

**A SEMIOTIC MULTIMODAL ANALYSIS AND SOUTH AFRICAN CASE  
STUDY: THE REPRESENTATION AND CONSTRUCTION OF  
MASCULINITIES IN *MEN'S HEALTH* (SA)**

by

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## DECLARATION

Student number 611-658-2

I declare that **A semiotic multimodal analysis and South African case study: The representation and construction of masculinities in *Men's Health (SA)*** is my own work and that all the sources that I have either used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of comprehensive references.

C. P. Cilliers

Date: 30 April 2014

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## ABSTRACT

The main question of this study was: How and in what way can a multimodal semiotic visual analysis model be developed and used for contributing to the analysis and understanding of the manner in which the *Men's Health* (South Africa) magazine – as a case study – represents and constructs masculinities in South Africa? The following three subsidiary research questions were formulated to address this topic:

- *What is the literature revealing with reference to the media as producers of meaning in relation to masculinity and visual texts?*
- *How and in which way can a semiotic visual analysis multimodal model be developed with the purpose of contributing to the analysis of visual texts?*
- *What is the outcome of the visual analysis multimodal model with reference to the case study about the representation and construction of masculinities in visual texts in MH?*

The first aim of this research was to establish an overview of masculinities and to explore the visual representation of masculinity with reference to mediation, reality, and ideology in the media. With reference to the media as producers of meaning in relation to masculinity and visual texts, a semiotic visual analysis and social semiotics were used to unpack culture as a site of the production of meanings. The media is one of the main sources from which men receive their entertainment and information about the world. In this sense, the media makes sense of the world. Mass media plays a key role in discourse and constructing the relationships between reality and ideology. During this construction, the media reflects on existing opinions and attitudes in society.

A quantitative content analysis and a qualitative semiotic multimodal visual analysis were conducted on 27 visual texts purposively selected from *MH* to include editions from July 2010 to June 2011. This population covered 12 front covers, 12 editorials and three flip covers. The developed visual multimodal model was tested qualitatively on nine visual texts since these texts included the front covers, flip covers and editorials of the three editions with flip covers.

A second major aim of the study was to establish the way in which a semiotic visual analysis multimodal model needed to be developed and used for analysing visual texts, as well as for analysing the visual texts according to the multimodal model in order to understand how the multimodality and social semiotic resources were applied in *MH* to represent and construct masculinities. The rationale for the development and design of this model was based on the premise that a basic understanding of semiotics and visual language was needed. Without such an understanding, the vast amounts of visual messages that confront the reader would remain incomprehensible. Consequently, a productive dialogue in relation to visual communication cannot take place.

The multimodal model developed in this thesis highlights visual text layout, in conjunction with language-in-use, that does not occur in isolation and that is deeply reliant on other forms of making meaning. The heptagon multimodal model consists of concept maps of the six functions of the designed hexagon model. This multimodality approach includes analysing simultaneously occurring semiotics and their various roles in conjunction with detailed, all-inclusive discourses. In the quantitative content analysis and the qualitative multimodal semiotic analysis, the six components of the developed heptagon model (visual grammar, positioning, typography, colour, modality, and iconography) are illustrated. The quantitative research supported the main research design, i.e. the qualitative multimodal semiotic analysis. It is envisaged that the development and construction of a multimodal semiotic model will make a contribution to the scholarly field of semiotic analysis.

By discussing the fluidity of the variations of masculinities and male identities, by giving a brief overview of the role of the media in constructing masculinities, and by focusing on the discourses that took place in *MH*, the researcher creates an awareness of the inherited patriarchal masculinities by recommending envisioned masculinities to be inclusive as a component of the solution. This approach is illustrated by the use and findings of the multimodal semiotic visual analysis.

**Key terms:** masculinity; construction; representation; social semiotics; visual grammar; hexagon model; multimodal model; multimodal analysis; visual discourse; concept maps.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

DECLARATION .....	ii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS .....	iii
ABSTRACT.....	iv

### CHAPTER 1

<b>OVERVIEW .....</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1 INTRODUCTION.....	1
1.2 RELEVANCE OF THE INVESTIGATION.....	4
1.3 CONTRIBUTION OF THIS STUDY.....	9
1.4 RATIONALE FOR THIS STUDY .....	10
1.5 DEMARCATION AND DESCRIPTION OF THE TOPIC.....	11
1.5.1 The main research issue.....	12
1.6 APPROACHING THE STUDY.....	12
1.6.1 Methodological approach.....	13
1.6.2 Theoretical approach .....	14
1.7 OUTLINE OF THE THESIS .....	16
1.8 CONCLUSION.....	18

### CHAPTER 2

<b>LITERATURE REVIEW PART I: SEMIOTICS .....</b>	<b>19</b>
2.1 INTRODUCTION.....	19
2.2 A BRIEF HISTORY OF SEMIOTICS.....	19
2.3 SEMIOTICS AS THEORY .....	21
2.4 SOCIAL SEMIOTICS DEFINED .....	23
2.5 SEMIOTICS: CONTEXT, MAKING, AND INTERPRETING MEANING .....	26
2.5.1 Semiotics and context.....	26
2.5.2 Semiotics and making meaning.....	27
2.4.3 Meaning as representation .....	28
2.6 SEMIOTICS: REPRESENTATION, REALITY, AND IDEOLOGY .....	30
2.6.1 Semiotics and ideology .....	31

2.6.2	Ideology, power, language and discourse.....	32
2.6.3	Encoding, decoding and polysemy.....	34
2.6.4	Ideology and different readings .....	35
2.6.5	Political economy .....	37
2.7	A BRIEF INTRODUCTION TO VISUAL TEXTS .....	39
2.8	VISUAL CULTURE – SOCIAL CONDITIONS AND EFFECTS.....	42
2.9	SUMMARY .....	46

### **CHAPTER 3**

	<b>LITERATURE REVIEW II: UNDERSTANDING MASCULINITY: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS AND CONTEXT.....</b>	<b>48</b>
3.1	INTRODUCTION.....	48
3.2	THE IMPACT OF GENDER FRAMEWORKS IN THE SHAPING OF MASCULINITY .....	48
3.2.1	First Wave feminism.....	49
3.2.2	Second Wave feminism .....	50
3.2.3	Third Wave feminism .....	51
3.2.4	Feminism and reactive sexism .....	51
3.2.5	Gay liberation and understanding of masculinity .....	54
3.2.6	Post-women’s liberation / post-gay liberation .....	54
3.3	MASCULINITY AND MEN’S STUDIES .....	56
3.4	THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS IN THE STUDY OF MASCULINITIES.....	60
3.4.1	Sex role framework .....	62
3.4.2	The biological framework.....	63
3.4.3	Social construction framework.....	64
3.4.4	The reality construction framework.....	66
3.5	SHAPES OF HEGEMONIC MASCULINITY .....	67
3.5.1	The ‘masculinity crisis’ framework .....	69
3.6	SUMMARY .....	71

## **CHAPTER 4**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW III: MEDIA, MASCULINITIES, AND THE VISUAL**

<b>TEXT .....</b>	<b>72</b>
4.1 INTRODUCTION.....	72
4.2 THE MEDIA AS PRODUCERS OF MEANING .....	72
4.3 A BRIEF OVERVIEW OF THE MEDIA AND SOCIETY .....	73
4.4 AN OVERVIEW OF THE ROLE AND EFFECTS OF MASS MEDIA ON MASCULINITY AND IDENTITY.....	77
4.4.1 Marginalising of men's bodies in visual texts .....	78
4.4.2 Visual representation reinforces existing attitudes of masculinities .....	79
4.4.3 Sexuality and race.....	80
4.4.4 Modern thinking about mass identities .....	81
4.5 MASS MEDIA AND SIGNIFICANT EFFECTS ON AUDIENCES.....	81
4.5.1 Misandry and representations of masculinities .....	82
4.5.2 Visual mass media representations as reflections of society ...	83
4.6 SOCIAL IDENTITY THEORY IN RETROSPECT AND PROSPECT ....	83
4.6.1 Self-identity and self-discovery .....	85
4.6.2 The nature of social identification .....	86
4.6.3 The individual and traditional identities .....	87
4.6.4 Multiple forms of identity .....	88
4.7 VISUAL MEANINGS, CONSTRUCTIONS, AND REPRESENTATIONS OF MASCULINITIES AND MALE IDENTITIES .....	88
4.7.1 Masculinity and male identity in mediation and representation	89
4.7.2 Is more than one identity an issue?.....	90
4.7.3 Masculinity, cultural diversity, and identity .....	93
4.7.4 Male identity and consumerism: Who is the new man? .....	95
4.8 SUMMARY .....	98

## **CHAPTER 5**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY .....**

5.1 INTRODUCTION.....	100
5.2 MIXED METHOD ORIENTATION .....	100

5.2.1	Qualitative part of mixed methods .....	102
5.2.2	Quantitative part of mixed methods.....	104
5.2.3	Mixed methods approach.....	106
5.3	THE POPULATION .....	107
5.4	SAMPLING PROCEDURE .....	107
5.5	TIME FRAME .....	109
5.6	THE CASE STUDY .....	110
5.7	A CRITICAL VISUAL METHODOLOGY .....	111
5.8	MODALITIES OF UNDERSTANDING VISUAL TEXTS .....	112
5.8.1	Viewing and meaning is not passive .....	114
5.8.2	Semiotics and a multimodal approach .....	115
5.9	SUMMARY .....	116

## **CHAPTER 6**

### **THE CONSTRUCTION OF A SEMIOTIC VISUAL ANALYSIS MODEL..... 117**

6.1	INTRODUCTION.....	117
6.2	THE MULTIMODAL MODEL FOR VISUAL SEMIOTIC ANALYSIS ...	118
6.3	THE HEXAGON AS THE CENTRE OF MULTIMODAL ANALYSIS ...	120
6.3.1	Visual grammar .....	121
6.3.2	Iconography.....	128
6.3.3	Modality .....	135
6.3.4	Colour .....	140
6.3.5	Typography.....	146
6.3.6	Positioning .....	151
6.4	SUMMARY .....	161

## **CHAPTER 7**

### **A SEMIOTIC ANALYSIS OF VISUAL IMAGES IN *MEN'S HEALTH* (SA) MAGAZINE..... 162**

7.1	INTRODUCTION.....	162
7.2	<i>MEN'S HEALTH</i> MAGAZINE IN CONTEXT .....	162
7.3	ANALYSIS .....	166
7.3.1	Men do not know much about women.....	181

7.3.2	The ideal man is a sexual champion .....	184
7.3.3	The ideal man is a powerful muscular man.....	188
7.3.4	The ideal man likes cars, gadgets, sport, and danger .....	194
7.3.5	The ideal man is healthy, eats right, and is not fat .....	198
7.3.6	The ideal man needs help .....	199
7.4	HEPTAGON MULTIMODAL MODEL ANALYSIS.....	203
7.4.1	Visual grammar .....	203
7.4.2	Iconography.....	212
7.4.3	Modality .....	216
7.4.4	Colour .....	217
7.4.5	Typography.....	221
7.4.6	Positioning .....	226
7.5	CONCLUSION.....	232

## CHAPTER 8

### CONCLUSION .....234

8.1	INTRODUCTION.....	234
8.2	THE RESEARCH FINDINGS .....	234
8.3	MEANING, MASCULINITY, AND THE VISUAL TEXT .....	234
8.4	THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE MULTIMODAL MODEL.....	236
8.5	THE MULTIMODAL MODEL TESTED ON VISUAL TEXTS IN <i>MH</i> ...	239
8.6	THE RESULT OF TESTING THE MULTIMODAL MODEL ON VISUAL TEXTS IN <i>MH</i> .....	243
8.7	LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY.....	245
8.8	RECOMMENDATIONS.....	245
8.9	CONCLUDING REMARKS .....	246

SOURCES CONSULTED .....	248
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### ADDENDA: COVER AND CONTENT ANALYSES –

MEN'S HEALTH MAGAZINE (JULY 2010 – JUNE 2011).....	268
ADDENDUM A: <i>MEN'S HEALTH</i> CONTENT CATEGORY (JULY 2010) .....	268

ADDENDUM B: <i>MEN'S HEALTH</i> CONTENT CATEGORY (AUGUST 2010) .....	270
ADDENDUM C: <i>MEN'S HEALTH</i> CONTENT CATEGORY (SEPTEMBER 2010).....	272
ADDENDUM D: <i>MEN'S HEALTH</i> CONTENT CATEGORY (OCTOBER 2010) .....	274
ADDENDUM E: <i>MEN'S HEALTH</i> CONTENT CATEGORY (NOVEMBER 2010) .....	276
ADDENDUM F: <i>MEN'S HEALTH</i> CONTENT CATEGORY (DECEMBER 2010).....	278
ADDENDUM G: <i>MEN'S HEALTH</i> CONTENT CATEGORY (JANUARY 2011) .....	280
ADDENDUM H: <i>MEN'S HEALTH</i> CONTENT CATEGORY (FEBRUARY 2011) .....	282
ADDENDUM I: <i>MEN'S HEALTH</i> CONTENT CATEGORY (MARCH 2011).....	284
ADDENDUM J: <i>MEN'S HEALTH</i> CONTENT CATEGORY (APRIL 2011).....	286
ADDENDUM K: <i>MEN'S HEALTH</i> CONTENT CATEGORY (MAY 2011) .....	288
ADDENDUM L: <i>MEN'S HEALTH</i> CONTENT CATEGORY (JUNE 2011).....	289
ADDENDUM M: <i>MEN'S HEALTH</i> EDITORIAL (JULY 2010) .....	291
ADDENDUM N: <i>MEN'S HEALTH</i> EDITORIAL (AUGUST 2010) .....	293
ADDENDUM O: <i>MEN'S HEALTH</i> EDITORIAL (SEPTEMBER 2010).....	295
ADDENDUM P: <i>MEN'S HEALTH</i> EDITORIAL (OCTOBER 2010) .....	297
ADDENDUM Q: <i>MEN'S HEALTH</i> EDITORIAL (NOVEMBER 2010) .....	299
ADDENDUM R: <i>MEN'S HEALTH</i> EDITORIAL (DECEMBER 2010).....	301
ADDENDUM S: <i>MEN'S HEALTH</i> EDITORIAL (JANUARY 2011) .....	303

ADDENDUM T: <i>MEN'S HEALTH</i> EDITORIAL (FEBRUARY 2011) .....	305
ADDENDUM U: <i>MEN'S HEALTH</i> EDITORIAL (MARCH 2011) .....	307
ADDENDUM V: <i>MEN'S HEALTH</i> EDITORIAL (APRIL 2011) .....	309
ADDENDUM W: <i>MEN'S HEALTH</i> EDITORIAL (MAY 2011) .....	311
ADDENDUM X: <i>MEN'S HEALTH</i> EDITORIAL (JUNE 2011) .....	313
ADDENDUM Y: <i>MEN'S HEALTH</i> FLIP COVER PAGE (OCTOBER 2010) .....	315
ADDENDUM Z: <i>MEN'S HEALTH</i> FLIP COVER PAGE (DECEMBER 2010) .....	317
ADDENDUM AA: <i>MEN'S HEALTH</i> FLIP COVER PAGE (APRIL 2011) .....	319

## LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 5.1: Sample selection by progressive selection and reduction .....	108
Figure 6.1: Hexagonal multimodal analyses .....	119
Figure 6.2: The difference between the Lexis and Grammar approach.....	122
Figure 6.3: Mapping the concept of iconography.....	130
Figure 6.4: Mapping the concept of modality .....	137
Figure 6.5: Mapping the concept of colour.....	142
Figure 6.6: Mapping the concept of typography.....	147
Figure 6.7: Mapping the concept of positioning .....	152
Figure 7.1: Cover line as an anchorage function ( <i>MH</i> September 2010) .....	171
Figure 7.2: Cover lines as staples and mandatory text ( <i>MH</i> February 2011) .....	172
Figure 7.3: Lean Muscle Fast! ( <i>MH</i> March 2011) .....	175
Figure 7.4: Using numbers on the front cover ( <i>MH</i> January 2011) .....	176
Figure 7.5: Tone: friendly, ironic, and laddish ( <i>MH</i> August 2010) .....	180
Figure 7.6: A female on the flip cover (Flip cover <i>MH</i> December 2010) .....	182
Figure 7.7: The Red-Hot Sex Issue ( <i>MH</i> July 2010).....	185
Figure 7.8: The Hardcore Issue ( <i>MH</i> May 2011) .....	190
Figure 7.9: How To Win At Everything ( <i>MH</i> November 2010).....	201
Figure 7.10: Example of Men's Health cover lines ( <i>MH</i> December 2010) .....	206
Figure 7.11: Example of discourse lurking into the text ( <i>MH</i> October 2010) ..	207
Figure 7.12: Men's Health editorial – October 2010 .....	210
Figure 7.13: Men's Health editorial – April 2011 .....	211
Figure 7.14: The Red Hot! Right Now! ( <i>MH</i> Flip cover April 2011) .....	213
Figure 7.15: The use of colour ( <i>MH</i> April 2011).....	219
Figure 7.16: Style (Flip cover, <i>MH</i> October 2010) .....	231

## LIST OF TABLES

Table 5.1:	Population parameters .....	109
Table 7.1:	Masthead colour and front cover guy .....	167
Table 7.2:	Career of <i>MH</i> front cover guy .....	168
Table 7.3:	Cover lines and smiles .....	170
Table 7.4:	Content categories on front covers .....	174
Table 7.5:	Masculinist discourse in <i>MH</i> editorials .....	176
Table 7.6:	Jeans and beards .....	195
Table 7.7:	Shirts .....	197
Table 7.8:	Editorial use of visual syntax .....	212
Table 7.9:	Masthead colours .....	218
Table 7.10:	Colour of shirts .....	219

## CHAPTER 1 OVERVIEW

### 1.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter introduces the focus, relevance, rationale and contribution of this study. The chapter furthermore gives a brief overview of how the study was approached from a methodological and theoretical perspective. The chapter concludes with an outline of the thesis.

This study focuses firstly on the manner in which semiotics contributes to advance the field of visual analysis. Semiotics and social semiotics are used as a theory, as well as a methodology in this research project. A 'multimodal graphic model' with semiotic visual analysis components has been developed to deconstruct the visual texts of Men's Health (*MH*) magazine in a systematic manner. An example of a relationship between semiotic resources and potential connotations is found in Jewitt and Oyama's (2001) investigation of the visual representation of masculinity in British sexual health materials that are aimed at teenagers. Jewitt and Oyama (2001:201) explain how metafunctions are used in systematically analysing visual texts in the domain of sexual education that results in the possibility of renegotiating "the meanings inherent in such condition rather than seeing these as fixed, irrevocable and natural". Why then, has *MH* – as a South-African magazine – been chosen, and what is the current assumption about the representation of masculinity in South Africa?

The second focus of this study is the representation and construction of changing masculinity in general, followed by specific reference to the way in which masculinities are portrayed in *MH* magazine. It is proposed in this chapter that such an investigation is indeed justified in terms of current academic discourse and also necessary, since it endeavours to indicate that debate about the changes in men's lives have been continuing for the past three decades. The researcher argues that although some studies of masculinities and male identity have been conducted in South Africa, only a few of them address masculinity and the media. The researcher also emphasises that lifestyle has surfaced as a key element of male self-identity in a postmodern society. The primary principals and structure of men's lives are

changing amidst the growing visibility of the idealised and eroticised male body in Western popular culture, and it is being argued that men are becoming the new victims of 'the beauty myth' (Dewing & Foster 2007:38).

Traditional gender roles no longer look the same (Mac an Ghail & Haywood 2007:1). While these changes are acknowledged by scholars and popular media alike, the methods of analysing and articulating these changes are outdated (Anderson 2010; Synnott 2009, Berger 2005). The approach and interpretation by popular media present the changes in gender male roles from the premise of gender confusion and loss. Two major features of these changes are a generation of children that has grown up without fathers and the rise of women in the workplace who have entered male dominated fields of work and eroded their authority. (One can also not ignore children who are brought up by gay parents, since it challenges the importance of the nuclear family.) Current debates are about 'who is wearing the apron', 'how modern men are not like men of 20 years ago', 'men are not men anymore', and 'men lack the sensitive touch of women'. Giving voice to the manner in which these changes are articulated in popular media and scholarly discourse necessitates the review and revision of the theories and methodologies that researchers of masculinity are using to shape the discourse. A process of transformation commenced in South Africa during 1994 with the first democratic election of the country. Despite many changes, power still is unequally distributed in a complex and stratified society. Imbalances in ownership and right of entry to social, economic, and political resources are still transcending gender and race (Luyt 2012:36).

In South Africa, political power has shifted to a black majority but gender power remains in the hands of men (Morrell 2001). This does not mean that men and masculinity in SA are not changing in relation to the traditional context of masculinity. West (2009:7) reports that men have to negotiate different aspects of the traditional and the modern man to define their own roles in modern day society.

Economic changes make it harder to get and keep jobs, social changes place expectations to be provider and carer for their families, and cultural changes mean men feel obliged to strive harder to match the successful lifestyles they see in the media (West 2009:7).

Men are still portrayed negatively in the media. Morrell (2001:3) observes that South Africa is “one of the last bastions of chauvinism”. South African men are “ranked among world’s most violent” (Cohen 2008:5); portrayed in the media as “simpletons” (Shannon 2007:15). In the South African print media, one reads articles of abuse by men, and men are called “monsters”; “child molesters”, and “rapists”. Cohen (2008:5) claims that South African murders claim the lives of nine male victims to every female victim, the rate at which men are murdered in SA is 6.4 times higher than in the rest of the world, and young South African men commit acts of violence at a rate nine times higher than the world average. The researcher does not argue that this is not the case but the question remains how this negative stereotyping and misandry, represented in the media, contribute to society’s view of men in general. While the unflattering view of South African men is stereotypical, to some extent it happens all over the world (Synnott 2009, Whitehead 2006, Haywood & Mac an Ghail 2003). The political and economic systems in South Africa are changing while gender relations are also changing. Since 1994, the SA Government policies have reduced some of the inequalities that separate women from men. Much of the public discomfort continues to be static and focuses on the subordinate position of women relative to men. Another change that has received less attention is the change in masculinity. In the 1990s, men and masculinity internationally have shaped the emergence of the ‘New Man’ (Synnott 2009, Whitehead 2006, Haywood & Mac an Ghail 2003, Morrell 2001). In this light, this study seeks to analyse the manner in which changing masculinity and male identity are represented in general by using *MH* as a case study, and by revising existing semiotic methods.

It is worth emphasising that there is no single or ‘correct’ answer to a question such as, ‘What does the image mean?’ or ‘What is this advertisement saying?’, since there is no convention that guarantees a singularly precise meaning of anything. One can also not surmise that meanings are never going to change. Therefore, the interpretative nature of work in this area is bound to spark a debate between equally plausible, though sometimes competing and contesting, meanings and interpretations; rather than a debate about who is right, and who is wrong. The best way of mitigating such contested readings requires examining the tangible example once more. Therefore, the most appropriate resolution is endeavouring to thoroughly substantiate one’s reading. This reading needs to occur in relation to the

actual practices and forms of signification that are applied, and what apparent meanings they seem to produce (Hall 1997a:9). The cultural meanings and power that are displayed in these images of masculinity clearly portray the world in a very particular way. The main emphasis indicates that visual imagery is never innocent, since it always gets constructed by means of various practices. For this reason, one needs to take a critical approach by using a 'multimodal graphic model' to analyse the social practices and effects as represented and constructed in the visual texts. The focus, therefore, is on the image itself rather than on audiences (Rose 2001:32; 99).

Although the media has attempted to create a discourse of the 'new man', the media is still communicating hierarchical relations amongst men that are perceived as improperly defined in terms of status that are entrenching the acquisition of attention of power (Connell 2005:351). *MH* has been selected as a case study as an example of a magazine that endeavours to communicate visual texts/images of the new man (in this case, the new South African man), while attempting to shift the focus from the traditional hegemonic masculinity to more inclusive masculinities. *MH* focuses on the emotional and physical well-being of men and educates modern men by using irony and humour to represent and construct an image of the new man that differs from the image of the traditional hegemonic man. This selection does not mean that the fundamental issue of power has shifted; power primarily still remains with men, no matter how the popular media depicts them. However, the assumption remains that masculinity, in the main, is negatively portrayed in South African media, since it is largely constructed and represented in a negative way. The research question of this study is: **How and in what way can a multimodal semiotic analysis model be developed and used for contributing to the analysis and understanding of how the *Men's Health* (South Africa) magazine – as a case study – represents and constructs masculinities in South Africa?**

## 1.2 RELEVANCE OF THE INVESTIGATION

The representation and construction of masculinities can be situated in social and cultural change. The impact of transforming masculinity into a commodity is mirrored in the current growth of the men's grooming market, which reached US\$191.7 million dollar in 2009 (Anderson 2010). In the past 20 years, models of masculinity have

portrayed an increasing curiosity about appearance, for example the metro- and übersexual models).<sup>1</sup> This is also evident in South Africa. West (2009:7) reports that young men in SA are delaying buying a house or having a child; SA men (35%) say they want to delay marriage and children versus the European average of 16%; young men also have a difficult time balancing their lives than previous generations. Men in SA say they can bring up a child just as well as a woman. Nearly three quarters (72%) of men in South Africa agree; higher than the European average of 63%. Success is not simply measured in material terms. About 65% of young South African men say their inner satisfaction with life has nothing to do with how much money they have (West 2009:7).<sup>2</sup>

The previous paragraph needs to be read in context of the personal opinions and satisfaction of men in general. Carter and Steiner (2004), Benwell (2003) and Gotting (2003) suggest that men, like their female counterparts, are achieving a sense of self by means of style, clothing, body image, and appearance. Men have become more fashion conscious owing to the relentless focus by the media on celebrities who personify opinions of men; for example colouring hair, going for facial treatment, and wearing the appropriate attire to specific occasions.

This study explores the different visual meanings of masculinity and multiple masculine identities by reviewing the literature on sex and gender, the socialisation of male identity and difference, stereotypes of male identity, and the influence of consumerism on constructing male identity. Mac an Ghail and Haywood (2007:147) hold the opinion that there is a trend for the body as a “primary site of desire and

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<sup>1</sup>The ‘metrosexual’ has been defined as “a male with a strong interest in fashion, appearance and other lifestyle characteristics traditionally associated with women” (MacMillan’s English Dictionary, 2006). Not long after the rise of the metrosexual, the concept of ‘übersexual’ has been announced. Übersexuals are described as being confident, masculine, and stylish. These men are reported to groom their minds, as well as their hair, therefore, they are combining the best of traditional manliness (character, strength, and honour) and positive traits like femininity (nurturance, communicativeness, and cooperation) (Macnamara 2006:173).

<sup>2</sup> This research is titled *A User’s Guide to Young Men*, and was conducted by Discovery Networks Europe, Middle East and Asia, which surveyed about 12 000 men in 15 countries and consulted leading experts on male behaviour. It reveals common themes in men aged between 25 and 39 years. The study uncovers 18 life issues that help to explain men’s attitudes and behaviour in the important areas of their lives. Discovery Channel says the research finds young men’s lives more complex than ever, although they are not in crisis.

cultural consumption” to gradually become the focus of a sense of self-identity. Cultural consumption falls within the wider developments in a consumer society where diverse masculinities are “currently articulated through consumerism that is written onto the body... [are] contributing to the reconstruction of masculinity through the practices of representation and consumption” (Mac an Ghail & Haywood 2007:147; 164).

The context that are clarifying some ways in which visual masculine identities are represented and constructed in *MH* are topics that form a complex interface between various theories, such as masculinity studies, men as a gendered or political category, masculinity crisis discourses, the theory of masculinities during late modernity, and diverse images of masculinity. The discourse analytical term ‘multimodality’ as embodied in the works of Kress and Van Leeuwen (1996), Van Leeuwen (1999) and, Van Leeuwen and Jewitt (2007) has become the most widely accepted approach to text analysis and creating meaning.

Carter and Steiner (2004) reveal that the role of self-reflective language during social practices affirms that the studying of language is limited without the resource of creating meaning during social practices. In a similar way, multimodality describes the grammar of visual communication that is applied by image designers in creating social meaning. Multimodality analyses the rules and principles that allow viewers to understand the meaning potential of the way framing, salience, proximity, colour saturation, and styles of typeface are arranged (Machin 2007:x). Multimodality can, therefore, be viewed as providing the means for describing a practice or a representation in all its semiotic complexities and richness. Multimodality prioritises representational complexities and illustrates the multi-semiotic nature of creating meaning (Iedema 2003:33).

Multimodality is used in this thesis with the purpose of focusing on the importance of semiotics and aspects other than language-in-use; such as image, music, and gesture. The escalating influence of sound, image, and film on television, the computer, and the Internet, not relevant for this thesis, is unquestionably amplifying this new prominence of and interest in the multi-semiotic complexity of the representations one is producing and observing around us. Apart from one’s augmented dependence on meaning, one faces sound and image that surpass one’s

tasks, since the advent of print media that is supplementary to language (Iedema 2003:33).

Since the design and media industries increasingly are becoming aware of visual design and composition, another argument for considering a semiotic multimodal analysis is the way in which signs are jointly used. In this study, a multimodal discourse analysis is used as a social semiotic approach to visual communication that is based on the work of Kress and Van Leeuwen (1996; 2001) and, Van Leeuwen and Jewitt (2007). It is a method that allows one to disassemble configurations into their most basic components and then to understand how these components are working synergistically.<sup>3</sup> In order to create meaning, one also needs to examine how relationships between components can be identified graphically. Multimodality systematically describes the range of choices that are available and how these choices can be used contextually (Machin 2007: viii-ix).

While the meaning of signs are contextually being realised in relation to other signs, the multimodal approach prompts the use of social semiotics. A variety of early cross-semiotic or 'multi-modal' work has converged in the *Social Semiotics*, which first appeared in 1990. In the original journal, a variety of articles merged by exploiting this confluence of a systemic-functional theory and an analysis of socially orientated forms of linguistic, visual, auditory, and spatial impact (Iedema 2003:32). Social semiotics has become the juncture for researchers who are analysing aspects of text that do not only include, but also transcend, language (Hodge & Kress 1988:37).

Such distorting of traditional boundaries provides evidence that our semiotic landscape is becoming more occupied with complex cultural and social discourse practices (Iedema 2003:33). The influence of globalisation and electronic

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<sup>3</sup> A multimodal analysis focuses on a multiplicity of modes, as well as the interplay of these modes in multimodal texts. To enable one to analyse the interplay of the various modes in multimodal compositions, a multimodal discourse analysis assists with formulating multimodal categories that matter in the process of creating meaning. Therefore, the argument is that it more precisely distinguishes between degrees of modal density rather than between mono- and multimodal texts; while it is directing the focus to the trajectory and transformation of meaning across time and space (Van Leeuwen & Jewitt 2007).

communication is increasing, and our diverse societies – political and cultural – mark important facets of this shifting landscape.

In analysing the visual texts in *MH*, it becomes clear that certain traditional ways of being male, deep-rooted in the industrial revolution and its domestic division of labour are becoming outdated. The debate about how men's lives are changing has been going on for about three decades. The men's movement includes a number of philosophies and organisations that try to support men by challenging the male gender role and improving men's rights; especially in relation to child access, marriage, and domestic violence (Synnott 2009; Whitehead 2006; Messner 1997).

The literature review of this thesis covers the 'new man' who exhibits feelings of the 1970s, the 'new man' of the 1980s, and the pro-male of the 1980s. Although the movements were predominantly Western, from the early 1990s men's movements have been growing in other countries too. One such an example is India. By the early 1990s, gender equity and feminism were seen as politically correct and anti-male (or misandristic). Those who held this view were perceived as rejecting feminism that was based on gender equity, and seen as constituting a 'feminist backlash' (Segal 2007; Whitehead 2006; Kimmel, Hearn & Connell 2005).

Present-day changes of sexual identity are identified by the definitive shift from the historical ideal of 'manliness' to the term 'masculinity' that became popular in the 1970s (Whitehead 2006; Benwell 2003). These authors maintain that, unlike the ideal of 'manliness' that is rooted in traditions of patriarchy, 'masculinity' has evolved from women's revolt against patriarchal relations as an oppositional, critical, and deconstructive term.

The modern lifestyle (characterised by a system of socially learnt cultural predispositions and actions by which people are distinguished) has surfaced as an important element of self-identity (Whitehead 2006; Benwell 2003). Macnamara (2006:5) maintains that the modern lifestyle provides a lens through which one can view and understand masculinity in the context of modern communities. In modern communities, one needs to be cognisant of the ways in which one lives differently; since sexual politics are marked by blends, hybridity, and body ambiguities that are changing masculinity (Anderson 2010, Mac an Ghail & Haywood 2007).

The modern lifestyle is also evidenced in cultural contents, especially in magazine design. The rules of 'what goes with what' and 'what signifies what' are constantly challenged and are changing by becoming inflexible features of common representational practices (Iedema 2003:38). One can no longer provide a direct definition of the magazine genre. The obvious definition should rather be viewed as a point of departure than an irrefutable definition. The logics of linear movement and causal closeness have given way to – or are used in combination with – “more unequal, non-linear, non-hierarchical, more freely re-combinative, circular, and serialised kinds of representation” (Iedema 2003:38). In the field of magazine design, for instance, it has meant that “within the last decade designers have increased their efforts to ... produce fluid fields of image” (Butler 1995:91).

Globally and in South Africa, studies of modern communities and media sociology focus predominantly on women. Content analysis research has focused on cinema and television advertisements, as well as entertainment programmes in the field of media studies. Comparatively, few studies have examined mass media portrayals of men and male identity, while gender studies have mostly assumed that media portrayals of men and male identity are positive and unproblematic (Anderson 2010; Synnott 2009, Macnamara 2006; Mac an Ghail & Haywood 2007).

For the purposes of this study, the less frequently scrutinised print media has been selected by specifically focusing on a magazine that contributes to the role, construction, and representation of masculinities in terms of men's physical and mental health.

### **1.3 CONTRIBUTION OF THIS STUDY**

The value of the multimodal graphic model design is significant, since social semiotics is extending discourse analysis beyond the opposition of traditionally separated language-orientated research, Barthesian semiotics, De Saussurean semiology, and sign-system-orientated semiotics. Subsequently, social semiotics is proclaiming to be concerned with the analysis of variable sign systems or text structures, while it is still excluding socially sign processes (Iedema 2003:29). A multimodal semiotic analysis approach contributes to visual text analysis, since the

various components as set out in the model could be used to uncover the various and multi-faceted meanings and layers of a visual text.

This thesis also refers to Berger's (1972) argument about 'ways of seeing', since he argues that images of social difference work not simply by what they show but also by the kind of 'seeing' that they invite. Berger (1972:9) uses the expression 'ways of seeing' to refer to the fact that "we never look just at one thing; we are always looking at the relation between things and ourselves".

Taking an image seriously also involves thinking about how it positions the viewer in relation to it (Wykes & Gunter 2005:39, Rose 2001:12). The argument is that, with semiotics as a methodology and a theory, it is necessary to examine visual images very cautiously, since they are essentially not completely reducible to their context. In this process, the researcher also considered his own subjective way of looking at images. Since ways of seeing are historically, geographically, culturally, and socially specific, the way one visually perceives is neither neutral nor innocent (Kress & Van Leeuwen 2006:13; Berger 2005:123-124; Rose 2001:16). (Chapter 2 situates ways of 'seeing' and a detailed foundation of visual semiotics).

#### **1.4 RATIONALE FOR THIS STUDY**

This study created a semiotic (visual schemata) multimodal model that can be used to analyse media visual texts; concept maps are designed for each part of the multimodal model. This semiotic analysis multimodal model had been tested as a case study on visual texts from *MH*; this was done to illustrate how this multimodal semiotic analysis model was applied in the analysis of the construction and representation of masculinity within a South African context.

This study with its multimodality approach attempts to comprehensively describe a practice or representation in terms of semiotic difficulty and fruitfulness. Although the practice could focus on a particular modality, the multimodal account does not favour any one semiotic for another. The multimodal model used in this study highlights visual text layout together with language-in-use that do not occur in isolation and that are deeply reliant on other forms of making meaning (Iedema 2003:40). This multimodality approach includes analysing simultaneously occurring

semiotics and their various roles in conjunction with detailed, all-inclusive discourses (Iedema 2003:40).

More than half a century of research has indicated that mass media portrayals of women are influentially shaping their self-image and self-esteem, as well as men's and societies' views of women (Macnamara 2006; Kimmel *et.al.* 2005). Few studies have examined the representation of men and male identity in the mass media. Gender studies have largely believed the studies about men and masculinities to be positive and unproblematic. In a post-industrial era of massive economic, technological, and social change; research reveals that mass media is assigning new images to male identity and disseminating them in articles such as 'Your best body ever' or 'Beat the taxman' that include references to 'metrosexuals' and men with 'a feminine side'. Collectively, these depictions of men and male identity have important social implications (Synnott 2009, Macnamara 2006, Kimmel *et al.* 2005).

## **1.5 DEMARCATION AND DESCRIPTION OF THE TOPIC**

This study sought principally to create a model that encapsulated all the different social semiotic elements from the seminal works within the field into one comprehensive multimodal modal. Currently, no holistic, comprehensive model exists. This study also proposes a conceptual and theoretical framework for reading and interpreting contemporary printed visual images by making use of this multimodal semiotic model. This study focuses on the semiotic visual analysis with the purpose of investigating the sites where images are created, where these images are viewed by the readers, and the different aspects of the processes at each site (modality). Rose (2001) classifies these modalities into technological, compositional, and social aspects (Chapter 2). The multimodal graphic model (Chapter 6) is applied to illustrate how the smallest components studied are purposively analysed from the perspective of intrerpretivist theory. The choice of an intrerpretivist approach for interpreting visual images seeks to substantiate the opinion with intrerpretivist theory that *MH* encompasses diverse ideologically loaded texts. For the purpose of this thesis, critical theory is concerned with the manner of articulating ideologies in visual images, such as front covers and editorials.

Furthermore, the study seeks to emphasise some of the possible representations of masculinities and male identity and to propose some of the ways in which the visual images in *MH* may be read. Referring to masculinities in this context means that one speaks and writes about the plurality of men, about masculinities, rather than about a singular perception of masculinity. The plurality of men could also include the multiplication of masculinities. One can also argue that owing to the pluralisation of masculinities the question of essentialism arises. The term 'masculinities' is employed in this study as a theoretical and political strategy to deconstruct conventional stereotypes that may stand in the way of understanding the workings of patriarchy properly. This study also proposes a conceptual and theoretical framework for reading and interpreting contemporary printed visual images.

### **1.5.1 The main research issue**

The main research question of this study was: How and in what way can a multimodal semiotic visual analysis model be developed and used for contributing to the analysis and understanding of the manner in which the *Men's Health* (South Africa) magazine – as a case study – represents and constructs masculinities in South Africa? The following three subsidiary research questions were formulated to address this topic:

- *What is the literature revealing with reference to the media as producers of meaning in relation to masculinity and visual texts?*
- *How and in which way can a semiotic visual analysis multimodal model be developed with the purpose of contributing to the analysis of visual texts?*
- *What is the outcome of the visual analysis multimodal model with reference to the case study about the representation and construction of masculinities in visual texts in *MH*?*

## **1.6 APPROACHING THE STUDY**

In this section, the methodological and theoretical approach is discussed. In addition, the various definitions of masculinity concepts and the approach to a visual methodology are defined.

### 1.6.1 Methodological approach

The research study utilises a mixed-method research methodology comprising both quantitative and qualitative approaches. Triangulation is evident as a quantitative content analysis and a qualitative multimodal semiotic visual analysis was conducted.

A multimodal analysis model was first developed for analysing the theoretical advances in critical visual analysis as far as perception, ideology, mythologies, and social semiotics were concerned (Chapter 6). The exploration includes the contribution of social semiotics to advancing the field of visual analysis and henceforth to discuss how a paradigm such as semiotics has approved notions such as meaning and ideology in relation to visual signification. A quantitative research design was subsequently employed to conduct a visual analysis of content. This quantitative content analysis consists of 12 cover pages, 12 editorials and three flip cover pages of *MH* during the period of June 2010 and August 2011. The qualitative component of the research includes three covers, three editorials, and three flip covers that were purposively chosen (Chapter 5).

The multimodal semiotic analysis is conducted by evaluating visual texts that emanates from the qualitative component of the covers, editorials, and flip covers. This analysis deals with multimodal semiotic analysis and the way in which patterns of visual meaning in *MH* are socially constructed versions of reality, for example, discourses are textually embedded and disseminated. For the purpose of this study, the multimodal analysis as a central concern is critically important, since it emphasises the potential social effects of the meanings that a reader of a subtext is positioned or called upon (interpellated) (Van Leeuwen 2005:120-2). These critical interpretations and analysis focus on the visual texts and interpret the construction and representation of masculinities in *MH*.

With reference to semiotics, the concepts text and discourse are used in conjunction with multiplicity. Since text analyses can only start after the material has been collected, an approach of narrative semiotics is followed. In the instance of semiotics, texts are systems of signs that always consist of two components: the surface structure at the level of syntax and words, and the underlying meaning. In

narrative semiotics, this model always appears as follows (Bignell 2002). The preference would therefore, be

- Firstly, the surface structure that is believed to be the instantly recognisable and readily reachable forms of a text. These structures are frequently investigated during traditional text and content analysis.
- Secondly, the deep structure means the essential system of values that is entrenched in a text. It comprises extensive norms, values, and attitudes; since in the text it imitates the value and norm structures of particular social systems (Iedema 2003).

The study is a descriptive, theoretical, and interpretive enquiry of *MH*. It is primarily an essayistic and broadly speculative investigation, rather than an empirical study. For example, no attempt has been made to test theories of audience reception of *MH*. Relevant interpretive strategies and theories have been enlisted in order to problematise, interpret, and deconstruct visual images by indicating their constructed and mediated nature.

### **1.6.2 Theoretical approach**

Semiotics as a theory, while providing a brief overview of the field, includes seminal and secondary literature such as Barthes and de Saussure while the focus remains on Halliday (1978) who introduced the concept of social semiotics in linguistics and the seminal authors of social semiotics (Hodge & Kress 1988). The theoretical approach furthermore explores semiotics as context, making meaning, representation, reality, and ideology. Social semiotics explore the meaning through its relationship with a code: It is system of visual grammar and a grammatical approach to visual communication that provides a variety of possible choices (Machin 2007: ix; Iedema 2003:32).

The representation of meaning is shifting from the use of text towards using and benefiting from alternative semiotics; such as image, colour, and page layout (Iedema 2003:32). The leaning towards a multimodal appreciation and the construction of meaning centres around two issues: firstly, the decentring of text as preferred mode of meaning-making; and secondly, the revisiting and blurring of the traditional margins between and roles allocated to, e.g. language, image, page

layout, and document design. This fusing of boundaries among the different semiotic dimensions of representation has been associated with, on the one hand, changes in the 'semiotic landscape'. On the other hand, the semiotic landscape can be related to the analysts' realisation that our human predisposition towards the constructing of multimodal meaning and our own multi-semiotic development requires attention to more than one semiotic analysis than simply text/language in use (ledema 2003:33).

A number of theoretical perspectives and approaches have informed this study of semiotics and masculinity, and it is pre-dominantly eclectic in nature. With reference to masculinity, the most important perspectives are sex role theory, feminist theory, and postmodern theory. In addition, the emerging field of men's studies, cultural studies, and postmodern and poststructuralist theory provides the underlying theoretical framework of this study.

A supporting theoretical point of departure for this study originates from the emerging field of men's studies (that can be considered as an extension of postmodern philosophy and theory), and the critical approaches of cultural studies, feminism, and social constructionism. The study also briefly explored the negative representation of men in the media, and the contribution of *MH* (as an example of mass media) to the inclusiveness of masculinity; and illustrates the contribution *MH* is making to the way that men are represented and constructed in contemporary society.

While no particular feminist theory or approach is applied, this study includes a feminist (cultural studies) perspective, since one of the goals of feminism is to analyse gender with the view of determining how gender relations and identities are constructed. Against this background of the feminist issue with patriarchy and male domination as problematic to gender relations and identities, this study is concerned with the representation of masculinity and male identity in *MH*. This approach is useful, since feminist theorists frequently use and apply numerous methods and

perspectives from a variety of disciplines in order to offer a critical analysis of patriarchy and hegemonic<sup>4</sup> masculinity.

With the stratification of masculinities attempts are made to focus on how masculinity is being reconstructed by *MH*. It should be possible to support feminists' views, such as the views of Hoff Summers (2003) that women face many inequalities and still have a long way to go towards gaining equality, while at the same time recognising that men and boys face inequalities and unfairness that need to be studied and addressed.

Postmodern and poststructuralist theory – which is concerned with cultural meaning in a social, historical, and political context – are other theoretical and philosophical points of view that inform this study. These points of view include multimodality that takes into account all the facets of semiotic dimensions and representations. Since this study explores the visual analysis of the construction of masculinities, it is important to note that postmodernism seeks to interrupt and cast drastic doubt on beliefs such as the notion of a stable coherent self, the existence of an objective, reliable and universal foundation of knowledge, the value of science, the existence of 'truth', and the neutrality of language as emphasised by Synnott (2009) and Kimmel *et al.* (2005).

## 1.7 OUTLINE OF THE THESIS

**Chapter 2** of this study provides the theoretical background of semiotics, visual communication, and representation. It is based on the argument that the individual and subjective responses one often expresses about visual texts need to be thoroughly investigated. It is, therefore, important that the issues of value and of evaluation in textual analysis – in the context of semiotics – are commonly explored by interrogating the political or ideological values that shape or underpin a text.

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<sup>4</sup> Hegemony is a concept created by Antonio Gramsci (1971) and it refers to a particular form of dominance in which a ruling class legitimises its position and secures the acceptance (or outright support) of the classes or archetypes. Of relevance to this research, the concept of hegemony has only recently been applied to the understanding of how men and their masculinity and sexuality are stratified in society (Gramsci 1971). It is also important to understand the difference between hegemony and overt rule – Gramsci's hegemony argues that there often is a threat of force structuring a belief.

Without such knowledge, it would be difficult (if not impossible) to understand the history and context of semiotics.

In **Chapter 3**, masculinity politics and the men's social movement are contextualised by briefly focusing on prior history. Chapter 3 in addition, provides explanations of previous studies about the sociology of gender, the surfacing of the "sex-role" framework, and masculinity before the start of women's liberation. While providing a brief historical overview of masculinity studies, the chapter includes a brief overview of feminism and the gay liberation movement. It further contextualises the study.

The theoretical focal point that illustrates the role and discourse in the media and in the construction of identity is described in **Chapter 4**. Social identity is positioned in the context of the print media. Furthermore, the chapter highlights the fact that most gender-related media research has focused on women. The analysis of masculinities and identities takes place by providing an overview of the manner in which masculinities are constructed and represented through media representation. Post-structuralism recognises the constitutive force or discourse of shaping social structures and identities.

As a point of departure, quantitative content analysis, visual methodology, and semiotics as a research method are explored in **Chapter 5**. In this chapter, the research approach, methods, population, sampling, reliability, and validity are discussed.

In **Chapter 6**, a multimodality graphic model is developed for analysing (testing) the visual texts that have been sampled from *MH*. Concept maps are drawn to illustrate the various components of the heptagon model. In this chapter, the researcher clearly demonstrates that a multimodality social semiotic approach to visual communication offers useful tools for allowing one to think about the details of visual composition, and for using multimodal visual semiotic resources to systematically analyse visual texts. This model is also 'methodological' in nature as the model was used to analyse the qualitative visual texts.

**Chapter 7** contains the findings of the semiotic visual analysis. In this chapter, the quantitative content analysis and qualitative semiotic analysis of the sampled visuals

are illustrated according to the multimodality graphic model that is designed and explained in Chapter 6.

**Chapter 8** returns to the research questions, and describes the limitations, recommendations, and conclusions of the research study.

## **1.8 CONCLUSION**

This chapter demarcates the topic by giving an overview of the relevance and rationale, as well as contribution of the study.

Chapter 2 starts with *Literature Review Part 1: Semiotics* which provides an overview of semiotics as a theoretical framework. Chapter 2 aims at discussing semiotics as theory, the influence and use that semiotics have on social semiotics, and exploring the meaning as representation of reality and ideology in relation to visual text and visual culture.

## CHAPTER 2

### LITERATURE REVIEW PART I: SEMIOTICS

#### 2.1 INTRODUCTION

This dissertation comprises three disparate literature reviews with the first review, *Literature Review Part I: Semiotics* provides an overview of semiotics as a theoretical framework. *Literature Review Part II: Understanding masculinity (theoretical frameworks and context)* consists of background and context of men's studies, including a historical overview of feminism and gay studies from which men's studies evolved. *Literature Review Part III: Media, masculinity and the visual text*, deals with semiotics, visual representation and the media, as well as the representation of men in the media. The first literature review provides the foundational theoretical works that are used in the development of the semiotic multimodal model. The reader is then asked to make a conceptual leap from semiotics to a seemingly new field: men's studies. Such a leap is necessitated by the latter two literature reviews (*Part II and Part III*) that deal with the representation of men in the media – the case study on which the semiotic multimodal model is tested and applied, that is, *MH*.

This literature review aims at discussing semiotics as theory, the influence and use that semiotics have on 'social semiotics', and justifying the use of semiotics for analysing visual texts. A brief history of semiotics is provided before defining social semiotics and the contribution of semiotics in making and interpreting meaning. The chapter further explores meaning as representation of reality and ideology. In exploring representation and interpreting meaning, a brief overview is provided of ideology; power; language and culture; encoding, decoding, and polysemy; ideology and different readings; and political economy. The last section of this literature review explores visual text and visual culture.

#### 2.2 A BRIEF HISTORY OF SEMIOTICS

One of the most influential and leading ways of thinking about the media is the approach that is known as semiotics. The most important aspect of semiotics for studying communication stimulates an awareness that people communicate by

means of signs with meanings that are either fixed or non-fixed. As a result, communication constantly experiences the transmission of meaning(s). It means that communication does not only focus on the way in which meaning is produced and exchanged among the partners in communication. Semiotics is concerned with the interaction between messages and people during the process of producing meaning. The message is both the object and subject of semiotic analysis. Messages are viewed as being composed of signs and codes that derive meaning from the culture in which they are used. Semiotics studies the relationship between the sign, the message, the users, and the culture (Thwaites *et al.* 2002:35).

This approach assumes that meanings are communicated by signs, and semiotics is concerned with the issue of how signs work. Semiotics stems from the proposed perspective of structuralism that human and communication behaviour is directed by an underlying system of ever-changing cultural and social structures. Therefore, semiotics is not viewed as an autonomous field of study, since it is applied in a broad range of fields - for example art, literature, anthropology and sociology, and the mass media. Since society is so infused by media messages, semiotics can be employed to analyse visual texts and to deepen our understanding of the media by means of a narrow focus on mass media products, such as *MH*.

Semiotics – the science of signs – is an ‘object language’ that refers to itself and its workings, and that serves as a metalanguage, since it can be used to analyse other systems of signs (Grossberg, Wartella, Whitney & Wise 2006:143; Hardy & Bryman 2004:567). A sign is something that makes total sense in the mind of one person, but at other times it is merely perceived as being beneficial to understand the connection between appearance and substance. Semiotics experiences itself as an object, as well as a subject. Any system of signs can be analysed by semiotics, including language as a communicative system. The core of semiotics includes the study of language: Especially how it shapes the observer’s perceptions of and thoughts about the world. While language is being used as model, the principles are mainly applied to the visual texts that are selected from *MH* magazine. In this way, the sign system is an authorised and realistic structure that resembles mathematics, since it contains the tools to apply consistent operations on itself (as a sign system).

These tools are also used to assess motion, change, or disruption in other systems (Grossberg *et al.* 2006).

Modern semiotic analysis has begun with the contribution of the Swiss linguist, Ferdinand De Saussure (1857-1913), and the American philosopher, Charles Sanders Peirce (1839-1914). De Saussure refers to his system as 'semiology', whereas Peirce favours the term 'semiotics' when referring to the science of signs (Machin 2007:167; Berger 2005:4; Lacey 1998:56).

In an inventive manner, De Saussure's approach is defining signs structurally. De Saussure states that the sign is the sum of the *signifier* (physical form in the real world) and *signified* (mental concept that the signifier evokes). Therefore, the relationship between the sign and its referent (the actual object that the sign is representing) is the signification (Thwaites *et al.* 2002:25-26; Lacey 1998:57).

Peirce's view of a sign is different from that of De Saussure. Peirce sees a sign as anything that, in some way or another, represents something else in some respect or capacity. Peirce distinguishes between three types of signs: the icon, index, and symbol (Berger 2005:4-5). In the analysis of the visual texts of *MH*, the mechanics of these signs are illustrated, as well as the extent to which these signs can be perceived as representing reality (Gillespie & Toynebee 2006:28-31; Lacey 1998:65-66). Since both Peirce and De Saussure deal with signs, their different 'ways of seeing' will be treated similarly for the purpose of this study.

### **2.3 SEMIOTICS AS THEORY**

As a theory, semiotics pursues the concept of the ways in which one makes sense of one another's communication, despite our inability to fully 'understand' any other person. Signification (a term originally coined by De Saussure) is a meaning that one expresses by means of a signifier and, therefore, at times it is vague and even ambiguous (Hardy & Bryman 2004:568). A system of signifiers is composed of elements that at the same time (inherently or essentially) signify nothing (Jakobson 1981:66-67). Although these signifiers are invisible and signify nothing, they always allow meaning to emerge.

A more thorough exploration of semiotics as a theory examines the binary way in which intrinsic variance in sign systems is organised, namely the syntagmatic and the paradigmatic dimensions (Gillespie & Toynbee 2006:23-35). The principle of syntagmatic-paradigmatic relations is important to De Saussure's idea of language as a system of differences. However, De Saussure uses the concept association rather than paradigm (Gillespie & Toynbee 2006:25; Berger 2005:8-9; Lacey 1998:56-64). The paradigm can be considered as the vertical set of associations while the syntagm is the horizontal, albeit sequential arrangement (Berger 2005:19-24; Lacey 1998:62-63).

When a text is deconstructed, semiotics is concerned with identifying the elements that constitute its structure; its ultimate aim surpasses the mere understanding of the structure of relationships and differences that characterise a given system. Semiotics aims at systematically interrogating the ways in which textual strategies are positioned with the purpose of achieving certain meanings. Deconstructing a visual text in a systematic manner is a way of exposing meanings to the scrutiny of critical analysis (Grossberg *et al.* 2006; Van Leeuwen 2005). For social semioticians, the key issue is to establish who are making the rules and how and why these rules might be changed (Jewitt & Oyama 2001:135).

Once subject meanings are critically analysed, they can be tracked by social semiotics which is one of the components of semiotics. Social semiotics explores human signifying exercises in definite social and cultural circumstances. It essentially strives to describe the making of meaning as a social practice.

The semiotician, Morris (1971:23), has adapted Peirce's work to a form of behaviourism by considering semiotics as goal-seeking behaviour in which signs exercise control; and attempts to divide the field of semiotics into three subfields:

- Semantics – explores the relationship between the world of signs and the world of things;
- Syntactics – explores how signs relate to other signs; and
- Pragmatics – clarifies the effect of signs on human behaviour.

Morris' views are pursued by some Russian influences where De Saussure's views of the abstraction of language as a system of signs have been heavily critiqued by the Bakhtin Circle (Gillespie & Toynbee 2006:59-60).

## **2.4 SOCIAL SEMIOTICS DEFINED**

Social semiotics is defined by reviewing the contribution of the structural semiotic approach during the deconstruction of texts by giving meaning to such texts in a systematic way.

The structural semiotic approach to representation has been naturally interested in deconstructing texts to classify codes, or sets of rules that are agreed upon a particular cultural system of a country (Bennett, Slater & Wall 2006:221-223). These sets of rules allow the members of the same culture to understand one another by attaching a similar meaning to the same signs. Van Leeuwen (2005) says that social semiotics compares and contrasts semiotic modes; the contrast is noticeable when the focus is shifting from the sign to the way people use semiotic resources to produce, as well as to interpret visual texts. Semiotics is a practice that includes observation and analysis.

The seminal authors, Hodge and Kress (1988), have practically explored the application of semiotic systems in society. They conclude that the social power of texts is affected by how societies interpret these texts. This practice of interpretation (semiosis) positions individual texts in the sphere of discourses that merge different interpretations by communities. When work is interpreted, it challenges the power of dominant discourses. These authors further have explored the view of semiosis as a dynamic process on the premise that meaning is not established by fixed structures, or predefined codes of culture. Hodge and Kress (1988:16-17) dispute perceptions that De Saussure's structuralist semiotics steers clear from attending to change, movement, and creativity in language; probably as a result of the diachronic linguistic habits of his time. As an alternative, Hodge and Kress (1988) suggest change in semiotics by applying the work of Peirce. They use Peirce's triadic model, which represents the 'action' of a sign as a boundless process of countless semiosis where one 'interpretant' (or idea connected to a sign) produces another. Hodge and Kress (1988:20) claim that the material world (the object) and the cultural rules of thinking

hamper these boundless processes of interpretation that Peirce's triadic model suggests.

De Saussure's principle of the 'arbitrariness of the linguistic sign' is also re-evaluated by social semiotics. This principle rests on the claim that the *signifier* only has an arbitrary meaning in relation to the *signified*. It implies that the meaning of a sound or appearances of verbal signifiers are not considered to establish what they signify. Gillespie and Toynbee (2006) and Hodge and Kress (1988) question De Saussure's principle of how the referent of the sign becomes more confusing when semiotics moves away from verbal language. They further claim that De Saussure is unwilling to explain how societies and cultures continue with or shift from traditional links between *signifier* and *signified*. It could mean that meanings and interpretations are systematically determined by a mysteriously composed collective force. These issues in relation to the main characteristics of social semiotics need to question and clarify how the social shaping of meanings functions in practice.

One cannot talk about verbal language and images in isolation from each other, since a sign does not exist independently from its meaning. However, images are composed of elements that are not as clearly distinguished as the word-signs of verbal language. In print, photographs are accompanied by captions, and advertisements include text. Roland Barthes (1977) distinguishes between two functional types of verbal language in relation to images: anchorage and relay. From a plethora of possible meanings of an image, anchorage endorses the most important one. In a sense, the relay function accomplishes a similar objective; it draws attention to certain possible interpretations and specifies them by way of additional information. Bennett *et al.* (2006:56) and Gillespie and Toynbee (2006:32-35) argue that Barthes ignores the latter in his analysis; the image can also anchor the verbal text, i.e. influencing or shaping the text in some way.

Therefore, social semiotics is situated in the broader field of critical discourse analysis. One could categorise social semiotics as a major research tradition of discourse analysis that specialises in revealing the close relations between language, ideology, and power in society. In addition to the work of critical discourse analysts such as Fairclough (1989, 1995), studies by theorists such as Hodge and Kress (1988), Lacy (1998), Kress and Van Leeuwen (1990, 2006) Gillespie and

Toynbee (2006), Van Leeuwen and Jewitt (2007) and Machin (2007) have influenced the shaping of social semiotics into a methodological framework for the analysis of photography and advertisements, as well as their relations with language.

The seminal author, Halliday (1978) introduces the concept of social semiotics in linguistics by arguing against the conventional separation between language and society, and demonstrates the beginning of a semiotic approach that expands the restricted spotlight on written language in linguistics. Halliday (1978:39) asserts that language includes classifications of 'meaning potential' or positions of resources that influence how the communicator utilises language in a specific social context. According to Halliday, the English language (as grammar) is organised for realising three functions:

- Assisting certain types of social and interpersonal exchanges (interpersonal): 'doing something';
- Representing and forming ideas about the world (ideational): 'about something'; and
- Integrating these ideas and exchanges into significant texts and relating them to their textual context: 'the speaker's text-forming potential' (Halliday 1978:112).

Multimodality and social semiotics extend the general framework beyond the origins of linguistics with the purposes of continuing the significance of visual and auditory images, including how modes of communication between digital and traditional media are used concurrently to exchange meaning across and in a range of semiotic modes: aural, visual, and verbal.

Semiotic visual analyses are used in conjunction with social semiotics with the purpose of unpacking and managing the ambiguities that are inherent to human communication; in this instance, it refers specifically the visual texts in *MH*. The separation of ambiguities begins with the idea of truth and proceeds by revealing its variations or counterparts. Human communication includes all kinds of representation and misrepresentation, partly because deception and misrepresentation can benefit the liar in conflict situations (Bennett *et al.* 2006; Gillespie & Toynbee 2006). Semiotic visual analysis powerfully uncovers and

considers the potential for fabrication or deceit in communication. It implies that the ambiguity that is inherent to abstract communication can never fully eliminate the influence of integration and context. Umberto Eco (1976:7) observes that:

*“Semiotics [is] in principle the discipline studying everything which can be used in order to lie”. If something cannot be used to tell a lie, conversely, it cannot be used to tell the truth: it cannot in fact be used to ‘tell’ at all”* (Emphasis in original text).

## **2.5 SEMIOTICS: CONTEXT, MAKING, AND INTERPRETING MEANING**

Thwaites *et al.* (2002:1-2), and Rose (2001:170-171) argue that culture is the site of the production of meanings and not the expression of meanings. They further argue that meaning arises during social relations and is produced and exchanged in a social context, while meanings are never fixed. Thwaites *et al.* (2002:2) also add that “culture is not a single unified process, but an ensemble of practices”.

### **2.5.1 Semiotics and context**

Various meanings and communication practices in a culture are produced in relation to different contexts in such a way that signs and events are framed differently (Schirato & Yell 2000:10). If one subscribes to the view that communication practices are always produced, read, and negotiated in terms of specific contexts, the question one needs to ask is: “What is a context?” Schirato and Yell (2000:14) describe contexts as “stable sets of circumstances” Context, or whatever is brought to the communicative encounter, is an often unreflective resource that initiates sense-making. Context is a very powerful guide to words in action when a collective situation requires cooperation. People ‘understand’ less than what they are communicating (Grossberg *et al.* 2006:165-166; Burton 2005:50-52). Also, the perception of what comprises a particular [or exact] context is not likely to be shared by everyone, and the meaning of those communication practices will change according to places, persons, and time (Schirato & Yell 2000:14). In this light, the question persists about the extent of mutual understanding (or intersubjective realities) and different meanings that arise.

## 2.5.2 Semiotics and making meaning

The two key notions of semiotic analysis are signs and relations.

The notion that linguistics might be useful in studying other cultural phenomena is based on two fundamental insights: first, that social and cultural phenomenon are not simply material objects or events but objects or events with meaning, and hence signs; and second, that they do not have essences but are defined by a network of relations (Culler 1975:4).

Semiotics starts with linguistics as a model and also applies its concepts to texts other than language. Semioticians treat texts as being like languages, since relationships (rather than things per se) are all-important. A cover page of *MH* can be considered as a system of signs and the various meanings in the magazine stem from the signs and from the system that tie the signs together. At times, the system is not obvious and needs to be derived from the text.

Bennett *et al.* (2006:219-222) and Thwaites *et al.* (2002:32-45) claim that since meanings are socially produced, it is up to society to teach individuals what different signs mean. It is ironic owing to the assumption that society is simply an abstraction consisting of individuals only, and yet people learn meaning as a result of growing up in a society. One is unaware of the extent to which culture shapes one's actions, identities, and feelings. Meaning, therefore, is always social.

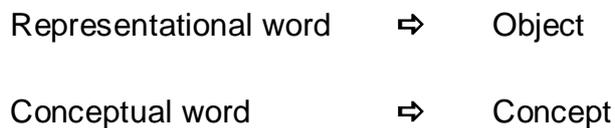
With reference to semiotic analysis, an arbitrary and temporary distinction is made between content and form, while the focus remains on the system of signs that constitutes a text. Since language is a system of signs that expresses ideas, it opens the study of media to us; almost anything can be a system of signs. Two signs can, therefore, also be in binary opposition when they are related by a quality that is present in one term and absent in the other (Bennett *et al.* 2006:219; Thwaites *et al.* 2002:67-68).

Bennett *et al.* (2006:263) define binary opposition as a device that is being used in textual analysis to indicate how oppositions; such as intelligent / stupid, and happy / sad are contextually explored in stories. Burton (2005:54) refers to the textual analysis of Barthes and Lévi-Strauss who use patterns of opposing meanings. Some narrative analyses also use binary oppositions in terms of motifs, themes, or

dramatic conflict. While binary oppositions might involve two opposites, they really only order things according one quality, since it is present in one term and absent in the other. Therefore, cultural codes use these qualities to create hierarchies or ranking orders, while these codes remain part of another code that provides their meaning (Grossberg *et al.* 2006:183-186; Carter & Steiner 2004:17; Lacey 1998:69-70).

### 2.4.3 Meaning as representation

MacKinnon (2003) says that the mass media (in this example *MH*) do not so much 'reflect' masculinity in society as they 'teach' it by creating or reinforcing their images. The creation and reinforcement of messages also align with the most common way of thinking about the representational nature of meaning. To describe meaning as representational implies that any language (or any system of meaning) always points or refers to the real word (Bennett *et al.* 2006:74-77; Grossberg *et al.* 2006:141). However, meaning is also conceptual. The conceptual nature of language refers or points to ideas outside our minds. The word 'man' refers to a particular image, picture, or set of associations that comes to mind whenever the word appears. The following diagram captures representational and conceptual meaning:



(Grossberg *et al.* 2006:140).

This diagram implies that communication may involve more than meaning understood simply as information; it also involves emotional and affective relations of human beings to whatever they are talking about. The theories of meaning as both representational and conceptual describe aspects of the way in which meaning functions in the human world. Grossberg *et al.* (2006:142), however, caution that:

Neither can explain the capacity, bestowed on people by their systems of meaning, to distance themselves from the world, to think and talk about things that are not present at the moment, or to imagine things that do not yet exist.

Bennett *et al.* (2006:76-78) and Grossberg *et al.* (2006:140-143) further argue that meaning as representation and meaning as concept discover meaning as a direct relationship between the code and something external to the code. A representational or realist theory of meaning imagines that every word refers to a particular object and for every object there is a corresponding word. Both meanings (meaning as representation and meaning as concept) are two reasonable views of meaning imagined, since there is a necessary correspondence between a particular word or sign, and its meaning.

Meaning is use-based and, therefore, any representation contributes to meaning that is provided by context. These meanings may be grounded in symbols, group experiences, or cultures. Pure representation is mystified, and also complicated by the irreducible emotional, phatic, and biased aspects of speech. It implies that the biased [subjective] meaning or relationship between a message and an idea always exists. Additionally, strings of representations; such as texts, poems, essays, novels, sonnets, and academic chapters produce changes in meaning that unfold since every sign sequentially points to another while it is moving away from an often arbitrary point of departure (Bennett *et al.* 2006:76-78; Grossberg *et al.* 2006:153-156; Hardy & Bryman 2004:567-568).

An important aspect for this study is how meaning is produced and conveyed, with particular reference to the visual texts, henceforth referred to as texts. This study interrogates how men create meaning, even when it refers to multiple and competing meanings. However, they are not at liberty to create any meaning they want to. It suggests that masculinity is not straightforward actuality, since aspects of several masculinities are archetypes rather than social realities. There are a history and a way of life behind the interpretations of the world and of languages that men construct. The relationship between meaning, history, and ways of life is precisely what is meant by culture. Reality external to language exists; men only know such reality by means of their language and culture. Grossberg *et al.* (2006:140-141) note that it is difficult to grasp the relationship between culture and reality. It remains something of a predicament, since meaning is both something men discover in the world around them, and something imaginary that they project on the world.

## 2.6 SEMIOTICS: REPRESENTATION, REALITY, AND IDEOLOGY

Semiotics seeks to value the structure of representation and its functions. While semiotics is defined as an investigation of law-like statements that might direct communicational systems including language and, distinguishing tangible speech by De Saussure, most present-day theories of symbolisation and representation also acknowledge the concluding context-bound character of meaning (Hardy & Bryman 2004:568). The difficulty of 'context', of the logic of representational systems, confuses many researchers of semiotics. Since all representations, including words, are discriminatory and combinatorial, they may well encourage connotations, fantasies, ideas, and desires that intrinsically contain the possibility for counterintuitive and incredible formulations.

As a human being, one already has concepts in one's mind and gives representation to these concepts by the production of meaning. Hall (1980) identifies two systems of representation. The first one is the system by which all sorts of objects are associated with concepts (mental representations) that one carry around in our minds. The other one is language as a secondary system of representation. When one says that one belongs to the same culture, for instance, it refers to the fact that one interprets the world around oneself in the same way. For this reason, culture is defined in terms of shared meaning or shared conceptual maps. Therefore, one is able to represent or exchange meanings. The relation between things, signs, and concepts lies at the very heart of the linguistic production of meaning. The process of associating these three elements with one another is called representation.

The very phrase 'men's magazines' contains an assumption about the coherence of a group of people with the label 'men'. These men are collectively represented, and spoken for as a recognisable group. This representation may in part be inspired by cultural assumptions and attitudes. However, stereotypes are never simply invented by the media, but are also created by marketing (Anderson 2010; Segal 2007; Gillespie & Toynbee 2006). Therefore, familiar and understood representations contribute to the sales of magazines by emphasising familiar sets of values. While codes are being shared, meaning is constructed by a system of representation. For example, the cover of a men's magazine usually contains a close-up image of a smiling man. This appearance engages our attention, since it is close and familiar to

the readers. However, some men are not represented. It is unlikely that the image of an elderly man or a beggar will appear on the cover of a magazine. The visual representations, therefore, construct an imaginary world for an imaginary reader (Wykes & Gunter 2005: 139; Burton 2005:137-138).

### **2.6.1 Semiotics and ideology**

Ideology forms a focal point in this study, and it may be defined as a 'world view', for instance, a more or less articulated coordination of beliefs that is used to draw conclusions about society (Seidler 2006; Burton 2005; Lacey 1998:98). Ideology has been associated by researchers as accountable for the production of a 'false consciousness' or a commonly-held mythologised view of social reality (Bennett *et al.* 2006:107-108; Thwaites *et al.* 2002:158-159). The relationships with the power constructs of a society form the heart of all ideologies. The dominant ideology adjusts everybody's perception of the world. Competing ideologies (may be from the past or new ways of viewing the world) challenge the authority of the main ideology (Bennett *et al.* 2006:49, 90; Thwaites *et al.* 2002:159-160). Ideology does not simply act as a 'window on the world', but it shapes our view of the world (Berger 2005:99; Thwaites *et al.* 2002:160-162). All communication is structured; it includes texts. Any structure has a foundation, and the foundation represents the ideology of that structure (Segal 2007:139; Berger 2005:99).

When signs and texts include myths, they represent and convey messages that are inspired by ideology. The myth of the everlasting six-pack is embedded in visual representations of 'active' and 'good looking' young men. Not only are such messages portrayed in advertisements of age-defying beauty products, it is also represented on the front covers of *MH*. The language of the covers communicates its discourses about youthfulness and 'strong', 'hard' bodies that do 'not age' when it uses words such as 'rejuvenating'. It is evident that ideology assists with the making of meaning by facilitating the discourse about the text (Fourie 2008:218; Thwaites *et al.* 2002:158-159; 175-179). It will be difficult to establish meaning without ideology. While establishing meaning, individual readers also attach their own meanings to the texts; a reader is, therefore, producing his own decoding of the text while sharing with other readers the ideological background and technologies that produce these texts (Burton 2005: 90-91; Thwaites *et al.* 2002:158-159; 175-179).

### 2.6.2 Ideology, power, language and discourse

The very language that one uses to deconstruct ideas is itself a product of the dominant ideology. Bennett *et al.* (2006:107-108) and Lacey (1998:101) observes that, in a way, ideology structures language and language structures the way one perceives and communicate. Helsby (2005) focuses on three theories of the way in which language and culture relate to representations and ideology. Firstly, the reflective theory assumes that language reflects meaning that imitates truth or reality inherent to the visual texts. Secondly, the intentional theory is concerned about the individual author of the texts who intends to represent certain ideas. Therefore, each act of communication is unique and enters into rules and conventions of a social system with the purpose of negotiating shared meaning. This study focuses on the third theory, i.e. the constructionist theory.

In order to deconstruct the visual texts, this study explores the constructionist approach with two major variants or models of the constructionist approach, namely the semiotic approach (De Saussure) and the discursive approach (Foucault). Barthes develops this theory into a wider field of texts to indicate how languages (visual, verbal, and non-verbal) collectively operate in society. By extension, Barthes incorporates the idea of myth or ideology that is context (Berger 2005; Helsby 2005; Lacey 1998).

Barthes has set the trend for deconstructing the wide range of excessive rhetoric of popular culture during World War II. Barthes' most influential work, *Mythologies* (1957/1972) continues to influence critical theory. For Barthes, myths are signs that carry cultural meanings. He describes myth as a well moulded, refined system of communication that aids the ideological aims of a dominant class (Barthes 1972). Barthes' (1972) views myth as a socially constructed reality that is inspired as natural.

The visual analysis multimodal model used in this study for the text analyses include the way in which De Saussure's sign becomes a signifier that creates a connotation, as well as a myth. At the same time, myths could be connotations that appear to be denotations and allow structuring the meaning of the text without appearing to do so; they expunge their own existence (Machin 2007:27; Lacey 1998:67-69). At times,

myths (such as the masculinities in *MH*) position the audience in a specific relationship to a sign and simultaneously disguise themselves. Therefore, a deconstruction of myths in the visual texts is necessary for understanding how it works to make meaning for men in the SA society.

In linguistics and other social sciences, discourse is a concept that is used in a variety of ways. However, one can distinguish between two main applications of the concept. From a linguistic point of view, one observes discourse as a combination of action and interaction of people in real social situations (Fairclough 1995:18). The second view is based on Foucault's (1978) observation of discourse as a social construct of reality, and issues of power and knowledge that are collaborating to bring about cultural understanding and shared meanings (Fairclough 1995:18). Foucault (1978) views discourse as a system of representation. He refers to discourse as a group of statements that offer a language for talking about a specific topic at a specific moment; discourse produces knowledge by using language. In this context, Foucault (1978) does not see discourse as a form of knowledge or a power relationship in terms of a single classical Marxist idea of oppressive class power. If the media states and expresses a particular knowledge about the representation of masculinities, the media turns into the truth by which men will lead their lives in society. Although knowledge might have changed over time – progressing from distinct hegemonic masculinity to a modern approach of the new man – it illustrates how beliefs change and how men behave differently according to the new ideologies. This principle also illustrates the knowledge and power of a media institution to represent new discourse or truths about masculinities.

Fairclough (1995) links the use of language and the exercise of social power. For this reason, his work often attracts the label of 'critical discourse analysis', since it is more critical of language in its social expression than some other types of discourse and linguistic analysis (Gillespie & Toynbee 2006:122). This perspective emphasises the production of knowledge by means of a network of relationships rather than a singular meaning of a visual image. This network of power relationships will appear in all the texts (intertextuality) and merges discourses as they are produced in a common idea which Foucault calls 'discursive information' (Grossberg *et al.* 2006:174-178, Helsby 2005:4-6; Lacey 1998:105-112).

### 2.6.3 Encoding, decoding and polysemy

The cultural studies research is changing the thinking about mass media by focusing on literary analysis, linguistics and sociolinguistics. A key influence is Barthes' concept of the 'death of the author' which shifts prominence from the author's intent to the reader (Newbold, Boyd-Barrett, & Van Den Bulck 2002:37; Barthes, 1977:149).

Building on Hall's significant 'encoding-decoding' model (Hall 1973, 1977; 1980, and Hall *et al.* 1980) and his concept of the critical reader (Hall *et al.* 1980), sociologists and modern media scholars point out that audiences dynamically construct the meaning of or decode media texts owing to a variety of influences, instead of just passively absorbing meaning forced on them (Newbold *et al.* 2002:307; Mumford 1998:121).

Encoding and decoding unlock debates about:

how far textual meanings are predictable and can be the preference of the producer (a closed text) and how far texts may be genuinely polysemic and open to the preferences of the reader (an open text) (Burton 2005:71).

The possibility of interpreting texts in a variety of ways is referred to as polysemy (Fourie 2008:283). Alternative interpretations oppose ideological closure of texts by allowing a variety of readings.

McQuail (1984) says that the promotion of the uses and gratifications theory inverts the interrogation of the media from what effect do the media have on people to how people are using the media and endorsing the collapse of earlier simplistic assumptions about cause and effect between media and audiences. Fiske (1989:172) argues that it is the audience, not the media that wields the most power. However, Lull (2000:168) has proposed that Fiske "hopelessly romanticizes the role of audience members".

In the approach of cultural studies to mass media, texts are viewed as polysemic, that is they offer the possibility of a diversity of readings, even when a preferred reading is anticipated by its producers (Newbold *et al.* 2002:45). Curran (2002:144) agrees that "the media have fractured meanings", while Lull (2000:162) uses the

term 'multisemic'; the discovery and rediscovery of audience power are leading to a more careful effects theory which exposes a media ideology that leads to a "more cautious assessment of media influence" (Curran 2002:115).

#### 2.6.4 Ideology and different readings

One of the significant views of the cultural studies approach to mass media is borrowed from literary criticism and applies cinematic analysis, linguistics, and sociolinguistics (Macnamara 2006:67; Thwaites *et al.* 2002:91-93). This links the issues of gender relations and power relations. The proposition is usually interpreted as meaning that men have power over women. One needs to interrogate this proposition with its negation, which has perhaps equalled, or truth value. Gender relations are not power relations and are not similar to class or race relations, Clearly men do not have all the power; women are far from powerless (Synnott 2009:211-214). In addition, this approach examines the manner in which different readers interpret text. However, the focus of this study is mindful of the view that readers "as passive is too pessimistic, but it is probably also over-optimistic to believe that male readers are 'free' to choose from a variety of potential meanings" (MacKinnon 2003:24). It seems that mass media (from an early neo-Marxist cultural studies point of view is being used to control or influence audiences) argues that their influence depends on cultural hegemony (Macnamara 2006:67; Thwaites *et al.* 2002:91-93). Therefore, exploring and viewing texts as polysemic with different meanings need to happen contextually.

The reading audience is engaging actively with the text. Hall (1980) views the audience as decoders of texts; one has to recognise the codes and conventions in the text in order to make sense of the text. Hall describes the audience in terms of three different relationships with the text:

- The *preferred* [dominant] *reading* refers to the meaning [or interpretation] that is favoured by the producer of written text, and likely to be taken from the text by the reader owing to the use of diverse conventions and procedures that exclude other ways of understanding it (Burton 2005:90; Thwaites *et al.* 2002:91-94; Hall 1973:26-27).

- The *alternative* [negotiated] *reading* creates meanings that are not intended by the producer but that do not acutely challenge the dominant reading. To some extent, this reading is negotiated by readers and they can modify the reading with their own views according to their social situation and needs (Burton 2005:90; Thwaites *et al.* 2002:91-94; Hall 1973:26-27).
- The *oppositional reading* tackles and challenges the dominant reading, since it comprises a degree of intellectual independence of the reader. Readers reject the dominant ideology while understanding the meanings [polysemic nature] of the text, by purposely decoding those meanings in a different manner. Furthermore, this kind of analysis is inclined to be mindful of ideology, so that dominant meanings are perceived in relation to the dominant ideology (Burton 2005:90; Thwaites *et al.* 2002:91-94; Hall 1973:26-27).

It implies that ideologies kindle various readings that produce the same kind of decoding. However, ideology can also concurrently enable surprisingly different decoding meanings by a variety of text readers. The author / producer of any text obviously wish that the reader understands the text in the same way they have coded it (Thwaites *et al.* 2002:91-94). Unfortunately, it is not predictable, since the processes of decoding and encoding are not always congruent.

The question arises to what extent is the audience free to resist preferred readings? The answer is largely influenced by the cultural background of the audience and their values, attitudes, and beliefs (Macnamara 2006:68-69; Burton 2005:90). However, critical media assumes that a relationship exists between ideology and how media produces content. Hall (1980:172) admits that society constantly imposes a dominant order on the social world. A set of discourse or preferred readings is distributed that serves as an epitome for society to emulate. These readings are not closed, and people can move between negotiated or oppositional relations in texts (Burton 2005:91; Thwaites *et al.* 2002:91-94; Hall 1980:173). It means when one perceives the texts as a form of social discourse that the power of interpretation [potential meanings] lies with the media user. Therefore, it becomes a regular negotiation between meanings in the text and meanings that are attributed by recipients (Fourie 2008:283).

### 2.6.5 Political economy

South Africa can be considered as a media-rich country. It is evident from its highly developed media environment. Three strands make up the media in South Africa: broadcasting, the press, and film respectively. However, the development of these strands took place simultaneously. These varied strands confirm that the supporting theories and models are not exchangeable between the three strands. The history of broadcasting in South Africa is largely based on the development of the South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC). For the purpose of this study, the press has the longest history of all media, dating back to the Cape Colony period. South Africa has four major press houses: Independent Newspapers, Times Media Limited, Naspers (Nasionale Pers Limited), and Caxton (Fourie 2008). Of the three media strands, the press is also the most vibrant as a result of continual changes and structures. Its development specifically contributes to the empowerment of the historically disenfranchised societies. Notwithstanding efforts in this direction, the ownership and control of the media do not yet sufficiently reflect the heterogeneous nature of the South African societies (Fourie 2008).

The impact of ownership on media content, as well as how media ownership supplies to the improvement and spreading of ideology is emphasised (Mac an Ghail & Haywood 2007:46-49; Macnamara 2006:66-68). From critical theory, one can deduce that there is a close relationship between the media, politics, and the economy. In critical theory, it is argued that media sustains the awareness (cultural, political, and economic) of one group at the expense of another group. Political economy is an overarching term for all theories and analytical approaches that seek to understand the nature and functioning of the media as a social institution (Mac an Ghail & Haywood 2007:46-49; Macnamara 2006:66-68).

Newbold *et al.* (2002:219) indicate that reviewing masculinity and male identity in conjunction with political economy views the dominant political, financial, and industrial institutions of societies as directly affecting the ideological forces, including the mass media that is maintaining control. Like Marxist thinkers, the radical political economy tradition sustains the argument that the media is powerfully shaped by their political and economic organisation (Macnamara 2006:66-68; Curran 2002:22; Strinati 1995:258-259).

Mac an Ghail and Haywood (2007), and Macnamara (2006) argue that media markets are part of political economy that is, in turn, part of the capitalist economic system in a country. Therefore, an analysis of the media can indicate how information and entertainment mirror the ideas and values of governing classes in the South African society. Most importantly, however, is the issue of who owns the media (media ownership), and how does that ownership impact on the content of a specific genre (Mac an Ghail & Haywood 2007:46-49; Macnamara 2006:66-68).

McLuhan (1964) focuses further attention on mass media and their role in society with his well-known concept of 'the medium is the message'. Political economy and subsequent views of cultural studies that are dominating media theory from the 1970s reverse the thinking that mass media has limited effects (Griffen 2006:404; 409). The views of cultural studies perceive the involvement of mass media as a means of manufacturing consent (Macnamara 2006:67; Burton 2005:334; Strinati 1995: 258-259).

With the agenda-setting theory (advanced by McCombs, 1977), a further shift has taken place in viewing mass media as powerful propaganda instruments. The various media are viewed as being used by the elite for manipulating public opinion with the purpose of manufacturing consent. The techniques applicable in the agenda-setting theory include focusing on the mass media as the originators of a message (Fourie 2008:238-239; Griffen 2006:400-4; Macnamara 2006:74).

The media attracts institutions owing to its predictability and its economies of scale. It means that the production side of genre material is predictable. The production teams have a former understanding of what material to use, and what elements they can amalgamate. As far as costs are concerned, it makes the budgeting process easier. This predictability assures their success in the marketplace. In this sense, it becomes ideologically conservative, or subversive, by disguising their opposition by the familiarity of the formula (Burton 2005:77).

## 2.7 A BRIEF INTRODUCTION TO VISUAL TEXTS

Du Preez (2009) argues that gender and visual culture negotiate in quite exclusive and often captivating ways. Gender functions can firstly be seen as an interdisciplinary approach and as a critical tool to examine and explore several subject fields. In this way, gender adds to creating a theoretical and purposeful platform from where gender practices can efficiently be evaluated and transformed. Secondly, the rising acceptance and ubiquity of visual culture in a global context create a need to reflect on and to question. Cultural studies are a recognised subject at the Northern institutions; it is slightly new and rather under-theorised in the global South. The topic of gender and visual culture has been addressed over the past decade and this brief summary is an attempt to create a dialogue about masculinities and visual culture. It also introduces the discussion about the gendered nature of visual culture.

Van Leeuwen and Jewitt (2007), and Rose (2001) claim that in the past two decades, the way in which a social scientist understands social life has changed. This change is often explained as a cultural turning point. Schirato and Yell (2000:17) emphasise that communication practices are always informed by and produced within cultural contexts. These cultural contexts produce and constrain cultural practices, and are closely connected to the notion of cultural literacy. Such literacy can be understood in one of two ways: from the point of view of a familiarity with the rules and conventions of a culture, or from a sense of negotiating those rules and conventions. Williams (1976) states that culture is one of the most difficult words in the English language to define.

Du Preez (2009:6-15) and Lacey (1998:84-85) emphasise that it is worthwhile to investigate all visual texts, especially when they are popular. These visual texts teach one about how societies are organised and how societies create meaning. One has to acknowledge that culture has developed into the essential means by which many social scientists appreciate social processes, social identities, and social change and conflict. Lacey (1998:86) claims that both the correspondent and recipient of any image have their own cultural backgrounds (though they may be the same) which have manipulated, in that order, the construction and interpretation of that image. Many writers who are addressing these issues argue that visual texts are

vital to the cultural construction of social life in present-day Western societies (Rose 2001:6). In this study, it is important to remember that no visual text is ever innocent. These visual texts are neither a transparent pane to the world. Visual texts interpret the world, and that interpretation is displayed in a very specific way (Van Leeuwen & Jewitt 2007:65-68).

Some academics regard visual perception as the most essential of all the senses. Fyfe and Law (1988:2) argue that interpreting, imaging, and seeing are ever-present features of the process that enables most human beings to know the world as it really is for them, and the seminal author Berger (1972:7) proposes that it happens because sight precedes words. The sighted child looks and acknowledges [recognises] visually before it can speak (Van Leeuwen & Jewitt 2006:76; Rose 2001:6; Lacey 1998:77-78). Van Leeuwen and Jewitt (2007), Rose (2001) and Lacey (1998) assert that Westerners now cooperate with the world mainly by means of visual perception. These authors use the term *ocularcentrism* to explain the pivotal role that visual perception evidently plays in modern Western life. The growing significance of visual perception to modern Western societies is a shift from modernity to postmodernity. Jenks (1995:1, 2) argues that “looking, seeing and knowing have become worryingly integrated so that the present world is very much a ‘seen’ phenomenon”. An historian of images, Stafford (1991), argues that the construction of scientific knowledge has become increasingly based on images rather than on written texts. Jenks (1995) claims that the enhancement of science, allows insight to experience the connection between seeing and knowing, in Western culture, as similar. The connection between seeing and knowing is also acknowledged in other fields of modern practice (Rose 2001:7).

Foucault (1978) discovers the way in which many nineteenth-century fairs and exhibitions depended on various forms of surveillance and how societies represented the world as an exhibition. Rorty (1980), for instance, traces the development of this conflation of seeing with knowing to the intersection of several central ideas of eighteenth-century philosophy. Adler appraises tourism and argues that between 1600 and 1800 the journeys of European leaders became an increasingly visual practice (Adler 1989:24). Debord (1983) claims that the world

has become a 'society of the spectacle', and Virilio (1994) argues that the new visual technologies have created 'the vision machine' one is trapped in.

In terms of gender and visual culture, it seems that certain types of genders, sexes, bodies, and identities are aptly described by Haraway (1991) as specifically "situated knowledge" which is inevitably doomed to otherness. Sexed and gendered positions are at times seen as 'other' in terms of the norm. Haraway (1991:188-189) claims that the scientific and visualising technologies in everyday use need to raise our awareness of the social power relations that are explicitly expressed by visibility. Haraway (1991:188) argues that such visibility produces specific visual metaphors, for example, of social difference and of hierarchies according to class, race, gender, sexuality. However, visibility claims not to be part of that hierarchy, albeit universal. Part of Haraway's project comprehensively examines how various institutions organise certain forms of visibility to see, and to arrange the world. For instance, there are different ways of seeing the world, and the essential task is to distinguish between the social effects of those diverse observations. Since it is important to understand the products and the reproductions of social relations, the next section more comprehensively explores visual culture.

Consequently, modernity is viewed as ocularcentric (Rose 2001:8). It is also argued that the visual dimension is similarly fundamental to postmodernity. Mirzoeff (1998:4), for instance, argues that "the postmodern is a visual culture". It is also often argued in postmodernity that the modern relation between seeing and true knowing has been broken (Van Leeuwen & Jewitt 2007:62-63). It is for this reason that Mirzoeff (1988) advocates that postmodernity is ocularcentric. He views postmodernity neither simply in terms of visual texts that are becoming more common, nor in terms of knowledge about the world that is progressively expressed in a visual manner. He views our augmented interrelatedness as completely constructed in terms of visual experiences. Owing to this influence, one needs to emphasise the modern connection between seeing and knowledge within the ambit of postmodernity. Baudrillard (1988) uses the word simulacrum to coin this concept. Baudrillard claims that postmodernity no longer allows a distinction between the real and the unreal. Therefore, it follows that one is substance owing to simulation. This claim contributes to the snowballing effect and changing nature of the ocularcentrism

in modernity and postmodernity. Moreover, it fuels the debates about the social relations in which these visualities are imbedded, and specifically the simulacra (Gillespie & Toynbee 2006:179-180; Rose 2001:9). Baudrillard has been blamed of celebrating the simulacrum without considering the unequal social relations that are articulated by means of the simulacrum.

## **2.8 VISUAL CULTURE – SOCIAL CONDITIONS AND EFFECTS**

An erroneous assumption exists that visual language only focuses on images. A graph with no explanatory text and figures along the axes are incomprehensible. Every infographic presentation needs explanatory text, words, and sentences to point the reader in the right direction. Without a caption, a photograph is nothing more than simply a picture without context. Therefore, visual communication is the integration of images and elements of images (visual elements) and words (verbal elements) in order to create a unit of communication.

Pollock (1988:7) notes that cultural practices add major social meaning when meanings about the world are voiced, to the negotiation of social conflicts, as well as during the production of social subjects. Haraway's (1991, 1989) work is a model of this principle. Cultural practices, such as visual representations, are either determined or created by social additions and omissions. Therefore, a critical account needs to address both those practices and their cultural meanings.

According to Williams (1976), culture has many connotations. Visual culture, for example, can be used in a broad sense to encompass 'a whole way of life'. However, by using culture in this broad sense, certain analytical issues become difficult to address. Some definitions of visual culture claim that visual culture simply refers to visual objects. These definitions are awkward, since they exclude ways of seeing. Visual images are also made and used in all sorts of other ways and for different reasons. While an image may have its own effects, these effects are always mediated. For its effects, an image depends on certain way of seeing (Berger, 1972). Effect is always embedded in particular cultural practices that are far more specific than 'a way of life' (Rose 2001:14). Grossberg *et al.* (2006) reason that cultural engagement, enables humans to have a refined understanding of signs;

whether in language, music, or visual texts. Thwaites *et al.* (2002:1) add to this by stating: "Culture is that aspect of the social which is concerned with meanings".

The cultural knowledge takes the form of sets of codes (or rules) according to which specific signifiers (for example, the word 'body') are associated with the specific signified (in this example, the concept of 'body'). The signified cannot be considered without the concerns with the practices of meaning in the context of South African society. Therefore, the researcher argues that the issue about the representation of masculinities in *MH* needs to be a point of departure for viewing things.

Culture is seen as a community of codes; a set of ideas about what signs mean and how they may be put together. In the latter sense, culture has to be understood as a prerequisite and shared condition for communication of meaning to take place (Culture in the context of visualities is more comprehensively discussed in Chapter 3.)

Gillespie and Toyne (2006), and Rose (2001) identify five aspects of the topical literature that grapple with the importance of visual culture in reviewing the social effects of images.

Firstly, Bennett *et al.* (2006:74) and Rose (2001:10) claims that images do something. Bennett *et al.* (2006) confirms this point of view and adds that an image is at least possibly a site of conflict and defiance, of the irreducibly particular, and of the subversively strange and gratifying. Rose (2001:10) states that it is not easy to express the resistance, obstinacy, fussiness, peculiarity, or pleasure of the visual image. Certain aspects of visual texts, such as the colours of an oil painting, or what Barthes (1982) calls the *punctum* (an intensely private meaning) of a photograph at times undergo a sort of paraphrasing and change when they are written about. Language is used in conjunction with imagery in the semiotic visual analysis. It is important to remember that knowledge is conveyed by a plethora of different media that requires senses other than the visual, and that visual texts often convey meaning with other kinds of representations (Rose 2001:10). For instance, one never sees a cover page or advertisement of *MH* without any written text.

One can, therefore, assume that visual forms of transmitting meaning are not the same as written forms. Visual experience or 'visual literacy' might not be fully

explainable according to the model of textuality. Visual objects are, however, always surrounded by a variety of other texts – visual or written – and these texts overlap with one another. It is vital to acknowledge that visual texts can be influential and enticing in their own right (Van Leeuwen & Jewitt 2007; Gillespie & Toynbee 2006; Rose 2001).

Secondly, Rose (2001:10) emphasises the discomfort of visual culture for the way in which images visualise or depict invisible social disparity. Gillespie and Toynbee (2006:18-20) confirm the same point. Fyfe and Law (1988:1) agree that a portrayal is never simply an illustration; it is the site for the construction and portrayal of social difference. The purported ‘cultural turn’ aims at arguing that social categories are not natural but constructed; these constructions can take on a visual form. This strong point of view is also held by feminists and postcolonial scholars who have studied blackness and femininity, particularly the way in which it has been visualised (Gillespie & Toynbee 2006:178-82; Rose 2001:11). Therefore, understanding visualisation depends on an enquiry about its origin and its function in creating social meanings for society. Visualisation comprises the acknowledgement of the inclusion and exclusion principles, and detecting the roles that it makes available. Visualisation amalgamates the ways of understanding how images are distributed, and enables the decoding of the various layers, and of the differences that it makes natural (Fyfe & Law 1998:1).

Thirdly, Gillespie and Toynbee (2006), and Rose (2001) state that scholars of visual culture, among others, are not only concerned with how images look, but also how they are looked at. The discussion by Berger (1972), for instance, illustrates that it is not only about the image, but also how it is viewed by specific viewers who look in specific ways. Berger (1972) uses the expression ‘ways of seeing’ to refer to the fact that one never simply looks at one thing in isolation; one always looks at the relation between things and oneself (Berger 1972:9). Berger’s best known example deals with the genre of the depiction of females in Western art. He indicates how women are represented in specific ways: as a spectacle, unclothed, vain, passive, and sexually appealing. In the average European oil painting of the nude, the key protagonist is never painted. He is the viewer in front of the painting and he is assumed to be a man. Everything in the painting addresses him. Everything must

appear to be the consequence of his presence. It is for him that the figures have assumed their nudity (Berger 1972:54). It explains how Berger appreciates the genre of female nude painting; not only by its representation of femininity, but its construction of masculinity too. Berger's representations are understood as part of a wider cultural construction of gendered difference. One might streamline this gendered difference by saying: *men act* and *women appear*. Men look at women. Women watch themselves and men but also consider the relation of women to themselves. The evaluator of woman in herself is male: the investigating female. "This means that she turns herself into an object, mostly an object of vision, i.e. a sight" (Berger 1972:47). Some of the critiques of Berger's views mention that he assumes heterosexuality in his cultural construction of gendered difference. For instance, images work by constructing effects every time they are looked at. Taking an image seriously means that one has to consider how the image positions one, the viewer, in relation to that image (Van Leeuwen & Jewitt 2007:76, 95).

Fourthly, the term 'visual culture' specifically gains prominence, since it entrenches visual texts in a wider culture, says Gillespie and Toynbee (2006), and Rose (2001). This point of view is also confirmed by Mirzoeff (1999:22-26). In this context, the concept culture means that it is almost like a whole way of life (Gillespie & Toynbee 2006:178-82; Rose 2001:12-15). At this point, it is obvious that the discussion of the term visual culture is used in a very broad sense. Some definitions of visual culture simply refer to visual objects. If one sees visual culture as a process and not a thing, a particular way of perceiving the object and not the particular object perceived, it carefully explains the term by releasing the facticity of visual things totally, and by emphasising one's crucial view of visual culture as a visual relation between an object and a spectator. Visual objects organise certain ways of seeing (Rose 2001:14). Since one cannot think of culture as a singular entity, one needs to recognise the intertwined relationship between significant social practices and the visual texts they produce. Therefore, it becomes necessary to view visual culture as a dynamic process, or a set of practices (Van Leeuwen & Jewitt 2007:65-68; Rose 2001:12-15). As human beings with diverse backgrounds and ways of seeing, one interprets visual texts in a variety of ways. The seeing of an image always takes place in a specific social context that mediates its action (Van Leeuwen & Jewitt 2007:65-68; Rose 2001:12-15).

Finally, most statements about visual culture debate the essence of an image as a site of resistance and rebellion on the one hand, and a particular audience on the other, i.e. not all audiences are able or willing to respond to the way of seeing that is invited by specific images and its specific practices of display (Rose 2001:15).

The above discussion encapsulates the significance of the five major issues from recent debates about visual culture to understand how images work: an image may have its *own visual effects* (one needs to look carefully at images); these effects, through the *ways of seeing* that are mobilised by the image, are crucial in the production and reproduction of perceptions about *social difference*; but these effects always intersect with the *social context of its viewing*; and *the visualities that inform its spectators' viewing* (Rose 2001:10-15).

## 2.9 SUMMARY

Semiotics, understood as a mutual term for the traditions of both Peirce and De Saussure, deals with the process of communication and is developed with the inclusion of Barthes and Hall in order to understand and analyse texts. It represents the foundation of 'social' semiotics, and the entities are clearly embedded in the communication process. At the same time, semiotics plays an important role in the general theory of culture, since it illustrates what happens when the texts in the media are produced, and what happens subsequently when those texts are received, used, and understood by audiences.

The analysis of texts in media studies differs from everyday criticism, since the latter hardly includes evaluation. It is important not to rely on our individual subjective experiences, but to analyse the social world as independently as possible by using reasonable criteria for organising and weighting evidence (Gillespie & Toynbee 2006:2). The individual and subjective responses one often has about visual texts do not seem to fit these criteria. It is, therefore, vital that the questions of value and of evaluation in textual analysis are commonly explored by examining the political or ideological values that shape or underpin a text. Such examination is most appropriately conducted by executing a multimodal social semiotic visual text analysis.

*Chapter 3: Literature Review Part II: Understanding masculinity (theoretical frameworks and context)* introduces the topic of masculinity and masculinity studies by demonstrating that the confusion in sexual politics has primarily been discussed as a change in the social position of women. An overview of masculinity that is structured in the context of gendered hierarchies; a sociological perspective; how feminism has negatively framed men; as well as the shapes of masculinity and their interrelationships are briefly explored.

At this juncture, the reader is required to make a cognitive leap from semiotics to men's studies; because, as explained at the beginning of this chapter, the following two literature reviews are overviews of theories, concepts, and contexts that are the foundational works for the second part of this research: masculinity studies, and the application of the semiotic multimodal model to a South African case study, *MH*.

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW II: UNDERSTANDING MASCULINITY: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS AND CONTEXT**

#### **3.1 INTRODUCTION**

Masculinity studies have mostly originated from and been heavily influenced by, and in response to, feminist theory. This chapter, therefore, introduces First, Second and Third wave feminism, as well as gay liberation studies, and the role they have all played in the contribution to and the shaping of men's studies. From this chapter, it is apparent that theorists on feminism and sexual preferences have made important contributions to masculinity studies; for instance on issues of gender formation, biological determinism, social construction of identity, and sexuality. This chapter also provides a brief overview of the historical context from where men's studies began and evolved.

The literature review begins with an outline of masculinity structured within the gendered hierarchies by looking at masculinity politics and men's movements. Starting with a sociological perspective, this chapter views masculinity in relation to contemporary developments in order to illustrate how feminism has negatively framed and contributed to the discourse about men and male identity. This chapter accordingly considers the following issues: feminism's shaping media discourse on masculinity, shapes of masculinity and their interrelationships, and the masculinity crisis framework.

#### **3.2 THE IMPACT OF GENDER FRAMEWORKS IN THE SHAPING OF MASCULINITY**

Second and Third Wave feminist discussions on men and male identity merits attention for what it says about masculinities and the influence or 'power effects' that it has in modern society.

To provide an overall framework for the study of gender, Seidler (1994:112) says, "feminists have... set the agenda of men's studies". The argument is, therefore, that any study of gender identity [masculinities] has feminist gender theory as a theoretical foundation and on a practical level has to consider how feminism has

shaped the gender debate on men (Macnamara 2006:21-22). Simplistic worldwide understandings of power have pervaded much of feminists thinking and literature (Segal 2007:55-58; Beasley 2005:179-180). Mansbridge (1995:29) defines feminism as “the commitment to ending male domination”.

There is support for both biological determinism and the social construction framework in feminism (Macnamara 2006:31; Kimmel *et al.* 2005:27-29).<sup>5</sup> While the Second Wave feminist framework (Section 3.4.2) (rooted in sociology and psychology) has mostly advanced the view that gender is socially constructed, Third Wave feminism (Section 3.4.3) has returned (to some extent) to a biological determinist view. Third Wave feminism seeks to celebrate the differences between women and men, as well as the differences among women.

From their study of mass media representations of gender, Newbold *et al.* (2002:51) conclude that there is a fundamentally essentialist element to Third Wave feminism that significant biological, ‘natural’ differences exist between genders and transcend ‘social constructionist’ arguments.

### 3.2.1 First Wave feminism

Feminism is commonly considered to have grown out of *feminisme*, (an intellectual movement) in the nineteenth century in France. The concept entered the United States in 1906 (Baumgardner & Richards 2000:325). In the period 1848 – 1930 feminism largely focused on the struggle for women's right to vote which was finally won in the United States in 1920. This was followed by a campaign for the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) to the American Constitution and other basic rights in other countries, for instance the women's right to own property (Segal 2007:32-4, Beasley 2005:18-19, Kimmel *et al.* 2005:37).

Kristeva (1981) divides feminism over the past 150 years into three ‘Waves’ of feminism by distinguishing between their evolving philosophical and political focus. The first period she terms Liberal feminism focused on the rights of individuals.

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<sup>5</sup> While a biological basis of gender has seemed self-evident in popular discourse, the basis of gender and the roles assigned to people based on their gender have come under sustained attack in academic discourse in postmodern societies; especially within feminist-orientated gender studies. See Macnamara (2006:22-32) for a detailed discussion on the biology versus construction debate.

Some of these rights include the owning of property, job equality, and reproductive freedom (Segal 2007:33-4, Kimmel *et al.* 2005:36-39).

### 3.2.2 Second Wave feminism

Second Wave feminism started approximately 60 years ago and was influenced by Marxism while embracing humanist and essentialist philosophy. Kristeva (1981) also terms the early period of Second Wave feminism as Radical feminism that focuses on redressing the secondary role of women [the Other] and attacking patriarchy (Beasley 2005:31-2). Another main influence during the Second Wave shift is Louis Althusser, who proposes that ideology is “not the result of a conspiracy or collusion of those in power” (Segal 2007:23-26).<sup>6</sup> Another key role player was the French psychoanalyst Lacan, who drew heavily on the Freudian framework of the unconscious and sexuality. For Lacan, the phallus is the key signifier of the symbolic order of patriarchy which oppresses or ignores women.<sup>7</sup>

An important evolution in Second Wave feminist thinking was activated by the poststructuralist framework in the work of Derrida (1979) and Foucault (1978, 1980 and 1998). While liberal and political theorists maintain that power is a social and legal right recognised through social contract, Marxism claims that power is a property or right of one class over another to keep it subjugated (Macnamara 2006; Kimmel *et al.* 2005; Adams and Savran 2002). Foucault (1978) questions the major features of psychoanalysis and claims that power is not possessed, given, seized, captured, relinquished, or exchanged. It is something that is exercised. Most important issue for the Second Wave feminism is the fact that Foucault (1978) rejects worldwide views of power as something that one group [men] holds permanently and others [women] do not have (Beasley 2005:31-2, Kimmel *et al.* 2005:29).

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<sup>6</sup> Althusser believes that ideology is a “product of institutions, practices, and value systems that produces and validates some ideas and denigrates or excludes others. What the subject believes are products of his or her own thoughts are in fact produced elsewhere... and serve political and class interests in obscured but unconscious form” (as cited in Grosz 1990:68).

<sup>7</sup>Grosz (1990:75) summarises Lacan: [Women] are positioned in the symbolic order as a spoken exchanged object, not as subject who is a partner within exchange.

Besides Foucault's (1978) poststructuralist view, many feminists stick to old Marxist concepts describing patriarchal power as "something that men, as individuals or as groups exercise over women" in a conscious and intentioned way (Grosz 1990:87).

### 3.2.3 Third Wave feminism

Baumgardner and Richards (2000) note that it is not easy to identify the presence of Third Wave feminism, but point to 'hubs' unique to the new generation of feminists. Several authors argue that in the 1990s, feminist attention turned to new issues [new in the sense of focus, not occurrence]; including sexual abuse, violence against women, HIV/AIDS awareness, eating disorders, body image, and access to technology such as the Internet (Segal 2007:35-42, Beasley 2005:32-34, Baumgardner & Richards 2000:21).

Third Wave feminism has involved moving away from the view of women as the same or equal to men and towards a celebration of 'difference' but with equality (Beasley 2005:32-34, Newbold *et al.* 2002:250).<sup>8</sup>

Macnamara (2006), Kimmel *et al.* (2005), and, Adams and Savran (2002) all agree that the original goals of feminism (to be freed from male domination) are far from being achieved, and women are far from liberated.

### 3.2.4 Feminism and reactive sexism

Segal (2007), Macnamara (2006) and, Nathanson and Young (2001) argue for the equality goals of First, Second and Third Wave feminism and propose another type of feminism. In reviewing ideologically-based superiority feminism and reactive sexism, a common feature in the literature is a focus on the positive traits of women compared with the negative traits of men (Synnott 2009: 163-6; Segal 2007: 235-44; Macnamara 2006:36). Nathanson and Young (2001:199) identify two types of

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<sup>8</sup>In an attempt to define Third Wave feminism, Newbold *et al.* (2002:243) say that this feminism "...accepts sex-positive attitudes, the celebration of previously taboo areas such as sexual attractiveness, fashion and pro-capitalist ideologies". The latter is partly inspired by the 1980s role models such as Madonna. "It can be seen as a backlash against writers such as Andrea Dworkin – post feminism sees woman as equal but different, and that they can have it all" (Newbold *et al.* 2002:423).

feminism: One based on equality and the other based on advocating superiority. They refer to the type based on advocating equality as *ideological feminism* and to the type that is based on superiority as *superiority feminism*. They also argue that the rhetoric of difference becomes the rhetoric of hierarchy in a superiority feminist philosophy and call this transformation 'feminist triumphalism' (Segal 2007: 235-9; Nathanson & Young 2001:62). Furthermore, they maintain this line of feminist philosophy and discourse views "male sexuality as innately evil, but female sexuality is innately good" (Nathanson & Young 2001:62); this is also confirmed by Segal (2007: 174-5). In addition, they determine that after several decades of identity politics on behalf of women, feminists have convinced many people that women are in some way superior to men (Segal 2007:28-9; Nathanson & Young 2001:50).

Nathanson and Young (2001:231) also state that contemporary men in fact have valid reasons to be afraid that feminist ideology leaves them with no basis whatsoever for a wellness identity. An essential proposition of feminism is that women can do, and should do, all that men do. That leaves indeed nothing to base masculine identity on. In other words, it appears that men can make no unique, essential, and appreciated contribution to society as men. Synnott (2009: 144-65) highlights that reverse sexism raises important issues in relation to men and male identity. While mainstream feminism has addressed specific objectives related to the freeing and welfare of women that are widely supported by women and men, some aspects of academic and intellectual feminism have undermined men collectively and individually.

A number of feminists and pro-feminists recognise that blaming men for most or all of societies' evils makes and views women as naturally superior. Synnott (2009) and Connell (2000) say that feminism is often sharply critical of men and little inclined to make distinctions between groups of men. Synnott (2009:149-156) and Connell (2000:170) note that a certain kind of feminist criticism, that group all males together, and persistently blaming them, is damaging. They acknowledge that the man reading feminist writing is likely to come upon pictures of men as rapists, batterers, pornographers, child abusers, militarists, exploiters, and images of women as targets and victims (Synnott 2009: 162-6; Connell 2000:144). Connell (2000) also reads in feminist and pro-feminist literature a narrative of men as part of a structured

patriarchy, deliberately winning and oppressing women in their relentless quest for power of which, apparently, all men are beneficiaries (for example Carter & Steiner 2004, Crew 2002; Connell 2000 and Butler 1999).

Paglia (2003b:35) (sometimes branded a traitor by feminists because of her man-positive statements) argues that the “major failing of most feminist ideology is its dumb, ungenerous stereotyping of men as tyrants and abusers”. *MH* plays an important role in SA to reflect as a men’s magazine the departing from hegemonic masculinity in creating and maintaining a different narrative than that described by Paglia’s view of feminist ideology. One cannot dismiss ideologically motivated feminists attacks on men as things that were done in the recent past by early radicals. Nathanson and Young (2001:250) cite the declaration in 2000 of Valentine’s Day (traditionally a day of celebration for heterosexual love and romance) as V-Day to draw attention to violence against women by men and the staging of Eve Ensler’s play *The Vagina Monologues*, with its “poisonously anti-male sub-text”.

Synnott (2009), Macnamara (2006), Kimmel *et al.* (2005) and Adams and Savran (2002) highlight the attack on men and observe that the generalisations that men are violent, warlike, sexually promiscuous, insensitive, commitment-phobic, and even inherently evil are common in gender discourse. Feminist literature has even ventured as far as suggesting that men are not necessary to society at all. The view is encapsulated in the opinion of De Beauvoir (1997:36) that: “In many spaces the male appears to be fundamentally unnecessary”. Superiority feminists promote claims that women are better communicators than men; women are more empathetic and caring, even more ethical. Synnott (2009:162-6) and, Nathanson and Young (2001:237) conclude that ideological feminism has resulted either directly or indirectly in the teaching of contempt for men.

The influences of feminism on masculinity and masculinity studies have been briefly introduced. The next section discusses the varieties of masculinities and the realities of identities, identifies the roles and influences of gay liberation in understanding masculinity, as well as seeing gay masculinity as part of the fluidity of masculinities.

### **3.2.5 Gay liberation and understanding of masculinity**

With the influence of feminism and its contribution to the shaping of masculinity as a sociological debate the role and impact of gay liberation also had an influence on masculinities, male identity, and men's studies. Gay liberation and the active cultural production of masculinities within the wider context of the social organisation of the sex/gender order are, therefore, relevant in the understanding of the diversities of masculinities.

Gay men's collective organisation is one of the most dynamic elements of recent sexual politics in destabilising sociological and common-sense meanings of men and masculinity within the broader structure of gender relations (Cooper 2013:47; Haywood & Mac an Ghail 2003:136). One productive field that one can propose in which to acknowledge gay liberation is to explore those who have neither assumed the identity to become heterosexual men, nor the identity of a wide range of sexual minorities: gay men, bisexuals, transsexuals, and transgendered groups.

### **3.2.6 Post-women's liberation / post-gay liberation**

The rising history of male homosexuality offers an important starting point for constructing a historical perspective of masculinity in general. The history of homosexuality provides a view of masculinity not as a single object with its own history, but as being constantly constructed within the history of an evolving social structure, a structure of sexual power relations. It is significant to view this construction as a social struggle taking place in a difficult ideological and political field where there is an on-going process of deployment, side-lining, contestation, struggle, and subservience (Cooper 2013:100; Adams & Savran 2002:110).

The link between feminism, gay studies, and masculinity studies is viewed by authors such as Cooper (2013), Anderson (2010), Whitehead (2006), Kimmel *et al.* (2005), Carter and Steiner (2004) and, Adams and Savran (2002) in terms of the literature on masculinity before women's liberation being outspokenly antagonistic to homosexuality, or at best, very cautious of the issue. According to a study that accuses broadcasters of stereotyping homosexuality, Bennett (2010:8) reports that gay people are mostly portrayed on television as promiscuous, predatory, camp, or unhappy. In five hours of programming, gay people were portrayed in a derogatory

or negative way. In serious storylines, homosexuals are characterised as unhappy, bullied, or rejected by their families.<sup>9</sup> The gay man is often stereotyped as too promiscuous, too phallic, too masculine, or lacking masculinity. The latter implies that gay men are somehow incompetent and oppressed for being the wrong sort of man. These authors also equate post-women's liberation with post-gay liberation. The problem of hegemonic masculinity (Section 3.5) was first addressed outside a clinical context by a group of contemporary gay activists. Gay men used the political techniques of women's liberation, and side with feminists on issues of sexual politics, i.e. to argue for the significance of sexual politics.

None of the 1970s literature about men made any attempt to explore gay liberation arguments or the fact that mainstream masculinity is heterosexual masculinity. Kimmel *et al.* (2005:54-56) also argue that the history of homosexuality is conceptually and operationally gendered. One argument is that gender and sexuality as practices are constructs and complexly linked (Segal 2007:123-5).

The 'men's movement' publicists never wrote about the gay liberation group who were active in sexual politics alongside them. It could be argued that the 'men's movement' saw homosexuality as a hypothetical embarrassment. However, the gay movement had been mainly concerned with masculinity as part of its critique of the political structure of sexuality (Kimmel *et al.* 2005:52-55; Adams & Savran 2002:108). The stigmatisation of homosexuality has much to do with how society 'sees' the construction of gender. The gay liberation arguments also strengthen an active approach towards masculinity whereby it is seen as a historically specific phenomenon that is socially organised by distinguishing between homosexual behaviour and homosexual identity (Mac an Ghail & Haywood 2007:239-42, Segal 2007:123-5, Kimmel *et al.* 2005:64-65).

The most general result of the gay liberation argues that heterosexuality is taken for granted as the 'normal' order of things. The gay movement's theoretical work, by

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<sup>9</sup> The report, entitled *Unseen on Screen*, singles out BBC One for particular criticism. After examining 39 hours of output, researchers found only 44 seconds of positive portrayal. The research was commissioned by the pressure group, Stonewall, which believes that there is a link between homophobic bullying at schools and colleges and the television programmes watched by young people.

comparison within the 'sex-role' literature and 'men's movement' writings, has a clearer understanding of the reality of men's power over women, and it has direct implications for any consideration of the hierarchy of power among men. The nineties brought a turning-point for gay rights in South Africa when discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation was outlawed by the new constitution and homosexuals attained theoretical equality before the law. In the new psychological climate, an increasing number of homosexuals feel free to 'come out'. The first gay marches were organised in 1990. Morrell (2001) confirms that in democratic South Africa gay men were openly flaunting their sexuality in public spaces, a clear sign that the homophobic grip of hegemonic masculinity was losing its influence. Mbuyazi (2013:3) reports on Tshepo and Thoba Sithole-Modisane, a gay couple clad in their traditional attire who got married in a Zulu and Tswana wedding. The video of the first known traditional wedding has been viewed more than 500 000 times. This occasion emphasises how gay marriage is breaking ground in SA. Although these are examples of recent positive reporting on gay men, not everything reported about gay people is positive. Mr Gay World was won twice in succession by SA, in 2011 and in 2012. SA also hosted the event in 2012, however, the media in SA hardly acknowledged the winnings and international event.

Mac an Ghail (2007), Segal (2007), Carter and Steiner (2004) and Beasley (2005) see masculinity not as a single object in history, but as being constructed within history, making one aware of the importance of subjective values or of a type of masculinity that informs all kinds of masculinity. The above leads to the discussion of the various shapes and interrelationships of masculinity to further illustrate the fluidity and variety of different identities within masculinities (Chapter 4).

### **3.3 MASCULINITY AND MEN'S STUDIES**

Segal (2007) says that study of men and masculinities is rooted in the academic framework of women's studies that has generated the vocabulary of gender-based judgement and social constructs. Masculinity and men's studies cannot be reviewed without taking gender into account. The field of gender research has mainly addressed questions around women and gender studies have developed from contemporary feminism (Kimmel *et al.* 2005:1-3). As the study of gender has expanded rapidly, studies of gender issues about men and masculinities have been

revisited. To date, the social sciences have generated the largest amount of research about men and masculinities. Wisneski (2007), Segal (2007), Seidler (2006) and Carter and Steiner (2004) argue, however, that more research is needed. The development of a multimodal semiotic visual analysis model (Chapter 6) and the application of this model to a visual analysis of masculinities in *MH* as a case study (Chapter 7) attempt in some way to address the lack of research on men and masculinities identified by these authors.

Kimmel *et al.* (2005:3) characterise studies on men and masculinities as being a *specific*, rather than an implicit or incidental, focus on the topic of men and masculinities; taking account of *feminist, gay, and other critical gender scholarships*; recognising men and masculinities as *explicitly gendered* rather than non-gendered; understanding men and masculinities as *socially constructed, produced, and reproduced* rather than as somehow just arbitrarily constructed one way or another; seeing men and masculinities as *variable and changing* across time (history) and space (culture) within societies, and through life courses and biographies; emphasising men's relations, albeit differentially, to *gendered power*; spanning both *the material and the discursive* aspects in analysis; and interrogating the *intersecting of the gender with other social divisions* in the construction of men and masculinities.

One needs to consider why masculinity presents the frame of reference for evidence of the situation of men in society. While masculinity can only mean characteristics or capabilities of what men have in common, masculinity may also refer to male bodies; sometimes symbolic and sometimes directly or indirectly represented. There is a history in psychology of defining and evaluating characteristics and capabilities of men as a way of assessing gender roles. Critical masculinity studies are, however, concerned with a broader view of masculinity. For the purpose of this study, the traditional construction of heterosexual masculinity is considered, as well as the manner in which hegemonic processes of dominance and oppression are used to explain the stratification of men. In these processes different masculinities are clarified (Anderson 2010, Segal 2007, Kimmel *et al.* 2005; Carter & Steiner 2004).

It is also necessary to explore feminism's (traditional) formations and descriptions of women. Together with feminism, gay studies are also concerned with society's reactions to homosexuality which means that masculinity has escaped notice and

has continued to pose as the norm (MacKinnon 2003:ix). In the literature reviewed for this study the assumption is that women and gay men grow to become the 'Other' upon which heterosexual men are constructed and valued in society.

In reflecting on masculinities, including gender, it is important to note that the term gender is generally thought to refer to women (MacKinnon 2003: ix). Masculinity should not be neglected and should also be thought of as part of gender. However, masculinities are not formed by gender alone. Masculinities are also shaped by differences of age, social class, ethnicity, race, and social environment. The argument by masculinity researchers such as Anderson (2010), Synnott (2009), Reid and Walker (2005) and, Kimmel *et al.* (2005) is that the persistence of the belief that men cannot fundamentally change and that the perception of a fixed masculinity need to be questioned.

How is 'masculinity' conceptualised? There is a certain paradox in the fact that the term *masculinity* has come to serve as the framework for problematising women and men's issues (Segal 2007; Wykes & Gunter 2005). The masculinity paradox develops from the lack of a comprehensible formulation of women's identity. The assumption of the masculinity paradox is based on the work of Anderson (2010) who asks us to imagine analysing women's situations in the dynamics of domestic violence as a problem of feminism. It would appear that the problematic issues feminism nowadays face relate more to transgender and intersex issues, and to the debates concerning certain men who have sex with men while they are not necessarily gay.

Segal (2007) argues that the leading way of thinking about men stays focused on the individual mostly through the development of sex roles and the Gender Socialisation theory. At the heart of the Gender Socialisation theory is the view that gender is a process of socialisation – a process by which persons acquire a sense of self and their identity – during which they learn expectations of society.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> In the gender socialisation process people learn about their gender to conform to social roles of being male and female. People also learn what is appropriate or inappropriate gender behaviour and one can see this as a process by which people learn to be feminine and masculine. A variety of

The discussion cannot ignore performativity which is a term layered with multiple meanings. Butler (2007:145) explains that gender is not a condition that one has, but in fact it is “an identity tenuously constituted in time”, that is, a social role that one performs. In disputing that gender is instituted through performative acts, Butler (2007) accredits to gender the depending and time-based qualities of performance as understood in theatre and anthropology. At the same time, in theorising the possibility of using such acts as an approach for cultural renovation of gender norms, she draws upon her deep-thinking appreciativeness of performativity: The acts that institute gender are not communicating a reality; they establish that reality through performance. Butler (2007) claims further that when the performative speech act often seems performative in the acting sense, it is equally true that an activity we describe as performative because of its theatrical quality may also have value, an ability to do something. Bail (2004:146) suggests that “much of cultural knowledge is performative rather than informative – an efficient means of promoting cultural understanding.” Butler’s theorising on gender as performative has opened up ways of understanding gender categories. The emphasis on gender as performative has problematised the cultural formation of sex and the interconnections between sex and gender.

Segal (2007) and Seidler (2006) argue that the field of gender development has been dominated by a few theoretical perspectives that have driven the progress and debate in the field. Since developmental researchers are interested in the origins of behavioural issues of nurturing, the focus is to be biological versus socialisation approaches to understand gender development (Segal 2007; Ruble, Martin & Berenbaum 2006; Seidler 2006). These authors also note that current biological approaches do not imply determinism and emphasise the ways in which biological and social factors interact to produce behaviour. Another debate that has received attention is concerned with socialisation and cognitive approaches to gender development (Kimmel *et al.* 2005; Adams & Savran 2002; Bussey & Bandura 1999). Both approaches underline the shaping of behaviour to match cultural gender role norms.

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influences play in on gender socialisation which include parental practices, childhood socialisation, gender boundaries, and social learning (Beasley 2005).

The socialisation and cognitive perspectives differ because they emphasise the role of the social environment, especially modelling of adults and peers (Segal 2007; Ruble *et al.* 2006; Bussey & Bandura 1999). This concept is explored in the next section by giving a brief overview of theoretical frameworks to contextualise the part of this thesis that focuses on the representation of masculinity.

### **3.4 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS IN THE STUDY OF MASCULINITIES**

The terms sex, sexuality, and gender are used in various ways throughout the extensive literature; including the terms masculinity and male identity. Their meanings are discussed and clarified as far as possible in specific relation to the research topic. Some writers use these terms interchangeably, while others continue to dispute their meaning.

From the beginning of the twentieth century, sex and sexuality have been identified as essential elements of identity. Gauntlett (2002:34) notes that the nature of sex and gender has been the subject of long debate among psychologists and sociologists. MacKinnon (2003), and Haywood and Mac an Ghail (2003) agree that cultures approve and uphold certain ideas of masculinity. The separation of people into male and female is critical to our understanding of identity and is discussed in more detail in Chapter 4.

An initial belief existed that men could not fundamentally change sexual orientation and masculinity was perceived as a fixed gender. MacKinnon (2003:3-4) contrasts the latter idea by declaring sexes as radically divided. Beasley (2005:2-7) distinguishes between the gender/sexuality field by characterising sex and power. The subfield under sex is gender with feminist and masculinity studies (as sexed categories), and the subfield under power is sexuality (for example, hetero- and homosexual). In this study, one of the assumptions is that gender in Western society refers to a binary division of human beings that is created in the phrase 'the opposite sex'. These categories are not distinct and opposed, but fit within a hierarchy in which one is usually cast as positive and the other as negative (Beasley 2005:12).

Weatherall (2002) draws a distinction between sex and gender based on the influential work of the anthropologist Rubin (1984) who proposed sexuality and gender as two distinct systems. Weatherall (2002:81) uses the terms in varying and

contradicting contexts by stating that the important distinction has been drawn: sex as biological and gender as social. With reference to masculinity, sex, and gender Davies (1993:10) notes that in the sex/gender framework, sex refers to biological characteristics while *gender* denotes social characteristics. However, Davies (1993:10) indicates that the “boundary is now so blurry that the distinction is no longer a meaningful one”, and in reviewing male and female identity, one has to negotiate both concepts.

One of various uncertain gender research premises asks whether there are key similarities – across cultures – in the manner in which masculinity and femininity are constructed. The assumption is that males are ‘programmed’ at birth to be masculine or masculinity is learnt and obtained by a process of social education, probably via religious institutions and the family (Anderson 2010; Synnott 2009; Beasley 2005; Connell 2000). The research on masculinities conducted by Mac an Ghail and Haywood (2007:87; 95) and Kimmel *et al.* (2005:16) address the implications of the social framework perspectives as follows: a structural equality-inequality view of men and masculinity, and the relationship to a direct gender hierarchy or direct male dominance view.

The implications of the social framework do not yet answer the question arising from the exploration of men and masculinity as to whether gender is natural. One view is that the social constructions are generally linked to male versus female separations. In addition, the existence of social groups (men and women) is viewed in the context of hierarchical relationships (Anderson 2010, Segal 2007, Kimmel *et al.* 2005; Connell & Wood 2005). As meanings of gender have altered over time, it seems that many researchers today describe gender in terms of social identities (men and women). Some see gender in terms of institutions that form groups and social interactions. The main view is that gender is understood by critical thinkers as sexuality that falls within two major subfields: feminist and masculinity studies (Segal 2007; Connell & Wood 2005; MacKinnon 2003). From a psychoanalytic viewpoint, one can suggest that masculinity acquires a shape and becomes definable in terms of what it denies. As such, masculinity may be understood partly by contrast with what is excluded from it, i.e. the feminine (Segal 2007, Connell & Wood 2005; Crew 2003; Morrell 2001).

Psychoanalysis teaches one that even the outwardly most masculine of men have a hidden, guarded, soft emotional element within their psychology (Anderson 2010, Synnott 2009; Seidler 2006). This soft emotional element is strongly reserved because it is perceived as a threat to the very masculinity by which men seek to measure their achievement. Even so, MacKinnon affirms that “masculinity is an ideal, not an actuality” (2003:17). It seems that men must always fall short in experience, and somehow masculinity stays out of reach. Masculinity – in this way – becomes *ideological*, an aim to strive towards, but not achievable eventually. “Thus, being a ‘real man’ is unjustified, always under threat, even from within. It involves struggle” (MacKinnon 2003:17).

Since the topics of sex difference research, the sex role framework, and sex and gender are all interlinked and fluid; these concepts are at times used interchangeably. Hence, the views on the sex role framework for contextualising masculinities are further explored. The focus now shifts to the following frameworks: biological, social, and reality construction.

### **3.4.1 Sex role framework**

In reviewing the development of men’s studies and masculinities, the field frequently referred to today as ‘the sex role framework’ has been a major factor in the development of social science work on gender [masculinity]. In the next section masculinity is defined and the understanding and characteristics of masculinity are briefly looked at within the context of the sex role framework.

Current popular accounts of men’s problems, predominantly with reference to women, speak of a gender division based on fixed ideas of masculinity in which gender identity is seen as a feature of the individual. Earlier definitions of masculinity were strongly connected to psychological paradigms that perceived masculinity as present in different behaviours and attitudes (Macnamara 2006:6-7; Haywood & Mac an Ghail 2003:6-7).

There are approaches drawing upon sex roles as a concept to understand masculinity that are to be closely developed with theories [frameworks] of socialisation. One of the key figures in this development was Parsons, who in the early 1950s wrote the classic formulation of the sex role framework (Parsons

1964:88-103; 177-196). Parsons argues that males and females are trained into appropriate roles of behaviour. Divisional norms and expectations between genders are central to the definition of masculinity. As a result; attitude tests, according to one view of the sex role framework, can be used to measure levels of socialisation by the amounts of masculinity that males display. Within this outlook, masculinity is subject to objective and unproblematic measurement through an index of gender norms (Kimmel *et al.* 2005:22, 26; Haywood & Mac an Ghail 2003:7-9; Adams & Savran 2002:103).

It is, therefore, also important to understand the fluidity in the perception of [gendered] masculinities to review the biological framework by looking at issues from the history of sex and gender.

### **3.4.2 The biological framework**

One of the fundamental issues in relation to sex and gender is biology versus social constructionism. Garfinkel (1967) posits eight 'rules' that determine 'natural attitudes' towards gender. Kessler and McKenna (1978:112-14) summarise these as follows: female and male comprise the sole two genders; gender is stable and lasting, assigned at birth or before; genitalia are a fundamental aspect or designator of gender (females have a vagina and males have a penis); anyone who does not clearly belong to one of the two genders is abnormal; there are no transfers from one gender to another; everyone belongs to one of the two genders, i.e. there is no such thing as someone without a gender; two genders only are a naturally occurring fact; and membership of one of the two genders is natural and inevitable.

If one argues that gender is inborn and grounded in biology, then the nature of men and women is predetermined and reasonably set by genes and hormones, with minimum or no change able to be affected socially and culturally. However, if gender is a social and cultural construction (Section 3.4.3), then the characteristics and appearances of gender and roles assigned on the basis of gender are changeable and open for negotiation (Mac an Ghail & Haywood 2007:21; Kimmel *et al.* 2005:51-52).

Mac an Ghail and Haywood (2007) and MacKinnon (2003), and argue that the nature/nurture debate includes biology, since it determines certain aspects [of which

power relations is one] of gender. Since there are social rewards for 'real' men or 'real' women, both genders present themselves, and demand to be seen as 'real'. Synnott (2009) and Kimmel *et al.* (2005) argues that power relations [in the context of the nature/nurture debate] are part of the construction of gender. Power relations and distinguishing between the two genders are constantly negotiated and renegotiated.

Today, it is generally accepted that early claims of biological determinism, particularly those applied to women, lack scientific evidence and they have earned a bad reputation (Kimmel *et al.* 2005:51-52). Views such as those that view woman being ethically inferior to men (Hoff Sommers 2000:91), being too emotional to hold positions of authority or own property, or subject to hysteria are indefensible in the face of expanding knowledge and, understandably, caused, and continue to cause, outrage among women (Kaplan & Rogers 1990:26). Accordingly, the social construction framework needs some clarification.

### **3.4.3 Social construction framework**

The social construction framework of sexuality and gender developed between 1975 and 1990 in opposition to the biological framework. Vance (1995:39) comments that the social construction framework draws on developments in numerous disciplines: social interactionism, deviance, and labelling framework in sociology; labour studies; social history; women's history and Marxist history; and representational anthropology, multicultural work on sexuality, and gender studies to name only the most noteworthy streams. It is the pro-feminist writer Connell (1995a:35) who specifically advances the notion that gender is socially and culturally constructed. The idea that gender is not fixed in advance of social interaction, but is constructed during interaction, is an important theme in the modern sociology of gender.

The references about sexuality and gender in the context of social construction need some clarification. A number of researchers have attempted to differentiate between sex and gender, but Butler (1999:9) argues that the "distinction between sex and gender [as] serving the argument that whatever biological intractability sex appears to have, gender is culturally constructed".

Butler (1999:10) makes it clear that she sees cultural construction as the primary influence (on being male or female) and goes as far as suggesting that “perhaps the construct called ‘sex’ is culturally constructed as gender”. She then argues that the body cannot be sexed prior to constructed gender, since it is precisely gender that provides the conceptual framework for reading the body’s biological determinations.

In relation to male gender, Connell (2000:12) argues that “...masculinities are neither programmed in our genders, nor fixed by social structure, prior to social interaction”. Masculinities come into being while people are acting. They are dynamically shaped, using the means and approaches in a given social situation. He also is of the opinion that masculinity is “implanted in the male body, it does not grow out of it” (Connell 1995b:126).

Segal (2007) and Kimmel and Messner (1995) support the social construction framework when they argue that men’s identity is developed through a complex process of interaction with the culture in which men learn the gender scripts of their culture. Within the social and historical context, men are actively in the process of making themselves. Beale (2001:28) supports this point that “the entire gender system is an oppressive and divisive piece of social engineering, a human invention that has little to do with biology”.

Some researchers suggest that a mixture of biological factors and social construction constitutes gender. While advancing a constructionist view of gender, Weatherall recognises a biological element as well, describing a constructionist position on gender in the following terms:

Instead of viewing sex as primary and biological while gender is secondary and social, the order is reversed and the boundaries made less distinct. A constructionist view is that social and cultural beliefs are primary, and cannot be separated from biological knowledge (Beale 2001:81).

Connell (1995a), drawing on ‘communities of practice’ from anthropology, argues that gender is a structure of social practice. Connell sees this in the everyday conduct of life organised in relation to a reproductive arena. Connell says this is not the same as posing a biological base to gender: “We are talking about an historical process involving the body, not a fixed set of biological determinants” (1995:71). Gender is social practice that constantly refers to bodies and what bodies do (which

Connell calls 'gender projects'); it is not social practice reduced to the body (Connell 1995:71). He elaborates on this by saying "when we speak of masculinity and femininity, we are naming configurations of gender practice" (Connell 2000:28). In the constructionist view of gender, male-sexed human beings *do* masculinity and female-sexed humans *do* femininity as a practice learned from social interaction and discourse (Weatherall 2002:145).

If one assumes that the male body takes on a key role in masculinity, since the body is visibly and so obviously physical, the implication is that if it is male, its masculinity is natural. Yet, the body is also "an object of social practice" (Messner 1990:214). The latter could be illustrated by the role that weight-training, exercise, and steroids play in the social construction of the male body. A fourth main framework is the reality construction framework that is regarded as an alternative to the biological and the developmental view of the construction of gender (including sexuality and masculinity). Weatherall (2002:82) argues that construction of gender is a product of gender discourses. Constructionist views of gender cite discourse as a central element in the process of creating gender identity.

#### **3.4.4 The reality construction framework**

The reality construction framework argues that gender has no set form, and that gender identity is what a person would like it to be at a particular moment in time. To illustrate, every time one, for example, sees oneself as a man one is doing 'identity work'. In this instance, it may appear that one take one's masculinity for granted; in reality one only do so because one constantly works at it. Every social situation, therefore, is an event for identity work (Chapter 4). For instance, it may well be that all the identity work one does will support and separate contradictory ways of viewing gender, but this is simply another way of saying that gender is always a construction that has to be renegotiated from situation to situation.

Brittan claims the idea that gender:

has to be accomplished, rather than considering it a finished product, runs counter to both the socialisation study and the masculine crisis framework... Hence, gender identity is regarded as being some kind of internal snapshot that men or women may have of themselves at any point in their histories (1989:37).

The social construction framework and reality construction framework serve as a basic foundation for viewing the understanding of masculinity. Since the growth in the study and discussion of men and masculinities have remained salient and fragmented in most countries, it is important to reflect on the interrelationship between sex role, gender, and hegemony.<sup>11</sup>

### 3.5 SHAPES OF HEGEMONIC MASCULINITY

To fully understand the shapes of masculinity and their interrelationships, Macnamara (2006), Kimmel *et al.* (2005), and Carter and Steiner (2004) view masculinity as something that 'invests' the body and reproduction as a question of strategies. In viewing the various shapes of masculinities, it is important to acknowledge that social relations are maintained by taking account of the body and biological processes while interacting with them. The latter also is discussed in Chapter 4. If one argues that our knowledge of the biological dimension of sexual difference is itself grounded on the social categories and that, sexuality and desire are biologically constituted then, one can acknowledge that power relations and gender practices have historically developed in the construction of the unconscious.

To understand the different kinds of masculinity in which hegemony is constituted and contested, the focus can be three political techniques of the patriarchal social order, here briefly described: Firstly, hegemony means persuasion and one of its important supporters is likely to be the commercial and main stream mass media. From the research undertaken for this study by examination of visual texts; it is clear that masculinities are constructed by assisting men to see themselves as virile. Virility creates a reassurance about being a man. But it is obvious that the hegemonic masculinity that existed in one's father's or grandfather's day is under pressure with a new social structure in which consumption is more important than production. Masculinity is constructed as a product available for consumption by merely choosing the appropriate brand names. The images of masculinity constructed purposely to sell a brand-name product also shape the way men see

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<sup>11</sup> Nathanson and Young (2001:67) claim that "men are silenced now... just as women were silenced in the past".

themselves and others (Berger, Wallis & Watson 1995:287-288). This is illustrated in the multimodal analysis in Chapter 7.

Secondly, hegemony closely involves the division of labour, the social definition of either 'men's work' or 'women's work', and the definitions of some kinds of work as more masculine than others. This is an important source of tension between the gender order and class order, since heavy masculine labour is generally perceived to be more masculine than white-collar and professional work (Beasley 2005; 214-15, Adams & Savran 2002:114).

Thirdly, the negotiation and imposing of hegemony engage the state. The criminalisation of male homosexuality as such is a key move in the construction of the modern form of hegemonic masculinity: This is evidence in several countries over the world, and particularly in African countries such as Uganda and Zimbabwe. Although criminalisation of homosexuality has changed in South Africa with the granting of constitutional rights to same-sex couples to marry, gay masculinity is still represented as 'the Other' in the media.

Hegemonic masculinity is far more multifaceted than the accounts of essences in the masculinity books would suggest. It is not a 'syndrome' of the kind produced when sexologists think and treat human behaviour as if it exists as a real and tangible object or 'condition' (Fausto-Sterling 1995:128-129). Or, when medical professionals think and treat homosexuality as if it exists as real, and classify it into pathology. It is, rather, a question of how certain groups of men occupies positions of power and wealth, and how they appropriately replicate the social relationships that produce their power (Adams & Savran 2002:112).

Positions of power as ingrained in hegemonic masculinity are only relevant to a small number of men. The 'men's liberation' literature provides a sound insight by seeing a distance, and a tension, between collective ideal and actual lives. Most men do not really act like Josh Holloway (television actor of *Lost*) (*MH* August 2010) or Mark Wahlberg (*MH* cover March 2011). However, large numbers of men carry on sustaining the hegemonic masculinity. The most important reason for sustaining hegemony is that men benefit from the subordination of women, and hegemonic masculinity is mainly connected with the institutionalisation of men's dominance over

women. Adams and Savran (2002:113) claim that it would hardly be an overstatement to say that hegemonic masculinity is hegemonic so far as it symbolises an effective approach in relation to women.

A contemporary ruling-class family is organised around the corporate or professional career of the husband while he is supported by his wife. For a husband to be dominant in the home is to require assertiveness and authority with traditional ideology (religion, culture). To think of this as 'working-class authoritarianism' and to see the ruling-class family as more liberal would be to mistake the nature of power; both are forms of patriarchy and enacting hegemonic masculinity (Macnamara 2006:114-118, Beasley 2005:214-215, Adams & Savran 2002:113-114). An important feature of this masculinity is its construction of domination that is heterosexual.

This discussion attempts to demonstrate that hegemony refers to a historical situation; a state of affairs in which power is obtained and maintained for a certain period.

### **3.5.1 The 'masculinity crisis' framework**

For the purpose of this study, the focus is on the premise that theoretical arguments about the masculine crisis framework are based on psychoanalytic, role learning, and cognitive views about gender acquisition. Most of these views emphasise the vulnerability of masculine identity, with the emphasis that masculine gender identity is the product of a developmental process that has its roots in early childhood.

Haywood and Mac an Ghail (2003:6-8) argue that men and masculinities are framed towards a sociology in the sense that the visual media representation of men appeals to an earlier gendered social order (based on biological differences between genders). There is a description of the 'hard times' that men are experiencing followed by an explanation that the growth in these paraded masculinities is caused by their incapability to internalise suitable models of masculinity (Chapter 7).

If one argues that it is difficult for men to escape from traditional hegemony, that men find it difficult to air their views; if one further considers the definitional issues, language barriers and the so-called 'backlash' politics; the fragmentation of the

various men's movements; and the fact that men's studies as an academic discussion are repressed, then men are in a crisis. Such a crisis includes the way the media represents masculinity visually, since the media contributes to men doubting themselves; it could plunge men into crisis. The argument is then that the spread of misandry and hatred of men is not recognised. All these issues could play a role in how men are visually represented and constructed in *MH*, for instance.

Another issue that brings men much anxiety is the feminisation of work (Haywood & Mac an Ghail 2003:26-29). Additional to this crisis is the distinction between 'muscle worker' and 'brain worker' where the latter is seen as separated from the 'natural' self, and where "over civilization has had an impact on their ability to become men" (Haywood & Mac an Ghail 2003:28). If one argues that men in South Africa, for instance, are increasingly adopting traditionally attributed feminine ideals of intimacy, emotionality, and sentimentality; it results in a debate in the sense that men are becoming more like women. If one argues that men exhibit caring and emotional characteristics at work, it could be seen as different from dominant definitions of masculinity.<sup>12</sup>

It could be argued that in South Africa social class positions, employment equity, black empowerment – including articulation of racial positions – have led to men becoming disconnected, sexually impotent, and 'losing' their manhood. The effect of unemployment on masculinity is another issue that can produce personal anxieties. Collectively, these are some of the issues that lead to men questioning themselves. If one considers the constant negative stereotyping of men in the South African media, negative stereotyping contributes to be a current restructuring process for men and does not, but could result in adopting new/alternative different masculinities as argued by authors such as Anderson (2010), Synnott (2009) and Segal (2007).

Men's magazines seem to have perpetuated what theorists call 'masculinity in crises'. This is owing to magazines having constructed different forms of masculinity. The argument is also mentioned that an economic crisis that leads to

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<sup>12</sup> "When men do not correspond to the perceptions of dominant occupational masculinities, other workers 'feminize' them and they [men] are described as 'women' (Haywood & Mac an Ghail 2003:27).

men being unemployed and the boom of industrialisation also contribute to the crisis. Some social changes (feminist movements and gay rights movements who fight for equality) have also threatened masculinity (Wisneski 2007:30). Kimmel *et al.* (2005) comments that gender order is innate with tendencies that point towards masculinity, but masculinity itself is not in crisis. Wisneski (2007:31-21) adds that the crisis may be within an individual but not with masculinity. People may be facing an identity crisis because of social changes (retrenchment) but masculinity does not play a part in this 'crisis'. The argument of this study is that *MH* is attempting to do this differently – to represent and construct men visually in a different way – the 'new' man, moving away from traditional hegemonic masculinity, motivating for an alternative and different masculinity. Chapter 4 describes the various masculine identities, while Chapter 7 offers the findings of the visual analysis.

### 3.6 SUMMARY

This chapter presents an overview of how the study of masculinity (within or as gender) has expanded rapidly. The studies of gender issues about men and masculinities have been outlined. Masculinities have been positioned in this chapter in relation to biology, sexuality, gender, the sex role framework and social construction as part of social interaction.

It is also speculated that the hegemony of masculinity is asserting a position of superiority. The mechanisms by which feminism and gay liberation shape media discourse on masculinities are sketched. This chapter suggests that the various shapes of masculinities and their interrelationships contribute to self-doubt amongst males. The emphasis includes the notion that gender should be seen as fluid and negotiable, i.e. gender or sexuality is created through performances rather than being fixed and innate.

The next chapter situates masculinities and male identity with specific reference to the visual socialisation by the media. Chapter 4 provides an overview of male identity and meanings, constructions, and representations of masculinities by focusing on the role of the visual media in constructing male identity, differences, and stereotypes, and by introducing some of the current discourses in the South African media.

## **CHAPTER 4**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW III: MEDIA, MASCULINITIES, AND THE VISUAL TEXT**

#### **4.1 INTRODUCTION**

It has been argued in Chapter 2 that social semiotics can be used to analyse any media text, as well as to examine the practices that are involved in producing and interpreting such a text. In this study, the media text is *MH* magazine and it is specifically focusing on the representation and construction of masculinities in *MH* as a case study to exemplify and illustrate the semiotic multimodal module that this research has created and developed. The chapter, therefore, functions as a conduit between the theoretical views of the visual text, the media, masculinity (including an overview of the representation of men's studies), and the visual construction and representation of male/masculine identities.

This chapter also examines several related issues of media and masculinities by exploring current theories and research questions and endeavours to situate masculinity and male identity in the context of the interpretive framework of social semiotics. The underlying premise accepts that men's magazines play a role in the social construction, mediation, and representation of masculinities and the male identity in visual texts. The discussion comprises the following phenomena: how visual texts shape and contribute to men's identity; the role and effects of mass media in representing and constructing masculinity and identity; mass media and their effects on audiences; social identity theory in retrospect and prospect; meanings, constructions, and representations of masculinities and male identities; as well as male identity and consumerism by focusing on how the 'new man' is represented in visual texts.

#### **4.2 THE MEDIA AS PRODUCERS OF MEANING**

The media has become the primary source for men receiving their entertainment and information about the world. The media shows consumers what the world is like, therefore, the media makes sense of the world. The power of the media is succinctly expressed by Grossberg *et al.* (2006:182) who observe that, in a contemporary

society, the media is possibly the most significant producers of meaning by presenting claims about the way the world is. In this way, *MH* and the media in general become powerful ideological institutions in South Africa. This assumption, therefore, indicates that the processes of representation, interpretation, and evaluation are central to the visual representation of masculinities in *MH*.

The examples in this study originate from contemporary 'popular' culture or 'mass' culture in *MH* that constructs and represents male identity and masculinities. This magazine has been chosen because it is accessible, familiar, and socially significant: Men learn how to think and feel about the world in which they live by means of popular culture. The importance of analysing the visual images in *MH* emphasises the significance of the social values of men's culture. Most significantly, the visual images in *MH* serve to illustrate or test the semiotic multimodal model that this study has developed.

### **4.3 A BRIEF OVERVIEW OF THE MEDIA AND SOCIETY**

While exploring the representation and construction of men in the South African print media as a reflection of society and culture, it is necessary to first reflect on the media and their role in contemporary society.<sup>13</sup>

For the purposes of this discussion, the 'media-world' views of O'Shaughnessy and Stadler (2006) in *Media and Society* are used. The authors focus on three different ways of looking at the relation between media and society, hence the concept 'media-world'. Firstly, this 'media-world' creates a relationship between the media and society, with the core focus on how the media is expressing and challenging the principal values, norms, and ideology of society. Secondly, it points to the construction of the media's own views and visions of society and the representation thereof. Thirdly, 'media-world' implies that the world one lives in is deeply swayed and dominated by the media.

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<sup>13</sup> The concept 'media' is used as an umbrella term, but the focus of this study is on *MH* magazine as an example of this media genre. The researcher is not offering a definitive series of answers about the construction and representations of men in lifestyle (print) magazines, but is reviewing different approaches. Hence, generalisations will only be presented in reference to *MH*, not to the media in general.

At times, there are contradictory arguments about the media and how it functions. One aim focuses on reflecting a variety of perspectives in the representation and construction of men in South African media, and that people have different views about the media.

An important social aspect engages the manner in which South African media, specifically the print media, reflects society and politics in its content when representing and constructing news about men. It includes the positioning of men as a gendered group and the interpretation of male identity in the South African media. O'Shaughnessy and Stadler (2006: xvii) approach gender from two perspectives. Firstly, gender includes issues of social power and equality, not only social oppression of women by men. At a more advanced level, they contemplate the more complex situation of both men and women who are constructed and oppressed by the patriarchal, competitive, and hetero-sexist values of society.

Since gender relates to sexuality, the question arises why men are often at the centre of print media representations in South Africa? Topics of social power and sexuality are often linked in a variety of ways and one supposes that all readers, men and women, are able to relate to these topics on the grounds of their own experiences. These issues are also relevant for understanding how being male is represented as part of South African society. While the discussion may refer to some of the political views of society in the media, the way in which the media functions is not the focus of this study.

One also needs to be aware of the positive social power of the media in South Africa by sharing ideas across space, being democratic, giving a voice to people, and representing the political views of men in South Africa. Although the South African citizens are not yet equal, the general positive qualities of the media assist the democratic process and equality of society. Print media and the liberal constitution of the South African democracy allow the publication of political issues and events about a variety of common issues or prejudices. Habermas (1989) proposes a discrepancy in political thinking with his concept of mass media, as a 'public sphere', that functions as a setting of public communication where individual citizens gather and freely discuss matters of general interest. It is crucial that the media is enabled

to freely participate and express these democratic roles in public life (Curran 2002:45).<sup>14</sup>

Although the media can freely participate, one is also compelled to question the media, since it has powerful means of communication. At times, its visual texts contribute to the 'Othering' of men in society by perpetuating a status quo of inequality in relation to inclusive masculinity.

Macnamara (2006:11) claims that in modern and postmodern societies, mass media is considered to play a key role in discourse, and one is not always sure what role and effects the media has, therefore, it is subject to some debate. Media representations – also called re-presentations – refer to more than the physical presentation of information to readers of *MH*. Visual media representations refer to the construction by the media of reality that includes the relationship between reality and ideology. (Newbold *et al.* 2002:61). When discussing how representation produces identity, Hall (1990:22) says identity is “always constituted within, not outside representation”. In other words, one cannot escape the presentations of one's gender. Therefore, one is compelled to frame one's identity within representations thereof. Representation is defined by various media researchers and feminist writers.<sup>15</sup> The following two examples emphasise the key elements that are relevant to this study.

Representation is a process when signs and symbols are made to convey certain meanings. Importantly, representation refers to the signs and symbols that claim to stand for, or re-present, some aspect of 'reality' such as objects, people, groups, places, events, social norms, and cultural identities (Newbold *et al.* 2002:260). One needs to be aware that any representation is not the transparent mirror-image of reality that it appears to be (Reid 2013:8).

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<sup>14</sup> Habermas' concept of mass media as a public sphere of debate where reason and logic would prevail has been widely dismissed and seen as flawed because of its idealisation of public reason (Curran 2002:45). Further information about the media and democracy is available in Habermas (1989); and J. Thompson, *The Media and Modernity: A Social Theory of the Media*, Polity Press, Cambridge, 1999.

<sup>15</sup> Hall notes: “Representation is an essential part of the process by which meaning is produced and exchanged between members of a culture” (1997:15).

Butler (1999) says there are two meanings of or uses for the term 'representation'; one denotes an operative or functional process, while the other proposes a normative function.

Representation... serves as the operative term within a political process to extend visibility and legitimacy... on the other hand, representation is the normative function of a language which is said either to reveal or to distort what is assumed to be true (Butler 1999:3).

Researchers such as Cooper (2013), Fourie (2008), Burton (2005) and Macnamara (2006) point to the key role and effects of mass media in modern-day societies. An example of the key role and effects of mass media in contemporary societies is mentioned by Beavis who claims that "without communication there can be no such thing as a society. Of singular social important is then how communication is mediated (Barr 2002:10). Barr (2002:16) supports this point of view: "Media remain central to most people's lives... next to sleep and work, our next most time-consuming activity is attending to media."

It is sometimes claimed that visual texts are 'simply entertainment' and that, by implication, socially important meanings cannot be read from these texts and significant effects on individuals or society are questionable (Reid 2013:5-9; Macnamara 2006:13; Burton 2005:334). However; Marxist, feminist, and social researchers argue and present substantial evidence that media content is never entertaining only and is never politically or ideologically 'innocent'. The media sends messages to readers about the way things are, can be, or should be (Nathanson & Young 2001:189). While there are numerous studies about mass media representations of gender, these studies focus mainly on women (Anderson 2010; Segal 2007; Seidler 2007; Macnamara 2006; Burton 2005; Carter & Steiner 2004).

With reference to the key role and effects of mass media in modern-day societies, feminist researchers have extensively cited the role of mass media representation in shaping gender identity of women (Macnamara 2006:13). A further factor that is supporting the need for research about the visual representation of masculinity in *MH* is the limited studies of mass media representations of men and male identity that primarily focus on advertising and entertainment media such as movies and television (Grossberg *et al.* 2006; Crewe 2003; Benwell 2003; Newbold *et al.* 2002).

Media researchers point out that all representations are selective, limited or framed, and 'mediated' (Grossberg *et al.* 2006; Newbold *et al.* 2002; Benwell 2003).

#### **4.4 AN OVERVIEW OF THE ROLE AND EFFECTS OF MASS MEDIA ON MASCULINITY AND IDENTITY**

In this section, the role and effects of mass media on masculinity and identity are reviewed by providing an overview of the marginalising of men's bodies by the media. The discussion focuses on the manner in which the media has traditionally reinforced existing attitudes of masculinities in visual texts. In addition, McQuail's (1984) view of the way people deal with the media is reflected on in modern thinking about mass media and identities by focusing on globalisation and the mediated representation of masculinities.

Viljoen (2009) provides a thorough analysis of the rhetoric employed in an Afrikaans men's magazine, *MaksiMan*, with a mainly white male readership and a black men's magazine, *BLINK*. Both magazines cater for the challenges of producing social capability in corporate culture; they go about the issue quite differently, according to Viljoen. As the first Christian men's lifestyle magazine in South Africa, directed at Afrikaans speaking men, *MaksiMan* tries to "encourage (predominantly white) South African men who were in a state of crisis because they had lost their political voice and were feeling dislocated from the country" (Viljoen 2009:104). She claims that the type of articles in *MaksiMan* frequently emphasises a happy home and family life that needs to be well-adjusted in relation to the demands of work and professional life. *MaksiMan*, due to its Christian inclination, comprehends in the framework of certain religious and social values, although Viljoen argues that the alignment may actually be "connected to the positioning of the magazine within Afrikaans or Afrikaner culture, since the Afrikaner 'imagined community' is both God-fearing and family centred" (Viljoen 2009:114). The analysis is sustained by the socially involved and ethically accountable style of *BLINK*, largely directed at the "upwardly mobile, educated black men... actively contributing (both intellectually and practically) to the social construction of a democratic South Africa" (Viljoen 2009:116). It seems that it is indeed this involved and questioning style of *BLINK* which led finally to its expiry for, like *MaksiMan*, it also had to close its doors in 2007. It is evident from this

analysis that masculinity continually re-defines and re-shapes itself, sometimes with incapacitating results and in other cases with emancipating effects.

While the visual texts in *MH* (as in all media) are variants of representations, they are not reality. *MH* exposes the reader to real-time images of people and places; however, it does not confirm the truth of the meanings (Mac an Ghail & Haywood 2007).<sup>16</sup> In semiotic terms, the signs epitomise something, for example, objects or ideas. In an ideological sense, visual images also represent ideas. The reader interacts with the texts which produce ideas. A variety of current issues and debates get extrapolated and presented, since ideas are directly related to the general core of visual representation and construction of masculinity.

#### **4.4.1 Marginalising of men's bodies in visual texts**

In reflecting on masculinity seen in the media in the sense of gender, the media reflects and produces visual images that surround us in our culture. Since masculinity is marginalised by academics, hegemonic men's bodies have been narrowly viewed by the discourse of 'compulsory heterosexuality' that governs the media (Seidler 2006; Macnamara 2006). According to the early views of the transmission model, the media has assumed that mass media is a dominant propaganda tool that is or can be released on a passive mass audience. Early media research expected direct social effects that are based on the model of Shannon and Weaver (1949). Their model describes communication as transmitting a message to a receiver, with meaning being synonymous with content. In this view, power resides in texts and their producers, while audiences are perceived as passive receivers of information (Newbold *et al.* 2002:25). Lull (2000:9) summarises: "The first stage of media audience research reflects... strong impressions of the... media as powerful, persuasive forces in society". This conviction is central to the Mass Manipulation model of the media and underpins later cultural hegemony and political economy models (Bennett *et al.* 2006:197; 234-5).<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> "Texts are nothing but representations in both a material and an ideological sense ... text is a made thing" (Burton 2005:61).

<sup>17</sup> The Mass Media Manipulation model originates from an idea that the media might be a social and political force. Audiences are seen as a mass of individuals that could be influenced and persuaded.

While the bodies of women have been constructed as objects for the enjoyable gaze of heterosexual male viewers, it is almost forbidden to portray men's bodies in related ways, since it would contain a danger to the visual power of heterosexual men (Kimmel *et al.* 2005:271). Men's bodies are represented as objects of the gaze on front covers of *MH*. This is another reason why the multimodal model has been developed to conduct a visual semiotic analysis of visual texts for this study. One can also argue that multiple and diverse portrayals of inclusive masculinity can inspire new thinking about politically and socially disadvantaged categories of people (MacKinnon 2003:23).

#### **4.4.2 Visual representation reinforces existing attitudes of masculinities**

To understand that there are many ambiguities of life that are mediated in the media, it is important to note that visual representation does not merely reflect and also does not neutrally "transmit a pre-existing meaning" (MacKinnon 2003:24). All visual texts need not be understood and 'read' in an identical manner. Looking at traditional mass media, breakthrough research during the late 1950s and 1960s refutes many claimed effects of the mass media and shows media power to be overrated. The studies of Katz and Lazarsfeld (1955) and Klapper (1960) tackle the same topic. Curran (2002:132; 159) and Newbold *et al.* (2002:31) conclude that mass media is more likely to emphasise existing attitudes than changing them or creating new attitudes.

Another stream of media research that rejects direct effects thinking is based on the theory of Katz (1977) who introduces the notion of audience interpretation and is known as the Uses and Gratification model. Instead of asking what the media do to people, Katz (1977) turns the question around by asking what people do with the media (Griffen 2006:400; Lull 2002:101). This theory assumes that people engage with the mass media and benefit from the experience (Lull 2000:11). The thinking of uses and gratification continue in the mass media today, but with less favour, since it is linked to the functionalist theory that is advanced by Lasswell (1948). With the

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The relevance of this model is limited today with the advent of new technology. Audiences have more choices, are more active, and are aware of the manipulation of the media. It does not mean, however, that one should underestimate the media (Bennett *et al.* 2006:197; 234-5).

traditionally reinforced attitudes of the view of the media about masculinity, one also needs to consider sexuality and race in the media.

#### **4.4.3 Sexuality and race**

Kimmel *et al.* (2005:274-275) argues that the two most substantive topics about masculinity – sexuality and race – that are being covered by the media, are depicted in a social constructionist manner. These authors site examples of Greg Louganis (champion diver and an 'out' [openly] gay man), Magic Johnson (a heterosexual HIV/AIDS positive basketball superstar), and Tommy Morrison (a heterosexual HIV/AIDS positive world champion boxer) and acknowledge that the identity of these three athletes is visually constructed and re-presented by the media.

Kimmel *et al.* (2005) cites research about gay masculinity by referring to media coverage of Canadian male figure skaters who have died of HIV/AIDS-related illnesses, and semi-structured interviews with gay Australian men about their accounts of television representations. In South Africa, where Mr Gay South Africa won the Mr Gay World title consecutively in 2010 and 2011, almost no coverage was given by the media. Cooper (2013), Anderson (2010) and, Mac an Ghail and Haywood (2007) claims that gay masculinity is portrayed in the media as trespassing on the indistinct heterosexual public space.

Research about masculinity and race that is quoted by Kimmel *et al.* (2005:275-276) maintains that the American television advertising community reinforces the significance of gender and racial differences. The racist discourses construct African men as bodies without minds. It seems that African American men have, at times, implemented hyper masculine performances that coincidentally strengthen the very racist stereotypes that are oppressing them (Mac an Ghail & Haywood 2007:217-219; Kimmel *et al.* 2005:275-276). Although American research reveals that the media still represents the masculinity of white men as the reinforced search for justice, 'new' forms of masculinity are neither spontaneously progressive, nor do they involve institutional adjustments. This statement, therefore, maintains that masculinity is flexible, and change in modern thinking about mass identities is possible as long as it supports the status quo (Segal 2007; Mac an Ghail & Haywood 2007; Kimmel *et al.* 2005). Since the election of a democratic government

in 1994, issues of race are constantly reported in the media. These reports reinforce the negative stereotypical perception that men are untrustworthy, and that men cannot control themselves.

#### **4.4.4 Modern thinking about mass identities**

When looking at the contemporary theory of media effects, a variety of modern thinking about mass media recognises that identities cannot be viewed as constructed by media representations only (Newbold *et al.* 2002:311). Identity is influenced by a multiplicity of factors; such as race, nationality, ethnicity, social background, education, gender, sexuality, religion, interrelationships, and also family, peers, occupation or work groups, as well as media content (Macnamara 2006; Seidler 2006; Haywood & Mac an Ghail 2003; Reid & Walker 2003). Adding to the multiplicity factors, Curran (2002:121) adds that first-hand knowledge, word-of-mouth relayed knowledge of other people, sceptical opinions about the media and internal processes of logic also influence the reading of visual texts by audiences.

It seems that there are difficulties in viewing the issue of limited effects or considering minimal impact theories of mass media. The counter-argument views mass media as having noteworthy effects for a number of reasons. Bardikian (1997) notes that throughout most of the twentieth century the trend of the culture industry centred on the ownership of a few multinational media monopolies and oligopolies. Changing boundaries between technologies and bodies are taking place in relationships where the social cases of gender and sexuality are not obvious, mainly owing to the notion of 'gender bending' (Mac an Ghail & Haywood 2007:136).

#### **4.5 MASS MEDIA AND SIGNIFICANT EFFECTS ON AUDIENCES**

In this section, misandry and representation of masculinities and mass media's visual reflections of masculinity in society are briefly discussed. The media's visual reflection places the visual display and representation of masculinities in context, and illustrates that *MH* as a case study is moving away from these kinds of representations. A visual analysis is provided in Chapter 7.

#### 4.5.1 Misandry and representations of masculinities

In order to provide a background to misandry, it is necessary to reflect on how masculinity is generally represented in the media. In the media, a variety of researchers about masculinities note that few people, including academics, are familiar with the term misandry, while the term misogyny is more widely known and used (Synnott 2009; Macnamara 2006; Kimmel *et al.* 2005; Whitehead 2006). Hoff Sommers (2000:134) identifies 'many trends in modern societies that are referring to "the tiresome misandry that infects so many gender theorists who do not stop blaming the 'male culture' for all social and psychological ills". Similarly, Macdonald, McDermott and Di Campli (2000) identify and warn against the 'pathologising' of men.<sup>18</sup> It may be owing to the claim of some feminists that misogyny simply occurs more frequently than misandry. On the other hand, it is argued that hatred and vilification of men have simply been unrecognised, that it is a new 'problem with no name' (Anderson 2010:127-140; Synnott 2009:162-6; Macnamara 2006:62). Men not free, hated, and reviled are confirmed by Germaine Greer (1999:371) in her widely acclaimed work, *The Female Eunuch* (1970) where she claims that the first noteworthy discovery she made while travelling along the female road to freedom, is that men are also not free. Nathanson and Young (2001, 2006) find pervasive misandry in North American popular culture; specifically in television shows, movies, advertising, and journalism studies. Four case studies are provided in their 2006 publication. The representations of men as not only doing evil but as being evil are more dangerous to men than the representations of them as stupid, useless, inadequate and, as deserving of vigilante violence that is redefined as justice. It is more dangerous because of the self-concepts they might develop of themselves, which is the teaching function of the media. This is echoed in chapters by Nathanson and Young (2006) on "blaming men" and "dehumanizing men" for all the evil in the world. This is beyond trivialising and more indicative of extreme sexism. While representing all men as villains, a significant part of so many made for

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<sup>18</sup> The media in South Africa also reports on men in a largely negative way. John Shannon (2007:15) writes in the *Saturday Star* that although women have always been exploited in advertisements (and it has worked for many years), it is now uncalled for; men are used in advertisements and represented as creatures that are rather simple, and obsessed with sex and beautiful women. Hence, advertisers are still appealing to men as the main purchasing officers by portraying men as fools and simpletons.

television movies focuses on women as victims (who become empowered, sometimes by violence). Real female villains and murderers are often portrayed rather sympathetically (Synnott 2009:260).

Our basic point is that ideological feminism is no longer merely a point of view adopted by a few pretentious journalists or ranting academics. It has become institutionalised. It has become law ... [M]isandry has been legalized – that is, misandry has taken the form of systematic discrimination against men (Nathanson & Young 2006:79-80).

Providing this background of misandry is an attempt to also illustrate by means of some examples how *MH* is moving away from such stereotypical representations (Chapter 7).

#### **4.5.2 Visual mass media representations as reflections of society**

In concluding the narrative about mass media content and examining visual representations by mass media of men and male identity, it is important to acknowledge that a substantial body of research reveals that visual media, particularly visual texts in magazines, reports what individuals, groups, and organisations are saying and doing, owing to the fact that they *reflect* society (Bennett, *et al.* 2006). This point of view means that visual texts may not be causing effects; instead they may be reflecting existing opinions and attitudes, or combinations of some causing effects and reflecting the effects of other influences (Bennett *et al.* 2006; Macnamara 2006; O'Shaughnessy & Stadler 2005).

The question of the extent to which the media causes effects and/or *reflects* existing conditions is a subject of considerable debate. While causes and effects need consideration, it is also important to provide an overview of social identity and the role of society in relation to the media during the visual and social construction of the various masculinities and male identity.

#### **4.6 SOCIAL IDENTITY THEORY IN RETROSPECT AND PROSPECT**

In this section of the study; meanings, constructions, and representations of masculine identities in the media are discussed.

Identity first emerges as a term during the enlightenment in the sixteenth century (Davies 1993:8).<sup>19</sup> As far as masculinity and male identity are concerned, it is important to mention that living in South Africa during the post-apartheid era with its new regime and political dispensation, one can argue that many white men are questioning their identities in the new political dispensation. Since white men experience loss of identity owing to the Employment Equity Act (EE) and its practical application of affirmative action and black men adjust to promote African identity, the way in which the visual media is significantly shaping the identities of both white and black men in South Africa is noteworthy. It is one of the reasons for exploring the role the media plays in visually shaping and representing the 'new man', male identity, and masculinities in the South African context.

Capozza and Brown (2000) argue that from the perspective of sociology, social identity is more associated with concepts originating from symbolic interaction. They see the self as constructed in and dependent on the social context while both dynamics include a multiplicity of self-definitions. Sociological models pay more attention to structural issues while psychological models of social identity are more concerned with process like the cognitive processes of categorisation and comparison (Woodward 2004). Sociological models emphasise individual self-identity while social identity underlines the intergroup processes. In the terms of Haywood and Mac an Ghail (2003), sociological theories focus more on the 'we' while psychological theories mostly deal with the 'me'.

To further complicate the issue of identity and the fluidity of identity, it seems that these variations illustrate that "attending both to features of the systems in which the self is rooted and to the nature of the self-structure it-self" (Capozza & Brown 2000:2). This point of view means that psychological models of social identity are

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<sup>19</sup> The concept of identity has become important in modernist thinking and even more so in postmodernism. Modernism recognises that tradition, myth, and religion remain influential in human identity and modes of living, however, these modes are largely overtaken by science, technology, law, and other disciplines based on rational thinking and reason as the basis of knowledge and 'truth'. Worldviews and beliefs of the church, and economic systems are attacked by Marxism that labels these beliefs as 'false consciousness' and encourages new strategies for achieving self-consciousness. Macnamara (2006:4) claims that postmodernism questions social identity, traditions, and modernism's scientific 'truths' of these beliefs.

more concerned with process, particularly cognitive processes of categorisation and comparison.

#### **4.6.1 Self-identity and self-discovery**

Postmodernism questions and dismisses all recognised pillars of social identity, including modernism's scientific truths and traditions, especially in relation to masculinity and male identity. Lyotard (1979:37) encourages incredulity towards the meta-narratives of identity. The identity master narratives of scripts for living supplied by traditions, religion, and science are replaced by a new cultural self-consciousness. In this environment, Giddens (1991) says "the self becomes a reflexive project".

In modern societies, Gauntlett (2002:96-99) maintains that self-identity [male identity] is 'an inescapable issue' of a self-discovery process during which "we create, maintain and revise a set of biographical narratives – the story of who we are, and how we came to be where we are now ...". Giddens (1991) refers to the self-discovery process as creating (constructing) narratives of the self. These narratives are uninterrupted constructions of the self. Gauntlett (2002:10) says "to believe in one, and command the respect of others, we need a strong narrative and these needs [sic] to be creatively and continuously maintained".

Hall (1990:222) also sees identity as an on-going "project of the self". He says "instead of thinking of identity as an already accomplished fact ... we should think, instead, of identity as a 'production' which is never complete, always in process ..." (Hall 1990:222).

There are a number of ways in which individuals and groups [men] construct and maintain their narratives of the self. Marxist philosophy views class and economic factors as the key inheritance of identity. In Faludi's (2000) assessment of working-class men, she demonstrates that the occupation of a man continues to be a key factor in constructing the identities of men in late industrial and post-industrial societies. One possible focus is moving away from the worsening negative representation of men in modern and postmodern societies by rather paying attention to the inclusiveness of masculinities. Not only are the traditional foundations of male identity being tough or taken away by economic, social, and

technological change, but the subsequent vacuum is being filled by highly negative discourse about men and male identity. Nathanson and Young conclude:

The traditional universe on which men relied for self-esteem and self-confidence is crumbling. Suitable replacement has not yet emerged. And almost any attempt to create one is quickly denounced (2001:295).

Analysis and discussion of men and male identity in contexts related to commitment and responsibility reveal an interesting contradiction and level of misrepresentation in discourse. Women's magazines and opinion columns frequently report, for example, that men lack commitment and even that men are 'commitment-phobic' (Synnott 2009:14-15; 19-20 & 257-258; Macnamara 2006:136-143). These women's magazines represent a stark contrast to magazines such as *MH* which encourage men to be emotionally involved with their partners and children.

#### **4.6.2 The nature of social identification**

From the problematic position of men in modern and postmodern societies, it follows that care needs to be exercised whenever one articulates statements about the nature of social identification. When looking at models of social identity, one cannot assume that all identities function according to the same basic principles. What defines and operates in, or the concerns established about, one constructed identity is presumed to generalise other identities. Capozza and Brown (2002:2-7) view this approach as common sociological practice, assuming that general processes are more informative than the analysis of individual cases, while they are not denying the value of analysing processes that may generalise to multiple settings. They also consider the importance of the unique qualities and individual meanings that a specific case might expose.

Between the focus on specific cases of male identity and the unique traits about the functioning of individual identity (instead of concentrating on broad generalisations), one finds the analysis, of social identity that promises directions for investigation. One of these principles is the classification approach that interrogates definable types of classes of social identity. Research results are complex and particular trait properties are associated with various identity types. The suggestion of the analysis is also pointing clearly to the ways in which diverse social identities may differ from

one another; with specific reference to either the collective or individual nature of the identity, social desirability and status, and the degree to which an identity is described or achieved (Deaux, Reid, Mizrahi & Ethier 1995).

Brewer and Gardner (1996) offer a different type of division of identity by looking at the individual, the interpersonal, and the group to define forms of the personal, the relational, and the collective self-concept. From the perspective of social identification, the key difference is found among relational identities that function in the areas of dyadic interaction and collective identities (Segal 2007; Hayward & Mac an Ghail 2003; Capozza & Brown 2000). It is important to note that these different types of self-representations are characterised by different bases of self-evaluation, reference, and motivational goals.

#### **4.6.3 The individual and traditional identities**

There are also different dimensions in identity categories or developing taxonomies that distinguish between classes of social identity and different components of a social identity. Capozza and Brown (2000:5) distinguish between components of group identities, one primarily cognitive and the other an evaluative-emotional constellation. Other attempts to explain the concept of social identification include two dimensions, i.e. individualism versus collectivism, as well as a relational and non-relational emphasis.

Ellemers, Kortkeas and Ouwerkerk (1999) distinguish between three aspects of social identification – self-categorisation, group self-esteem, and commitment to the group – and offer scales to measure each component. These authors present evidence that these three components are affected differently by group features such as status and size. Furthermore, only group commitment is found to mediate measures of intergroup favouritism.

The absolute strength of one's identification with a group is also an important factor. Although people may share a common cognitive category, their identification with the category can vary significantly, and these variations have important consequences for behaviour of male identity. People who identify strongly with their social group, for example, experience greater similarity among in-group members and are less likely

to consider leaving the group under conditions of threat (Capozza & Brown 2000). The argument is, therefore, that *MH* represents masculinities as social groupings.

#### **4.6.4 Multiple forms of identity**

When reviewing social identity, it is important to take into account a multiplicity of forms and dimensional differences of identity. There will always be variations of meaning in masculine identity, mainly when a move – including a process of self-stereotyping – takes place from the personal to the social level of categorisation. This change includes categorical membership by assuming characteristics that are associated with prototypical group members (Woodward 2004; Capozza & Brown 2000). It is, therefore, important to briefly provide an overview of the meanings, constructions, and representations of identity.

#### **4.7 VISUAL MEANINGS, CONSTRUCTIONS, AND REPRESENTATIONS OF MASCULINITIES AND MALE IDENTITIES**

Representations and making meaning in visual texts include identifying stereotypes. However, the representation of masculinities is not limited to stereotypes. The representation of ideas about men is significant. These ideas reflect the ideological positions of the times in which ideas about men are created visually. The contradictions between the various visually represented role expectations of men will be considered. Role expectations include the contradictions that are experienced between the world of *MH* and the real world that “reveal ideology at work [and] display a partial view of social relations, and dispositions of power” (Burton 2005:63).<sup>20</sup> Additional representations include social type, since the visual texts in *MH* reinforce ideas about masculinity (as a type) and men as a group. These typologies find expression in three categories: intensity, recognition, and cultural history (Burton 2005). It includes a consideration of archetypes, stereotypes, and types (Allan 2010).

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<sup>20</sup> See Allan (2010:113-116) for the cultural politics of news discourse where he illustrates the “codified definitions of reality which are regarded as the most ‘natural’, as the most representative of ‘the world out there’, that are actually the most ideological” (Allan 2010:114).

Furthermore, the notion of norms also incorporates the idea that representations are given force by means of processes of naturalisation (Mac an Ghail & Haywood 2007:111-112; Burton 2005:64). One needs to recognise that the subjects of representation are not only social groups but also involve the construction of visual ideas about masculinity. The symbiotic relationship between the representation and discourse helps to give meaning to *MH's* visual texts of construction and representations.

#### **4.7.1 Masculinity and male identity in mediation and representation**

Whitehead (2006), and Carter and Steiner (2004) observe that the first lessons about masculinity and femininity are formed by visual representations that mould for men and women the goals and limits of gender identification. It is very difficult to explain how and why men identify either with or against any given visual text. Perhaps the most important insight applies that representations require interpretation. When interpreting visual texts, one takes into consideration that the process includes the difficulty of making absolute statements about the relationship between representations and gender identification. Consequently it is difficult to predict how any given image of masculinity will be received and interpreted.

O'Shaughnessy and Stadler (2006:73) argue that the media constitute language that constructs the world and reality by naming, evaluating, representing, categorising, and defining. There is a complex relationship between representation and reality.<sup>21</sup> It can be argued that there cannot be unbiased objectifications of the world, since all representations originate from human beings. By carrying the bias of a particular person or group of people, these representations remain relative. As far as the veracity of representation is concerned, one needs to make up one's own mind.

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<sup>21</sup> As Richard Dyer (1993:3) puts it: "This is difficult territory. I accept that one apprehends reality only through representations of reality, through texts, discourses, images; there is no such thing as unmediated access to reality. But, because one can see reality only through representation it does not follow that one does not see reality at all ... Reality is always more extensive and complicated than any system of representation can possibly comprehend and we always sense that this so – representation never 'get' reality, which is why human history has produced so many different and changing ways of trying to get it".

It is evident that the work of cultural criticism in masculinity makes visible the processes by which representations become meaningful, while the political investments are at stake in those meanings. Differences of taste or aesthetic importance are inevitably associated with the politics of sex and gender (Kimmel *et al.* 2005:462-463; Adams & Savran 2002:153-156).

Anderson (2010) describes the problematic process of identity formation during which one identifies something as *without*, excluding multiple processes of identification *with or against*. It appears then that representations only become meaningful during the interaction between the reader / spectator and the artefact. Interpretation is a continuing process which involves adopting and rejecting a variety of meanings, instead of searching for a fixed meaning. Cooper (2013:145-8) and Kimmel *et al.* (2005:47) confirm that one has to acknowledge that finding fixed meanings is impossible while separating the various components of identity; since a gay male, for instance, could interpret the visual images in a variety of ways, depending on how he denies or interprets (views/reads) the visual images. This important notion emphasises that meaning and identification will always be fluid and open to change.

The various forms of masculinity might share predictable interconnections with other variants of identity, which makes it impossible to discuss masculinity without taking into account its relationship to race, class, nationality, and sexuality.

#### **4.7.2 Is more than one identity an issue?**

Foucault's (1980, 1998) 'subject' reinforces the idea that an individual has many identities. One way for a person to obtain an identity is distinguishing oneself from what is believed in discourse to be one's opposite. As 'masculine' and 'feminine' are perceived as being opposed to each other in much the way that 'male' and 'female' are, the achievement of male identity involves insisting on a distance from the female subject and her femininity; male identity includes reduction of the believed binary opposites of masculinity and femininity. According to Foucault (1980, 1998), the variability of our identities emphasises an investment in men's distinctness, including the disapproval of what men distinguish themselves from. Men's distinctness

includes the belief that the masculine body – as at times visually displayed in the media – is pivotal to popular culture.

Jeffords (1994) acknowledges multiple masculine identities. She believes that the masculine body is a central feature of popular culture and national identity. In the view of body image, Jeffords (1994) points out that the visual representation of the masculine body differs during the presidencies of American presidents, for example Reagan (1988-1990) and Bush (1990-2000). Jeffords (1994) links her view of more than one masculine identity to the perceived soft body of President Carter's period. On the other hand, the hard body is an image that was perpetuated during Reagan's presidency to counteract the soft-body image of the Carter years. During the 1980s, the hard body suited a firmly militaristic foreign policy. Jeffords (1994) points out, however, that the most recent soldierly identity includes the 'sensitive family man' with the lauding of family values that require the father as the authoritative person of the domestic activities. She argues that the hard body of the late 1980s and early 1990s alters masculine strength to include internal, personal values that are confirmed by men's relations with their families. In considering more than one male identity, popular culture does not support the simplistic linear change from the soft to hard body image (Jeffords 1994:13).

An allied view of the same changes in movie heroes [having more than one masculine identity] is offered by Kibby (1996). Her argument, however, reaches a different conclusion. She recognises that men in their own masculinity [and viewing masculinity] become increasingly unsure of themselves in the 1970s. She ascribes this to increase and speedy technological developments at the workplace, the introduction of new groups of masculinities to the workforce, and the replacement of old established industries by new ones. Against this background with its destabilised male identity, men could no longer be certain about their standing in the economic system.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> For Kibby (1996:3), the hegemonic masculinity that is represented in the cinema of the eighties is not so much perceived masculine identity, but more a frantic response to a superficial lack of identity and includes a variety of identities.

In contrast, queer theory (introduced in the 1990s) also incorporates more than one identity or an alternative identity that is part of masculine identity in general. Queer theory builds on the fundamentals such as those provided by Foucault when it offers a new explanation of identity, and in particular, of gendered identity.<sup>23</sup> “It is not that we *are* our identity; rather we *perform* our identity” (MacKinnon 2003:5).

It can be argued that one also performs (executes) one’s gender and sexuality. The systems of gender and sexuality are kept alive by performing these systems. Queer theory also suggests [with reference to more than one identity] that gender [masculinity] can be changed. The ‘laws’ of gender are shaped by frequent visual performances of gender as illustrated in *MH*. At the very least, one would argue that the awareness of gender masculinity as ‘performative’ suggests its unsteadiness. This unsteadiness is the exact reason for the requirement of continual reworking.

Poststructuralist feminists, such as Butler, predict a multiplicity of gendered possibilities for people rather than only two opposed conditions. In this case, Butler (1990: xii) reasons that:

A set of parodic practices based in a performative theory of gender acts that disrupt the categories of the body, sex, gender and sexuality and occasion their subversive delignification and proliferation beyond the binary frame... of femininity and masculinity.

Butler (1990) focuses on alternative masculinities by reflecting on the performative theory of gender that has been enormously productive during the development of queer theory as a field of study and for the advancement of an anti-homophobic political agenda for gay, lesbian, bi-gender, and transsexual rights. It is important to acknowledge queer theory, since inclusive masculinities are represented and constructed in *MH*.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> Queer theory is used here to support Foucault’s position. Note that there is no intention to discuss queer theory per se.

<sup>24</sup> Many male queer theorists and some female queer theorists focus on alternative masculinities, especially as they are represented in the media. Even more radically, some queer theorists embrace masculinity when its signs are manifested in female rather than male bodies (Anderson 2010:7-8; 93-101; Kimmel *et al.* 2005:45-47).

Synnott (2009:48-49) and Kimmel *et al.* (2005:45-46) report about several contemporary feminists who strive for the acknowledgement of multiplicity of gendered sexual statuses, as well as the abolition of gender by structuring equality so thoroughly in society that many forms of sexuality are recognised as equally valid and gender no longer organises social life at all. From these discussions, one can argue that although some contemporary feminists seek to claim masculinity for women or to multiply genders, other feminists strive to minimise gender polarisation with the purpose of eliminating the issue of gender altogether. Recognising multiple genders also contribute to viewing and representing masculinity more inclusively.

### **4.7.3 Masculinity, cultural diversity, and identity**

By discussing masculinity, identity, and diversity; it is important to consider the most recent views of cultural identities as one of the main areas in which cultural studies and 'seeing' the various masculinities and identities has been developed visually. For the purpose of this study, practices of cultural meaning as represented in the visual images of the variety of masculinities, and male identities in *MH* inform one aspect of culture and a display of activities in visual images from the point of view of an audience member.

Cultural identity and displaying a variety of identities are a complex idea, for example, (in general) a man could be an ordinary kind of person, perhaps similar in some ways to many of us. This man's identity, however, is neither singular nor fixed because the person could play different roles depending on the situation. Mac an Ghail and Haywood (2007:206; 221-222) and, Thwaites *et al.* (2002:22) proffer the view that identity comprises attributes that can combine different segments, for example social selfhood (self-identity) and involves role playing in presenting different identities/different selves. Identity is also structured by social discourse and a range of factors informs cultural identities: race, class, gender, ethnicity, age, and sexuality. Sexuality, furthermore, contributes to the diversity, variations, and inclusiveness of identities. In the case of *MH*, it means who are the audience of *MH* and the various popular texts that it consists of? It can be argued that factors of cultural identity may converge in contradictory ways. Gender and class, for example, can introduce the production of identities that many people find difficult to deal with;

some men may not know how to treat women from a higher class, or who are professional and successful.<sup>25</sup>

Cultural identity and dialogism amongst social texts become a motive when one considers the production of social meaning. One also notes that genre, narrative, medium, and ideology in the case of *MH* contribute to the representation and construction of inclusive masculinities. When it comes to cultural identity and social texts, the power of authoring texts and representing reality is loaded with social power (Thwaites *et al.* 2002:222-3).

While considering the variations and diversions of cultural identity with reference to masculinity, it is clear that identity is marked by difference. Categories, such as gender categories, can mirror an unequal relationship between us (those people inside the category) and them (the ones outside and from a different category). There are fewer differences between individuals in comparison with the larger differences between us and them.<sup>26</sup>

With reference to masculinity Synnott (2009) and Segal (2007) support the essentialist theory that there is also an essence to an identity category. These authors explain essentialism by referring to variations and diversions in a category that do not know they are not in the category. Having a penis, or having a Y chromosome, are apt examples of this essentialist view of the category 'men'. This point of view, for example, of the presence of a Y chromosome as essential to being a man reduces gender to one factor. Such reasoning implies that identity in general and gender identity in particular reduce gender to the presence of a single characteristic or essence. This essence categorisation contradicts the representation of inclusive masculinities in *MH*.

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<sup>25</sup> Since cultural identity and position are complicated in individual cases, the layers and interactions get more complicated when one turns to group situations. It seems that it comprises a wide range of groups and sub-groups and a diversity of cultural identities. The possibility then also exists for varied readings and interpretations of texts (Thwaites *et al.* 2002:221-222).

<sup>26</sup> In other words, without difference, there could not be such a thing as identity; without a 'them', there could never be an 'us'. Categories – like gender categories – investigated by human beings are organised into systems that make 'us and them' possible (Woodward 2004:51).

Synnott (2009:48-49) and Brittan (1989:24) share the opinion that critiques the above socialisation view, since this view finds it difficult to explain the exception to the rule. The socialisation view (the presence of a Y chromosome) can neither explain nor give reasons for individual or social change. It can be argued that this makes it difficult to explain why some men have not accepted the request to participate in heterosexuality – with reference to sexual orientation or sexual identity – or why some men may feel uncomfortable with playing according to the rules of the hegemonic ‘male game’.

Research in the Norwegian forestry industry over a 20-year period observes a move away from the traditional ‘macho man’ towards the technically and professionally proficient ‘organisational man’ or ‘management man’ (Kimmel *et al.* 2005:226-8). Kimmel *et al.* report that despite this shift in emphasis, conventional signifiers of ‘real’ masculinity, such as physical competence, strength, and toughness remain. The most respected men are still the ones who are displaying masculinities with the power saw and the time manager in the forestry (2005:277). *MH* similarly contributes by focusing on the ‘macho man’, but also engineers an inclusive masculinity (Chapter 7).

#### **4.7.4 Male identity and consumerism: Who is the new man?**

Anderson (2009:32-33) and Strinati (1995:225) argue that when popular cultural endorsements and media images are dictating our sense of reality for men, and when it suggests that style takes priority over content, then it becomes more difficult to retain the difference between art and popular culture. With this perception in mind, one could argue that there are no longer any agreed criteria that serve to differentiate art from popular culture. This argument also fuels the fears that mass culture would eventually subvert high culture. While looking at how the media plays (and invest) in consumerism, this study considers the notion of the postmodern condition that finds it difficult to distinguish between the economy and popular culture.

Postmodernism has ties with ideas about the scale and effects of consumerism and media-saturation as central aspects of the modern development of industrial, capitalist societies; the economic needs of capitalism have shifted from production to

consumption (*Thwaites et al.* 2002:217-220; Strinati 1995:235). Although South Africa is regarded as a developing country, it also seems that the need for people to consume has become equally important as the need for people to produce. Improved prosperity, more leisure time, and the capability of important sections of the working class to engage in prominent types of consumption have raised awareness about the consumption and production processes (*Thwaites et al.* 2002:217-220). It also seems that the growth of consumer credit and the increase of agencies such as advertising, marketing, design, and public relations persuade people to consume for the purpose of maintaining a lifestyle with high living standards. *MH* contributes to fuelling such consumption.

In this process, *MH* plays an important role. The rise of modern forms of mass communication and the connected production of the popular media culture, therefore, become vitally important to the explanatory framework of postmodern theory. Incidentally, these visual texts have become so essential to communication and information flows within and between modern societies that they, in conjunction with consumerism, give rise to the distinguishing features of postmodernism.

Christian (1994) depicts pro-feminist men as a minority who may not necessarily be active in anti-sexist groups. Similarly, Anderson (2010) and Kimmel and Messner (1992) depict anti-sexist men as active supporters of women's demands and family reforms.<sup>27</sup>

Research conducted by Christian (1994) on non-macho and non-gay men between the ages of 21 and 54 years reveals that they view themselves as sensitive and vulnerable men who enjoy better relationships with women and children. He identifies the aspects that influence the behaviour and, most importantly, lifestyle of moving towards the 'new man' as the non-identification with traditional fathers and strong identification with nurturing fathers and parents who do not conform to conventional domestic roles; a rejection of macho behaviour at school and a

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<sup>27</sup> Christian (1994:3) explains that "many men's experience and expectations of life and traditional ideas of masculinity have been seriously called into question in the late twentieth century".

preference for the company of girls; and the generalised influence of feminism, often based on a relationship with one feminist in particular.

Men who are changing their lifestyle are counterparts of the new man who is associated with commercial masculinity and the expansion of consumerism as depicted in visual texts of *MH*. The changing lifestyle of the new man is characterised by clothing outlets for men, with clothes that are targeting an aspirational lifestyle rather than class in the presence of new visual representations of men in advertising and on television (Synnott 2009; Seidler 2006). On cards and posters and in style magazines a self-confident, groomed, and muscular man emerges.

Gay men, predominant in the representation of image and fashion, are at the forefront of these changes and are held responsible for the 'feminisation' of men's fashion that is one of the contributions to inclusive masculinities. Also, boundaries between gay and straight, male and female are becoming more blurred, especially in media representations that include marketing and fashion. The changing lifestyle of the new man also includes young urban professional images with, for example, their corporate power look and the outdoor casual look. The new man – associated with commercialism and consumerism – also faces serious challenges. The millions of job losses during the recession of the 1980s and the early 1990s – with its shift from manufacturing to servicing and from industrialisation to electronic technology – subsequently have compromised working-class men. In contemporary South Africa, unemployment remains a pressing issue. The employment conditions are also exacerbated by feminism, since it has given women the confidence to move into masculine fields of work, while integrating work with motherhood. All these examples contribute to viewing masculinity differently by moving away from a hegemonic view (or rule) of masculinity by allowing men to become more amenable, in touch with themselves, and inclusive of other men (Segal 2007; Macnamara 2006; MacKinnon 2003; Haywood & Mac an Ghail 2003).

The male body as an 'objectified commodity' during the 1980s has propelled appearance and possessions to become vehicles for conveying visual meanings. It marks a growth point for renewed consumerism by creating a niche market of sensuous visual texts in the form of imagery of young, affluent masculinity of the

1990s. Men's lifestyles are more concerned about good times without any political or social agenda, including some 'laddism' that has become part of inclusive masculinities.

The new lad, who has his origins in pop music and football, is depicted as having a carefree laugh with his buddies in lifestyle magazine such as *Loaded*. This representation is also seen as a clever way of making money from young male consumers by appealing to the working-class 'jack-the-lad'. Other observers view laddism as a form of rebellion and of reasserting fundamental masculinity. The continuing influence of inclusive masculinities is clear in magazines such as *Loaded* and *Maxim* (Segal 2007; Kimmel *et al.* 2005; Crewe 2003).

The 'new man-as-nurturer' can also be considered as a response to feminism, to male consciousness-raising and the activities of men's groups, and to the influence of both male and female intellectuals. However, many researchers and academics state that the new man is "nothing less than the advertising industry's dramatization of its own self-image and driven primarily by commercial greed" (Carter & Steiner 2004:214).

Likewise, *MH* is continually inventing 'new types' of men. The frequently mentioned 'millennium man' and the 'dad lad' originate from the beginning of the year 2000. While there is extensive acknowledgement that masculinity has changed significantly during the 1990s, it is difficult to provide a clear agreement about the actual meaning of the new man. The only defining quality that is worth mentioning with some degree of certainty is that the new man is certainly not the 'old man', his father. The present-day youth have all been influenced by this new man-ism in one way or another, while developing and moving towards an inclusive masculinity (Anderson 2010; Synnott; 2009; Segal 2007).

#### **4.8 SUMMARY**

This chapter focuses on some of the most important trends and issues that are related to media and male identity by exploring current theories and questions that either directly or indirectly influences the modes of masculinity and male identity in the context of the interpretive framework of social semiotics.

The next chapter describes the research methodology that has been used during this study.

## **CHAPTER 5**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **5.1 INTRODUCTION**

Chapter 5 begins with a discussion of the mixed methods orientation. The mixed methods orientation between the quantitative and qualitative research that guides this study is briefly outlined. The discussion includes a general orientation to the study; a description of mixed method (quantitative content analysis and qualitative multimodal semiotic analysis) research, the population, and the sampling. This research project is also an extended case study with *MH* as a single unit, inclusive of 27 visual texts that provide a wider set of units. The qualitative multimodal model that has been developed validates the steps that arrive at a critical visual methodology and a critical approach for interpreting visual texts and modalities that influence a critical understanding of texts. The researcher followed a mixed method approach.

#### **5.2 MIXED METHOD ORIENTATION**

In reviewing the natural science model, the focus of this study is a qualitative to quantitative research approach as discussed in Bryman (2012:622) and Wimmer and Dominick (2006:7-9). Firstly, the study follows intrerpretivism that requires the social scientists to grasp the subjective meaning of social actions (Wagner, Kawulich & Garner 2012:167). Secondly, the methodological orientation of mixed methods for this study follows realism.

Realism shares two features with positivism: A belief that the natural and the social sciences can and should apply the same kinds of approach to the collection of data and to explanation, and a commitment to the view that there is an external reality to which scientists direct their attention (In other words, there is a reality that is separate from our descriptions thereof) (Bryman 2012:29).

There are two major forms of realism, i.e. empirical realism and critical realism. This study employs critical realism of which the policy is to identify the reality of the natural order, and the events and discourses of the social world. Realism further embraces our ability to understand and so change the social world when we identify

the structures at work that generate those events and discourses (Bryman 2012:28-30, Wimmer & Dominick 2006:7-9).

For the purpose of this study, mixed methods research can be seen as the researcher mixing or integrating quantitative and qualitative research techniques, methods, approaches, concepts, or language into a single study (Bryman 2012:632, Wagner, Kawulich & Garner 2012:167). Mixed methods follow a social research approach and are adopted for this study to investigate social constructs and visual representations (Bryman 2012; Babbie 2001). Philosophically, mixed methods research makes use of the pragmatic method and system of philosophy. Mixed methods logic of inquiry includes the use of induction (or discovery of patterns), deduction (testing of theories and assumptions), and abduction (uncovering and relying on the best of a set of explanations for understanding one's results) (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie 2004:17). Ragin (1994:2-3) maintains that mixed methods research is distinguished from other ways of commenting on society by its application.

Bryman (2012:628-630) and Creswell (2003:7-15) highlight arguments against mixed methods research. The first is the idea that research methods carry epistemological promises where two methods create conflicting views about how social reality should be studied. Secondly, the idea that quantitative and qualitative research is distinct paradigms where epistemological assumptions, values, and methods are inseparably entangled and are unsuited between paradigms.

Besides the arguments against mixed methods research, there are also two different versions that have implications about the nature of quantitative and qualitative research. According to the epistemological version of the qualitative and quantitative embedded methods and paradigm arguments, mixing is not possible mainly because of the opposing principles on which the two approaches are founded. The technical version gives greater strength to the data collection and data analysis techniques with which quantitative and qualitative research are each associated and sees these approaches as capable of being fused. If one recognises that quantitative and qualitative research each has individual ontological and epistemological assumptions, connections do not have to be viewed as inevitable and static (Bryman 2012:631; Creswell 2003:4-5). Bryman (2012) and Creswell (2003) essentially view the technical version about the nature of the two strategies of quantitative and

qualitative research as compatible. As a result, mixed methods research becomes feasible and desirable. It is in that spirit that the researcher, for this study, combined quantitative and qualitative research and followed a mixed method approach.

A variety of approaches was followed in this study to combine the quantitative and qualitative research in mixed methods research. The mixed methods aim at systematic knowledge and offer an alternative to a natural scientific approach. The collection of evidence for this study does not necessarily seek to be selective, since there potentially is an infinite quantity of visual texts that can be analysed. It does not imply that all the evidence collected is used.

In this study the mixed methods research focuses on the quantitative content analysis of visual texts, and the development and application of a qualitative multimodal visual semiotic analysis model for analysing the representation and construction of masculinity in visual texts of *MH*. The researcher argues that mixed methods offers a suitable approach for understanding the representation of masculinity construction and the analysis of the visual texts and firmly proves that *MH* uses 'special' language for its narrative about masculinity.

### **5.2.1 Qualitative part of mixed methods**

Qualitative research is a research strategy where words are emphasised, and it embodies a view of social reality in terms of its procedures that are less constricted and allows the researcher to conduct the investigation in a more interactive manner. Bryman (2012:35-36) defines the qualitative approach as the opposite of the quantitative approach where measurement is not employed. As said in Wimmer and Dominick (2006:114-115), during the qualitative part of the study, the researcher was an active participant in the collection of the data; and the design of the visual semiotics multimodal model evolved during the research. In the process, the multimodal model had been changed and adjusted. In this study, the researcher was also an instrument and developed theory by designing a visual semiotic multimodal model that was applied and tested. In this study, observations produce an investigation that leads to an inductive data analysis, i.e. a matter of reconstructing reality from the researcher's frame of reference (Bryman 2012, Wimmer & Dominick 2006), since there is no single reality. The researcher plays a

significant role in the interpretation of the results with a particular emphasis on intuition-based knowledge and social processes (Wimmer & Dominick 2006; Babbie 2001); either in terms of his own experiences in the field and with the reflexivity he brings to the role (Banks, 2007:xi).

Although the term 'data' is associated with a more positivist approach of social science, Banks (2007:12) uses data as "the objects of sociological attention". Banks (2007:12) asserts that when one sees data from a positivist perspective it means the data is already 'out there'; while from an interpretivist viewpoint the data are "brought into being through the process of inquiry". Visual texts are frequently reproduced, either for the next independent edition, or the next edition of a series. By being frequently reproduced, visual texts include various materials and generate multiple meanings. A multimodal semiotic analysis, to some degree, challenges the frequency of reproduction by taking a snapshot approach with the view of subjecting the visual texts to watchful awareness (Van Leeuwen & Jewitt 2007). For this study, it is important to note that the data includes the significance of understanding the meaning of the context in which these visual texts have been analysed.

To some extent, any object can transmit meaning (Gillespie & Toynbee 2006:2). However, the primary function of media products is the making and consuming of meaning. The term 'text' is used in a very pliable way. The most important point is that media texts consist of a network of 'signs' – words, gestures, texts, and sounds – that is created collaboratively to convey a multitude of possible meanings (Gillespie & Toynbee 2006:2-3). The multimodal semiotic visual analysis model that is discussed in the next chapter has been developed, since the term 'visual texts' emphasises the fact that media artefacts construct and express meanings.

In order to achieve a proper understanding of an in-depth multimodal semiotic analysis of the visual texts, a qualitative approach is followed. The emphasis is on allowing themes to emerge out of literature, which is combined into a multimodal model. The argument for a smaller sample size is that qualitative researchers often start with the belief that bigger representations badly misrepresent or fail to reveal successful essential social phenomena (Ragin 1994:81). For the purpose of the multimodal qualitative semiotic analysis, the visual texts are coded in terms of themes present in the multimodal semiotic analysis model: visual grammar,

iconography, modality, colour, typography and positioning. These themes were selected from a range of sources critically read on semiotic visual analysis. The categorisations of these themes are relatively straightforward, although a more interpretative approach has been taken. As semiotics as a method entails manifest and latent content of the visual texts, with these six identified themes, it was possible to probe beneath the surface in order to ask deeper questions about what is happening in the visual texts. The 27 visual texts used in this research were already classified in terms of the representation and construction of masculinity, since the focus is on *MH*.

### **5.2.2 Quantitative part of mixed methods**

Bryman (2008:715) confirms that quantitative research includes quantification in the collection and analysis of data. Content analysis is rooted in quantitative research and is one form of analysis that was used as part of the mixed methods approach in this study. Content analysis involves the analysing of texts that seeks to quantify content in terms of pre-determined categories in a replicable and organised manner (Bryman 2012:710; Babbie 2001:304-315). In addition to quantity, content analyses need to be systematic and objective. Objectivity means that there is clarity in the procedures for assigning the cover lines (as in this research) to categories; so that the researcher's personal biases restrict the process as little as possible. Systematic means that the application of the rules for content analysis is done in a stable manner so that bias is again suppressed (Wimmer & Dominick 2006:151).

Content analysis can be usefully contrasted with two other approaches to the analysis of the content of communication, namely semiotics and ethnographic content analysis. In this study content analysis and semiotics are used (Bryman 2012:291; Wimmer & Dominick 2006:152). In the context of the editorials and covers in *MH*, the topics in the cover lines are important items to code. The categories/subjects reveal which topics are frequently used on the covers, and which topics are used more than others. The major objective in recording such details is to map the main categories of representation and construction of masculinity on the covers. From a quantitative analysis point of view, the researcher engages in a coding process after the data (covers, editorials, and flip covers) have been collected. The various cover lines – known as teasers in the printing industry – on

the cover of *MH* magazines are categorised and counted. Coding is a crucial stage in the process of doing content analysis. Two main elements are present: designing a coding schedule and a coding manual. The coding schedule is a form where all the data relating to an item are entered. A variety of distinctive items of information is methodically condensed to a boundary set of characteristics comprising the range of variables on the front covers (Wimmer & Dominick 2006:152-153, Babbie 2001:386-387). Codes were generated from the analysed data for categorising purposes. The researcher followed emergent coding after a primary examination of the data. The resulting category system was constructed based on common factors or themes. In the case of the front covers, the cover lines emerge from the data itself. The researcher examined the frequency of the cover lines, and clustered them into the following content categories: Adventure, Body, Brain, Career, Fat, Fashion, Fitness, Food, Gym, Health, Money, Muscles, Sex and Relax. These categories are mutually exclusive and exhaustive. The coding manual includes all the possible categories for each dimension being coded. The coding manual includes: The masthead colour, and front cover guy<sup>28</sup>; The career of the *MH* front cover guy; Shirts the *MH* front cover guy is wearing; Colour of the shirts; Jeans or/and Beard of the *MH* front cover guy; Amount of cover lines and smiles; and Content categories and cover lines on the cover. The coding manual is important as it provides coders with complete listings of all categories for each dimension they are coding and guidance about how to interpret the dimensions (Bryman 2012:299; Babbie 2001:311).

The unobtrusiveness of content analysis does not require the same level of ethical scrutiny that is common for researchers selecting methods that require research participants. Content analysis is also flexible and contribute to the completeness of the mixed methods approach (Bryman 2012:304-305; 637; Wimmer & Dominick 2006:152-153). In this study, the content analysis method is transparent: the coding scheme and sampling procedure are clearly set out and follow-up studies will be feasible. This makes the research unobtrusive.

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<sup>28</sup> The concept 'guy' is used here, as *MH* itself refers to the male on the front cover as the '*MH* cover guy'.

### 5.2.3 Mixed methods approach

The mixed method approach should not be seen as mutually exclusive and in this study the research design included characteristics of both approaches. Besides semiotics as theory and method, gender theory and theoretical approaches and views on masculinity were incorporated. The approach of triangulation occurred as a planned strategy in this study. Triangulation was achieved in the combination of two data collection methods and reference to multiple sources of obtaining data. The two data collection methods were a quantitative content analysis and a qualitative multimodal semiotic analysis. Triangulation took place, since the results of the quantitative content analysis supported, enhanced, and was crosschecked against the results of the visual semiotic analysis. That approach made the research more robust.

Completeness as an approach of mixed methods indicated that a more complete answer to the research questions was achieved, since quantitative content analysis was mixed with the qualitative multimodal semiotic analysis. In this way, the content categories contributed to valuable additional information by indicating which cover lines were used across the analysed visual texts. The same rationalisation and arguments were used in the analysed editorials with reference to the discourse of the editorials. How masculinity was represented and constructed in visual texts in *MH* required not only the quantitative content analysis but also the semiotic visual analysis multimodal model that was developed and tested qualitatively to arrive at a comprehensive understanding of how such a model contributed to the visual analysis of texts.

Another mixed methods approach that contributed to this study, was instrument development, i.e. a range of sources were used to develop a multimodal semiotic visual analysis model. The main purpose was to combine a hexagon model with six components that could be used to analyse any visual text. This was done and used in conjunction with the quantitative content analysis to have greater credibility. To this end, quantitative content analysis was used in conjunction with the qualitative visual semiotic analysis. This approach tested the model (instrument) and, as a result, enhanced the credibility of the research. The researcher also found it useful to employ specific examples from the front covers, editorials, and flip covers from the

qualitative visual semiotic multimodal model analysis to illustrate the quantitative findings from the content analysis. The latter contributed to the strength of this approach, since the collected qualitative data and the visual semiotic analysis thereof revealed a more complex set of findings with regard to visual analysis and making meaning in texts.

### **5.3 THE POPULATION**

The research population comprised all the copies of *MH* since the first South African issue in 1995. As a subscriber of *MH*, the researcher had access to most issues since 2007. The accessible population of this research project were the *MH* issues from August 2010 to July 2011. This period coincided with the commencement of the thesis. The population parameters for the quantitative and qualitative analyses were covers (12), editorials (12), and flip covers (3). The units of analysis are referred to as 'visual texts' (Table 5.1).

Table 5.1 illustrates the selection process of *MH* from the universe of possible texts, and how the target population of magazines were demarcated to South Africa, then to monthly editions, as well as distinguishing between lifestyle magazines targeting women and targeting men. The population, sample, and units of analysis are also illustrated.

### **5.4 SAMPLING PROCEDURE**

The type of sampling that was applied was non-probability. This implied that the choice of units for analysis was regulated and every unit in the target population did not have an equal and possible chance of being selected to be included in the sample (Bryman 2012:187, Wimmer & Dominick 2006:89-90). Furthermore the research is more qualitative than quantitative, and findings cannot be generalised. In the instance of the covers, editorials, and flip covers the purposive sampling method was used. Purposive sampling was used as a method as these visual texts were simply available by virtue of its accessibility. The visual texts were selected on the basis of the researchers own judgement about which ones would have been the most useful or representative. Using a purposive sample means that the visual texts that were used in this research were not representative of the visual texts in *MH* as a whole. The sample size included 27 visual texts.

Chapter 5  
Research methodology

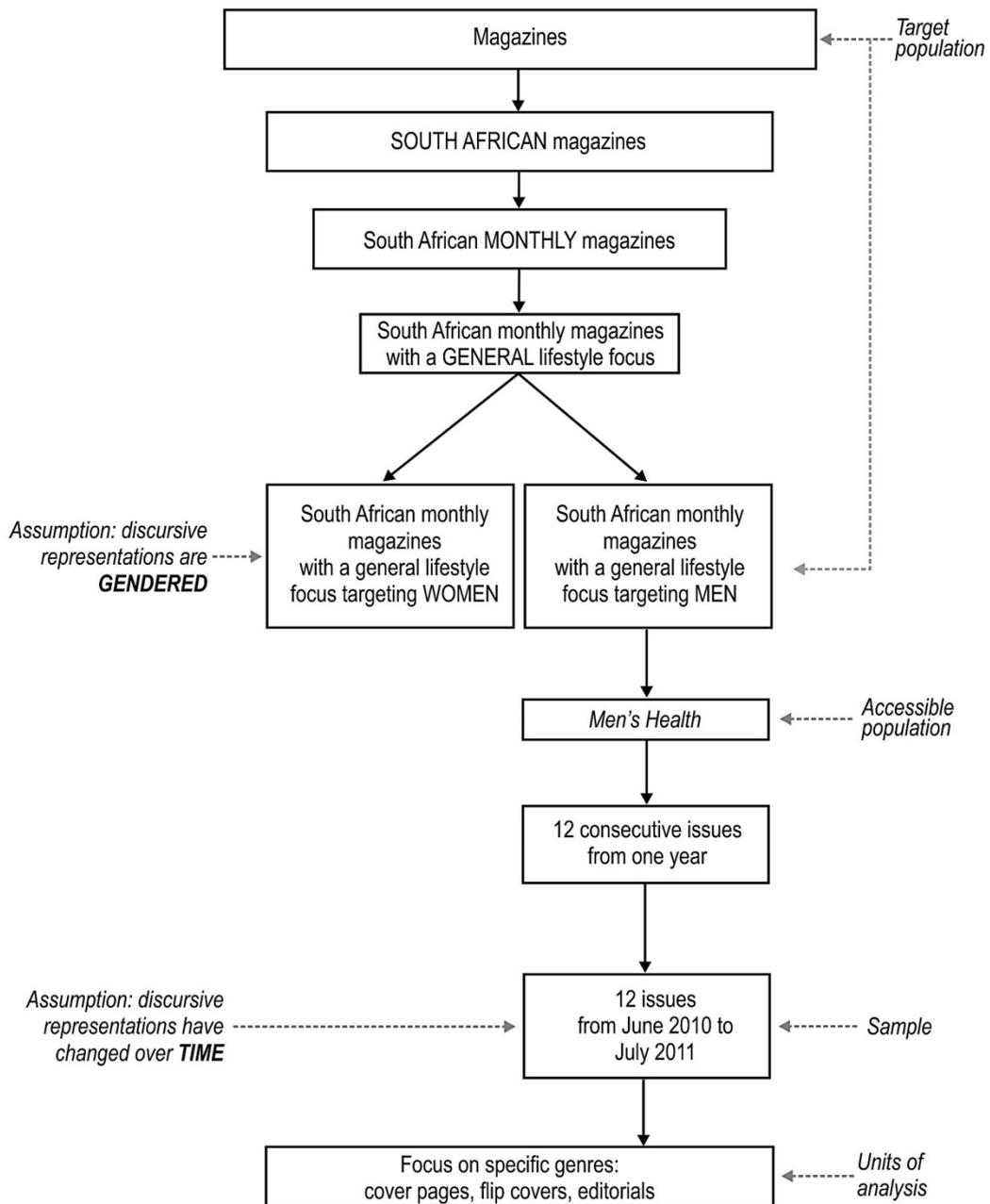


Figure 5.1: Sample selection by progressive selection and reduction (Wodak & Krzyzanowski 2008:36)

**Table 5.1: Population parameters**

Quantitative analysis	Qualitative analysis
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Twelve Front covers: August 2010 to July 2011</li> <li>• Twelve Editorials: August 2010 to July 2011</li> </ul> <p>Quantitative content analysis: Cover lines on front covers and flip covers coded into variable categories; editorials coded into variable categories.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Three covers</li> <li>• Three editorials</li> <li>• Three flip covers</li> </ul> <p>Multimodal visual semiotic analysis</p>

The quantitative aspect of the study comprised a content analysis of the covers and editorials (August 2010 to July 2011). The various cover lines on the front and flip covers and editorials were categorised, counted, and analysed.

To conduct the qualitative part of the study, the multimodal semiotic analysis model described in the next chapter was used and applied (tested) to the visual texts. For this part of the study, three of the 12 issues had been purposively sampled. The sample size was nine visual texts consisting of three front covers, three editorials, and three flip covers. The following three issues were purposively sampled, only three of the 12 issues included flip covers:

- *MH* October 2010 edition had a flip style guide called ‘Summer 2010’;
- *MH* December 2011 included a flip guide called ‘Tech Guide 2011’; and
- *MH* April 2011 contained a flip style guide called ‘Winter 2011’.

## 5.5 TIME FRAME

A cross-sectional time frame was used in this study, since the analysis of the visual texts were executed during a period of one year, since these events appeared in *MH* from June 2010 to July 2011. This time frame concurred with the time frameworks as described in Du Plooy (2009:91) and Babbie (2001:102).

## 5.6 THE CASE STUDY

This thesis exemplifies an extended case study, since it draws attention to masculinities like they are represented in *MH*. Gerring (2004:341) defines a case study as “an intensive study of a single unit with an aim to generalise across a larger set of units”. In this instance, case study indicates that the research is based on *MH* only; the research investigates the properties of *MH* as a single case (Gerring 2004:341-353). This case study is considered to be an intensive study of 27 visual texts (sets of units) in *MH* as a single unit for the purpose of understanding a larger grouping of [similar] units (Gerring 2004:342). For the purpose of the case study the researcher sees such a unit (27 visual texts) to be investigated in its entirety.

Thorough interrogation of the visual representation of masculinity forms the essential characteristic of this case study Babbie (2001:285). The extended case method serves the purpose of executing a semiotic visual multimodal analysis of visual texts in *MH*. By designing and testing, a visual semiotic analysis model can contribute to rebuilding semiotic theory and methodology “instead of approving or rejecting it” (Babbie 2001:286).

In this case, the research focused inductively on individual set of units (27 visual texts) at a time and for this reason the researcher needed to be concerned with the control of specific variables of these visual texts.

Hence, qualitative researchers aim not to limit a phenomenon – make it neat, and tidy, and comfortable – but to break it open, unfasten, or interrupt it so that a description of the phenomenon, in all of its contradictions, messiness, and depth, is [re]presented (Mayan 2009:11).

Inductive reasoning is used in qualitative research to focus more on the “logic of exploring meaning making processes as experience by... different mass-media messages” (Du Plooy 2009:33). As Mayan (2009:25) observes ‘research is dialogic’ and it involves, therefore, a subjective relationship. In this research, it was assumed that there were a multitude of realities and truths that could not be represented. Focusing on a multitude of truths describes a constructivist perspective that is rooted in relativist ontology and a subjective epistemology; the researcher and the visual image co-create a particular understanding (Mayan 2009:25). For the purpose of this study epistemological questions deal with how one can know and explain

something. This means one has to decide what types of statements about social reality is permissible. In other words, one has to decide what qualifies as being social scientific knowledge.

The researcher went beyond the data by proposing a prediction about the salience, representation, and construction of masculinity in *MH*. The visual analysis indicates what is prioritised or salient in *MH* and what is not. It reveals clearly how visual texts allude to consumerism, and how visual texts in the magazine genre of *MH* demonstrate patterns of media representation about masculinities.

## **5.7 A CRITICAL VISUAL METHODOLOGY**

In order to understand the value and use of visual texts in the production of meaning, it is necessary to consider how different analytical stances approach data. In general, positivist modes of analysis understand data as ontologically distinct in the sense that one deals with the nature of reality; something 'out there' that can be gathered and studied. Interpretive analysis consider insiders viewpoints – that includes intersubjective and subjective perceptions – to understand the social realities reviewing of visual texts that are studied as ontologically constituted through the act of the research (Banks 2007:37).

In considering the field of analytical traditions, one needs to differentiate between those forms of visual analysis that deal with the analysis of pre-existing visual texts, and those that create the images (empirical) and then afterwards analyse them. The former modes – the analysis of pre-existing visual texts – are practised by scholars in the fields of communication studies (as one field). This study is based on the first form of visual analysis.

In the quest to understand the significance of visual texts for creating meanings, a review of a critical approach is necessary for the interpretation of visual texts. The main critique of the critical approach argues that it is not a technical question or method that is important, and that it needs to focus on the analytical debates that happen to visual texts (Van Leeuwen & Jewitt 2007; Gillespie & Toynebee 2006; Thwaites *et al.* 2002). With the critical approach in mind, three indicators are important:

Firstly, texts need to be taken seriously. It is important to look at texts cautiously and thoroughly. The careful or cautious consideration of visual texts is necessitated by the fact that one cannot completely decrease, reduce, analyse, and simplify their contexts (Thwaites *et al.* 2002:30-31). Rose (2001:15) proposes, therefore, that “visual representations have their own effects”.

Secondly, a critical approach includes considering the social circumstances and effects of visual objects (Rose 2001:15). When one regards visual cultural representations as a cultural practice and process, the important articulation of meaning, the negotiation of social conflicts, and the production of visual texts call for an essential analysis of cultural meanings (Gillespie & Toynbee 2006:122-123; Rose 2001:15-16).

Thirdly, it is necessary to have a unique way of reading texts (Rose 2001:16). When one considers ‘ways of seeing’ while keeping in mind that one observes culturally, historically, geographically, and socially; then the way one observes is not natural or innocent. Haraway (1991:190) affirms that by carefully considering the position from where one observes, one might become answerable for the way one learns to observe. Haraway’s opinion that this is not an easy task is endorsed by Rogoff (1998).

The critical approach to visual texts needs to be briefly sketched. The next section explores different interpretations of visual objects that are not all compatible with one another.

## **5.8 MODALITIES OF UNDERSTANDING VISUAL TEXTS**

The meanings of an image are created at three sites: the site(s) of the production of an image, the site of the created image, and the sites where it is available to various audiences (Rose 2001:16). Gillespie and Toynbee (2007:6) and Rose (2001:16) claim that these sites are complex processes because there are diverse aspects to each of their interactions. Rose (2001) calls these differences modalities, and she identifies three modalities that inform a critical understanding of texts:

The first modality is technology. Mirzoeff (1998:1) sees visual technology as any form of device that is designed either to be looked at or to improve natural vision,

from oil paintings to television and the Internet. One can also argue that technologies are used in an image to agree about its form, meaning, and effect. One can, for instance, also question the truthfulness of the camera, which has nothing to do with the technical attributes of the camera. In this case, the format of the technology is print media.

The second modality is composition. In making texts, it encompasses a variety of formal strategies: colour, content, and spatial organisation. At times, all these formal strategies can occur in one single visual image (Rose 2001:17). One can argue that the form of an image is determined by its production in relation to the genre of texts that accompanies a particular image. Genre is a way of classifying visual images into certain groups. Images that belong to the same genre share certain features. A particular genre shares a specific set of meaningful objects and locations (Rose 2001:17-19). The observation of visual texts, with special reference to photography, invites a response (Van Leeuwen 2005:146-149).

The third modality is society which refers to the variety of political, economic, and social transactions, practices and institutions that contain an image, and the manner in which it is seen and used (Van Leeuwen 2005:121-122; Rose 2001:17). There is a body of knowledge which argues that the features of this modality are the most significant characteristics of informing an understanding of visual texts. One can argue that cultural production is embedded in the economic processes that shape visual images (Rose 2001:20). In modern capitalism, one can also assume that production processes determine how they are organised, and include reducing time and saving space by allowing production techniques to be more flexible (Van Leeuwen 2005:121-122; Rose 2001:20-22).

Van Leeuwen (2005:121-122) and Rose (2001:23) indicate that most of the research on visual matters is not interested in the intentionality of the person who creates an image, despite the different angles from where the topic is approached. Firstly, there are researchers who argue that other modalities are producing an image account for its effects (Mac an Ghail & Haywood, 2007; Van Leeuwen & Jewitt 2007; Rose 2001; Lacey 1997). Secondly, there are also researchers who argue that, since the image is always made and viewed in relation to other texts, this wider visual context contributes more significantly to the meaning of the texts than the artist's anticipated

meaning (Mac an Ghail & Haywood, 2007; Van Leeuwen & Jewitt 2007; Rose 2001; Lacey 1997). Barthes (1977:145-6) aptly describes this perspective as 'the death of the author'. Thirdly, there are some researchers who maintain that the most important site where the meaning of an image is made is not its author, its production, or the created image, but its audiences who introduce their own ways of seeing and other forms of knowledge while they perceive an image. In the process, they make their own mediated meanings of the image (Mac an Ghail & Haywood, 2007; Van Leeuwen & Jewitt 2007; Rose 2001; Lacey 1997).

### **5.8.1 Viewing and meaning is not passive**

Media texts are also a dominant feature of the South African social environment. For instance, the visual texts of men on cover pages and in editorials may not be noticed simply because they are always there. In general, while people are paging through a magazine, these visual texts are taken for granted and may well be treated undisputedly. One can, therefore, argue that the visual texts are subject to change because they are continually being produced and renewed. The intent of visual texts in *MH* to engage men and the aim of these visual texts to convey some kind of predetermined information also produce reactions that vindicate their continuing production in the media.

Even when an academic perceives the media as part of the social environment, one cannot be viewed as being passive in the way that the cladding of a building is passive. Its unpredictability makes the environment of representations dynamic. It can be argued that the production of meanings happens whether or not one engages with the text (visual image) on a conscious level (Gillespie & Toynbee 2006:151, 153-154). Even when the text is attended to, there are meanings that the reader is mindful of while additional meanings are involuntarily produced. In this sense, it can be assumed that the readers of visual texts are not totally in control of their engagement with the visual text. Equally, one cannot argue that the text maker is totally in control of the production of meaning. The text (visual image) becomes an appealing locus of engagement. Not all the outcomes of the text are predictable or manageable (Berger 2006:49-50; Burton 2005:45).

### 5.8.2 Semiotics and a multimodal approach

Semiotics and social semiotics were comprehensively explored as a method and theory in Chapter 2 with the purpose of establishing the graphic representation of the multimodal semiotic visual analysis model. Chapter 3 described the context of masculinity theory. In Chapter 4, an overview of masculinities and the media, with specific reference to the visual text was extensively discussed in an attempt to position theoretical substructures as recommended by Babbie (2001:285-286).

Firstly, a multimodal semiotic visual analysis model is needed, developed, and used to analyse the visual texts in *MH* with the aim of explaining and predicting how semiotics can be applied (Chapter 6). Secondly, a segment of this study explores and describes the manner in which masculinity is represented and constructed in *MH*. While social semiotics is questioning truth, modality needs to be observed. Modality relates both to issues of representation – fact versus fiction, reality versus fantasy, real versus artificial, authentic versus fake – and to questions of social interaction because the truth is also a social issue.

It is important to recognise that a presentation is always either a representation or a representation of something else. Berger (2005) regards this formulation as congruent to the Chomskyan<sup>29</sup> view. Berger (2005) adds that a surface collection can only be understood in terms of an underlying code and a set of ‘deep rules’ that permits a translation of the possible alternatives in relation to the surface features. What is regarded as true in one social context is not necessarily considered as true in other contexts; each context contains its own range of consequences (Van Leeuwen 2005:160). Du Plooy (2009:32) warns that researchers need to be attentive

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<sup>29</sup> In the 1950s and 1960s, Noam Chomsky developed the idea that each sentence in a language has two levels of representation - a deep structure and a surface structure. The deep structure was (more-or-less) a direct representation of the basic semantic relations underlying a sentence, and was mapped onto the surface structure (which followed the phonological form of the sentence very closely) via transformations. There is a common misunderstanding that deep structure was supposed to be identical across all languages (thus creating a universal grammar), but Chomsky did not in fact suggest this in so many words. However, Chomsky did believe that there would be considerable similarities between the deep structures of different languages, and that these structures would reveal properties common to all languages which were concealed by their surface structures. It is arguable that the overriding motivation for the introduction of transformations was simply to make grammars more (mathematically) powerful, rather than to explain the origin of syntactic variations between languages.

to the manner in which they interact, shape, and are shaped by the interaction while demonstrating it in some way or another in the text.

The researcher of this study contributed by designing the multimodal visual semiotic analysis model as a method (or set of rules for analysing already encoded data) and as a technique (tools and tactics for approaching raw data) when the data analysis was being conducted. The aim of each analysis was to present their relationships, to indicate and elaborate on the circumstances that determine the generalisations, and to identify exceptions or inconsistent material.

## **5.9 SUMMARY**

In this chapter, an overview of the research process is provided that includes the mixed method orientation in relation to its quantitative and qualitative research. The demarcation of the population and the sampling process are outlined. *MH* as a single unit is used as a case study, while the 27 visual texts represent the sets of units. Twenty seven visual texts were used as a non-probability available sample. Nine visual texts were purposefully sampled for the qualitative multimodal semiotic analysis. Since this study is based on *MH* editions from June 2010 to July 2011 a cross-sectional time frame was adopted. An approach that explains critical visual methodology, methodological tools, the media as an audiencing site, as well as data gathering is discussed.

In the next chapter, the researcher describes the design of a 'multimodal model' by means of concept maps. This model was used for the qualitative visual semiotic multimodal analysis.

## CHAPTER 6

# THE CONSTRUCTION OF A SEMIOTIC VISUAL ANALYSIS MODEL

### 6.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter forms part of the methodology, since the multimodal model is developed in this chapter and used to ‘test’ the applicability of the model; and to execute the qualitative multimodal visual semiotic analysis.

For the development of the semiotic visual analysis model the work of Van Leeuwen (2011), Machin (2007), Van Leeuwen and Jewitt (2007), Gillespie and Toynebee (2006), Kress and Van Leeuwen (2006), Berger (2005), Thwaites *et al.* (2002), Felici (2003), Rose (2001) and Lacey (1998) were considered. Each of these theorists contributes and illustrates aspects and forms of visual analysis. The researcher constructed the resulting workable ‘visual semiotic analysis multimodal model by adapting and collating the ideas and theories of the abovementioned theorists.

Together with the visual semiotics multimodal model the researcher also developed concept maps for the six sub-headings of the model. Concept maps can be seen as “graphical tools for organizing and representing knowledge” (Novak & Cana 2008:1). The concept maps were developed by the researcher after the multimodal model had been developed. They include concepts inside boxes of some kind, and relationships between concepts or propositions, specified by a linking line between the concepts. The researcher’s contribution results in the arrangement of major concepts into a visual illustration that emphasises related concepts by using lines to link them. Then, the researcher painstakingly titled these relationships between the connected concepts.

Visual texts in the media are created in order to communicate a message. When analysing images, one considers factors that influence the manner in which one looks at images of our world.

In the initial stages of the visual text analysis one engages in the process of identification, i.e. the analysis at the level of denotation. The analysis is followed by the non-verbal communication (NVC) that the body language of men represents

(facial expression, gaze, gestures, posture, body contact, as well as clothes and appearance) as represented in the visual texts.

## **6.2 THE MULTIMODAL MODEL FOR VISUAL SEMIOTIC ANALYSIS**

In the understanding of a concept model; the seminal author, Lippitt (1973:73) describes a model as a representation of an occurrence that presents the recognisable structural elements of those occurrences, the relationship among those elements, and the processes involved. To qualify as a model, three components are required: denotation, demonstration, and interpretation. Elements of the physical world are denoted by elements of the model, the model holds an internal dynamic that allows one to validate theoretical conclusions, and these conclusions, in turn, need to be understood when one wants to make predictions (Hughes 1997:325).

However, such a description is not sufficient: A model needs to offer a means of generalisation that aids communication and problem solving. Language is, therefore, a process of generalisation and abstraction. One can also view models as analogies that clarify one's thinking about a fairly multifaceted situation (Lippitt 1973:74). In this study, model building is essential to conceptualising the understanding of how visual images represent and construct.

The process of using analogies is not only related to the modelling process. Different kinds of analogies have been ranked according to a scale of conflicting degrees of abstraction from the real world. A model does not attempt to replace all the characteristics of the real world. Hughes (1997:335) posits that a scientific model provides a representation, since it represents a primary subject in terms of a secondary subject, i.e. the model itself. The internal dynamic of the model allows the demonstration of new, and sometimes novel, conclusions. Representations of this kind may be nested in one another, so that one model provides the internal dynamic for another. While developing a model, it is essential to firstly control the main characteristics, and secondly the factors which are exposed by analysis that can suitably be disregarded (Lippitt 1973:74–76).

Graphic models are differentiated into two categories: static and dynamic (Lippitt 1973:77). A static model is a graphic representation of a situation at a given point in time, whereas a dynamic model illustrates the interaction between the six main



### 6.3 THE HEXAGON AS THE CENTRE OF MULTIMODAL ANALYSIS

For this study the multimodal semiotic visual analysis model contains several facets, hence the use of a hexagon at the centre. This model has been validated against its applicability by using the model to analyse the visual texts. The model starts with the multimodal analysis component (as a hexagon) as the central constituent: The hexagon is situated in the middle of the model, since it represents the multimodality of the analysis of a visual text. The six sides (tools) of the hexagon in this model are equal. From the multimodal analysis component (the hexagon in the centre), six sub-headings branch out from the core: visual syntax, positioning, typography, colour, modality, and iconography. These tools are largely based on the work by Machin (2007). The six sub-headings are:

- **Visual grammar**

The social semiotic approach and theoretical foundation of the multimodal approach deal with visual grammar (Kress & Van Leeuwen 2001) and metaphors (Machin 2007: xv). This tool provides the methodical study of visual alignment or 'visual syntax', including different kinds of overlap and framing (Machin 2007: xvii). The main aim of visual grammar is to examine the way in which an individual sign can be used in combination with other signs, and how meaning is created (Machin 2007:2–3; Berger 2005:8–9; Lacey 1998:5–58).

- **Iconography**

Iconography is the illustration of a subject; the study of artistic images or symbols. This tool explores iconography, including different visual elements that have the ability to transfer meaning, especially the 'concealed meanings' of texts (Machin 2007: xvi).

- **Modality**

As modality, this tool reveals how real, or not, a representation claims to be by explaining how meanings could be hidden or enriched in a composition (Machin 2007: xvi).

- **Colour**

Individual colours have specific meanings; it should not only be about what one sees [impressions], but should also be systematic with the aim of enhancing potential meanings (Machin 2007: xvi – xvii).

- **Typography**

This tool deals with typography. It offers an account of the meaning potential of different kinds of shapes and proportions in a variety of communicative meanings (Machin 2007: xvii).

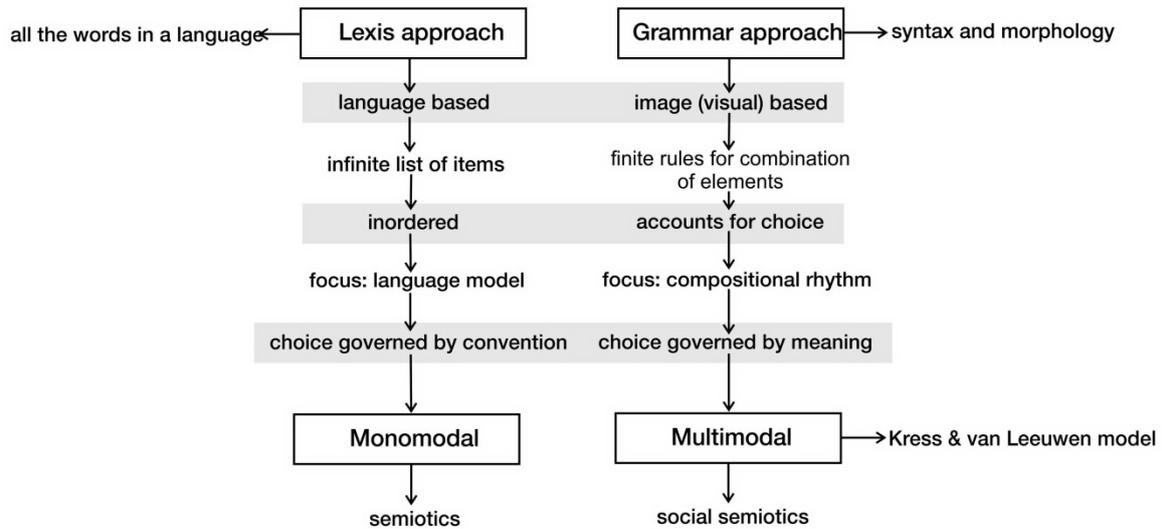
- **Positioning**

This tool entails whether actors are represented as collectives or individuals, and focuses on metaphorical associations such as proximity and angle of viewing (Machin 2007: xvii).

Each of the six tools (Figure 6.1) is hence expanded and described in more detail.

### **6.3.1 Visual grammar**

Machin (2007:2-5) claims that most versions of visual semiotics have looked at lexis rather than grammar. In other words, they have focused on individual signs rather than on the way these signs can be combined into meaningful statements. In Figure 6.2 the researcher illustrate that a grammar approach focuses on how individual signs can be used in conjunction with other signs in the 'meaning-making' process. The grammar approach involves considering images as complex semiotic systems, such as language, where meaning is created through grammar rather than by individual signs with fixed meanings. In looking at language, there is a need for exactness, specifically when visual language is present. It is, therefore, important to look at the semiotic systems used.



**Figure 6.2: The difference between the Lexis and Grammar approaches**

Machin (2007:3–5); Thwaites *et al.* (2002:31–33) distinguish between two kinds of semiotic systems. The simple sign system can be represented graphically as follows:

Sign            ⇔        meaning

In essence, and in its simplest form, this means that a signifier has a signified (a sign vehicle) that has an object. In this case, a picture of a man simply means a man. There can be an endless number of signs or lexical items in this system. Machin (2007:3) uses this kind of ‘simple system’ that is proposed by the lexical approach to images.

The more multifaceted [complex] sign system refers to grammar as something immaterial (intangible/non-concrete or abstract) that is compacted in “between meaning and the phenomenal (since the sign resides in the phenomenal, or real, world)” (Machin 2007:3). Graphically, the complex sign system can be represented like this:

Sign            ⇔        grammar        ⇔        meaning

In this instance, one has to move away from the ‘fixed sense’ of the sign, but rather look at the potential of the meaning of the sign (Machin 2007:3–5; Thwaites *et al.* 2002:31–33).

Linguists, who use Halliday's (1985) model of grammar, look for the systems of choices that give "signs their meaning potentials" (Machin 2007:3). When one applies this to a visual semiotic system, the meaning of a sign, like a colour such as blue, is not so much contained in the colour itself but in belonging to a system. The meaning of blue thus lies in its relation to other colours in the system of meaning potentials. It is important to note that when one uses this colour, one creates meaning according to, not necessarily intentionally, our knowledge about the accessible choices that are not being used, and about the system that lies behind the choices (Machin 2007:3–5; Thwaites *et al.* 2002:31–33).

In complex semiotic systems such as language, there is an arbitrariness of the relations between signs, grammar, and meaning (Van Leeuwen 2005:48-50). While the signs are important, it focuses more on how meaning is constructed by the wording of language, and the context that is used (Van Leeuwen 2005:23-24; Thwaites *et al.* 2002:31–33). Complex semiotic systems comprise certain characteristics.

- **Not only simple signs but grammar gives meaning**

Halliday (1985) raises our awareness about the predictability of the kinds of combinations of signs. He illustrates that these combinations of signs, in their own right, have meaning. Therefore, chunks of grammar almost take on the quality of signs by adding meaning potential. This is important when visual communication focuses on kinds of composition that are essential for creating meaning. The language in the following sentences illustrates this principle:

*The girl ate the banana.*

*The soldier shot his enemy.*

While one instantaneously recognises the different words in the two examples, there is a significant parallel between the structures of these sentences. There are two nominal groups<sup>30</sup> in each of the sentences that are related to each other by a verb. In each case, one group is the 'actor' and the other the 'goal'. In the second case,

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<sup>30</sup> A nominal group is mainly a group of words constructed around a noun that labels its qualities, actions, etc. (Machin 2007:4).

the soldier is the actor and the enemy the goal. This proves that although sentences include different signs that have different meanings, the foreseeable constructions that allow the individual signs to be assembled in identifiable patterns themselves create meaning, since they express nouns in relation to each other (Machin 2007:4). Therefore, one can also conclude that signs appear in predictable combinations.

- **Signs also tend to appear in predictable combinations**

From the examples above, it is clear that meaning does neither reside in the individual lexical item, nor in its grammar. One can therefore, not attribute meaning to either. To illustrate this concept, Halliday (1985) uses the term 'lexicogrammar' rather than grammar. Lexicogrammar describes the semiotic system that functions between sign and meaning to include the system of choices one is aware of when one creates visual or linguistic expressions. This system can be represented as:

Sign            ⇔    lexicogrammar            ⇔    meaning

The two parts of lexicogrammar describe the simultaneous closed general aspect of language and the open-ended and probably endless aspect of language.

- **Metaphorical association**

Metaphors are viewed as the application of a name (or a descriptive term) to an object that is imaginatively but not literally applicable. One uses metaphors to enhance representations by describing somebody or something with a word or a phrase. Lakoff and Johnson (1980) regard the giving of meaning from one field to another as a main feature of the way that human beings organise their experiences.<sup>31</sup> They refer to the example of ideas. Metaphors are a figure of speech and, therefore, do not carry any literal meaning (Gillespie & Toynebee 2006:131–134). Thwaites *et al.* (2002:48–51) view a metaphor as an implied or obvious comparison. Metaphors may be visual as well as verbal, and can have an interesting function of transmission when transferring some qualities of one sign to another. For Van

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<sup>31</sup> In the book, *Metaphors we live by*, Lakoff and Johnson (1980) change our understanding of a metaphor and its role in language and in the mind. They see metaphors as an essential mechanism of the mind that allow human beings to use what we know about our social and physical experiences to provide an understanding of numerous other subjects.

Leeuwen (2005:30), the essence of a metaphor is transference. An exchange happens from one field to another owing to some alleged association (Machin 2007:8). In *MH*, metaphors are specifically used to shape the conceptualisation of the body and men's understandings of reality as confirmed by Mac an Ghail and Haywood (2007:116). For example when the metaphor of music and the rock star is used: "Now's your chance to amp up your performance" (*MH* Editorial, September 2010).

Lakoff and Johnson (1980) believe that our physical experiences play a key part in a metaphor. We share physical appearances and assign these appearances in order to understand and explain more abstract ideas. In this way, connotations suggest additional meanings for a word apart from the literal or main meaning (Section 6.2.2). Diverse semiotic modes convey connotations from one domain to make sense of things in another domain. Metaphorical association appears in language, gestures, music, typography (bold typeface), and colour (lively colours are related to emotional energy) (Van Leeuwen 2011:25; Machin 2007:11). Such an association suggests that individual signs are able to connote complex ideas about the nature of the world. These signs are used in media discourses and, at times, attempt to draw links between the use of language and the exercise of social power (Gillespie & Toynbee 2006:122; Thwaites *et.al* 2002:140-1). For this reason, metaphorical association becomes a keen feature of the multimodal analysis. Colours that create meaning, typography, photography, and framing in composition collectively evoke physical associations during visual communication.

- **Discourse**

In traditional semiotic approaches, it has been common to talk about signs that connote particular ideas about the world. Thwaites *et al.* (2002:140) define discourse as the specific mode of textuality of an association that is a set of textual arrangements which seeks to organise and co-ordinate the actions, positions, and identities of the people to whom they are applicable. In discourse, one can distinguish between two main uses: Firstly, language in social action and interaction and secondly, a social construction of reality and knowledge (Gillespie & Toynbee 2006:122).

Thwaites *et al.* (2002:140) identify the following four principal characteristics of discourse:

- Concrete social sites at and within which it circulates (institutions);
- Roles for those who participate in it (functions of address);
- Power relations carried in those roles; and
- Certain topics that tend to be spoken about.

Institutions, such as media houses, comprise not only intersections among journalists but also practices of producing media as a text. The relationship between the audience and the articles in a magazine involves certain kinds of conversation that signify attitudes and feelings about the issues of physical and mental health. The conversation between the magazine and its audience involves the positioning of speakers with respect to one another in order to control or effect a situation; this is done with power (Mac an Ghail & Haywood 2007:39-40; Thwaites *et al.* 2002:138–141). All institutional identities can be defined in relations of power. Talking is one of the many forms of textuality that are produced by institutions (Burton 2005:52-54; Thwaites *et al.* 2002:139). In this sense, the media is the main textual work of a media institution for a mass audience. Institutions [such as *MH*] are not only a group of people working together and interacting by following rules and conventions: They also include all the texts and genres (magazine) “through which interactions take place, and whereby the rules and conventions are written down in the same way” (Thwaites *et al.* 2002:140). In this way, designers have used semiotic resources in visual compositions to connote particular discourses that allow them to define reality in a specific way.

Most importantly, discourse is the way in which things are entrenched in the social world. Even before discourse is concerned with what is said, it is concerned with where things are said, by whom, and what the relationships of power are (Mac an Ghail & Haywood 2007; Thwaites *et al.* 2002:141). This is how signs transfer meanings that communicate wider models of how the world functions or discourses. These models include values, kinds of participants, actions, manner of acting, circumstances, times, materials and complying with recognised standards, rules, as well as traditions (Machin 2007:16; Van Leeuwen 2005:91).

- **Multimodality as a broader change in the way we communicate in society**

From the section about grammar and metaphors, the focus moves to multimodality as a larger change in the way one communicates in society. In the past, semiotic modes were used in an isolated way (monomodality). This has changed to multimodality, since communication has become more visual, which is changing the way one communicates (Machin 2007:16–17). Van Leeuwen (2005:160-176) points out that one still thinks of high art as the separation of words and images while the simultaneous use of words and pictures are associated with mass culture and commercialisation. The general public – it seems – clings to the segregation of high art, but the situation has changed in visual communication. One uses different modes in an integrated way and in such a way that roles or functions formerly dominated by high art, for instance, are now replaced by different modes (Machin 2007:17). There are three basic requirements for any semiotic mode in order for it to function as a communicative system. These three functions (also seen as roles) are used comprehensively in the semiotic visual analysis multimodal model. Machin (2007:17–20) and Van Leeuwen (2005:23-24) identifies the three requirements as follows:

- **Ideational metafunctions:** a semiotic system has to be able to represent ideas beyond its own system of signs. In this way, language represents objects as being connected; such as ‘the guy is holding the topless girl’, or in visual communication the colour red might be used to represent the masthead of MH.
- **Interpersonal metafunctions:** a semiotic system must be able to create a relation between the producer and the receiver. In language, one can differentiate whether one is making a demand or providing information, for instance. Curved lines in a composition, for example, could create a mood of vibrancy.
- **Textual metafunctions:** a semiotic system must be able to form articulated entities (coherent entities). This can include the way in which information flows in a text, or about the resources that language applies for creating texts. The colour blue, for instance, might be used in a text and in a complementary photograph to create a link between the text and the photograph.

When one uses language and images interchangeably, either can take up any of these different roles. In this way, when one wants to communicate a certain mood, it can be done by using typeface or colour rather than words. Instead of using language by saying 'build arms like these' one can do it visually by giving a photograph bigger salience by means of size or colour.

### 6.3.2 Iconography

Iconography can include a variety of meanings and can be recognised as a set of images in a specific field, for example the visual images of men refer to objects that one recognises as having specific meanings, when associated in *MH* as magazine (genre) (see Figure 6.3). The roots of media iconography are real life for readers, who are concerned with their physical and mental health. They interpret the visual codes that are used in the magazine. For instance, the font (thickness and size versus slim and curved typeface) and use of colour all contribute to the elements and qualities that have been selected to be emphasised in the composition of the visual text (Machin 2007:22; Van Leeuwen & Jewitt 2007:73–76; Lacey 1998:36–37). The physical representation of male iconography operates in a stereotypical manner (Chapter 7).

On the basis of the signifier/referent relationship; Bennett *et al.* (2006) identify four types of signs: arbitrary, iconic, symbolic, and indexical. Whether a sign is a symbol, an icon, or an index depends on the logical relationship between the sign and what it stands for (Gillespie & Toynbee 2006:30). Bennett *et al.* (2006:79–80) say that this is not the case for icons. The iconic sign is not dependent on its referent; anything could be an iconic sign.

Photographs, in particular are considered iconic signs. Yet Gillespie and Toynbee (2006:30) contend that photographs are also indexical signs (also see Berger 2005:4; Lacey 1998:66). This contradiction concerns the standing of photography as meaning for objective documentation. Other theorists in this field state that a photograph represents indisputable facts, since it is viewed as an elementary physical-chemical cause and effect system, and therefore 'objective' representation, of whatever is in front of the camera (Machin 2007:22–3; Van Leeuwen 2005:170–171; Lacey 1998:127–8). As this study is about visual texts, it is essential to note that

with the advent of digital photography and the ease with which photographs can be manipulated, the iconic nature of the photograph needs to be taken into account. The argument is that the photographer has to make a number of choices that provide space or subjectivity and that current day photography is no more indexical than a drawing.

This leads to the question whether computer-manipulated photography should be clearly indicated as such. The defence of the indexical character of photography should now become an argument about the widespread notions of truth. Computer-manipulated photographs can alter facts (for example, producing a physical reality that is subjective) by making inconspicuous modifications (Van Leeuwen & Jewitt 2007:72; Rose 2001:74). Gillespie and Toynbee (2006:31) and Van Leeuwen (2005: 170-1) argue that if photographic representations are indexical signs, it does not mean that they deliver objective, unquestionable versions of what happens in front of the camera. As a result, one has the so-called 'as seen on TV' syndrome when a photographic reproduction is perceived to be real. Photographic representations do, however, have a certain truth-effect, since such reproduction claims the privileges one reserves for the truth.



Denotation refers to the first layer of meanings that are the literal or explicit (definitional, literal, obvious, or common-sense) meanings of words or visual texts (Machin 2007:27; Berger 2005:17). The process of interpretation involves identifying the sign, in this case visually, and attaching a predetermined perception (sight) to that sign. The process includes identifying the sign – when one perceives something – through any of one’s senses and the word one attaches to the perception of the denotation (Berger 2005:17–18; Lacey 1998:57). One hardly ever really sees any image [sign] in this kind of innocent way. Images usually mean something to us. Images are also not neutral recordings of reality. Denoting people in particular places or in groups – from different angles, in the distance, or close-up – will have an effect on how one views them (Machin 2007:24–25; Bennett *et al.* 2006:145).

When a sign is a linguistic sign, its meaning is provided by the dictionary. Choices in representation are provided with denotation. Barthes (1977:15–31; 32–51) claims that one needs to know something of what one is looking at when one views any image; it is not just a naive viewing. One is constantly in a process of making meaning instead of simply seeing. This principle is also confirmed by Machin (2007:24) and Berger (2005:16–17). The connotation of a sign involves the symbolic, historic, and emotional matters associated with it. Lacey (1998:66) describes language as the most recognisable symbolic sign and he further notes that “its relationship with what it represents is arbitrary”.

Denotation is also regarded as a process of naturalisation, since it is considered as the ‘literal meaning’ of a sign (first-order signification) that precedes connotations (Machin 2007:26–7; Lacey 1998:58). One could emphasise that denotations may refer to stable meanings. Machin (2007:23–4) and Bennett *et al.* (2005:145) and Lacey (1998:67) confirm that denotation is simply about identifying a sign and note that the relationship between the signifier and signified is generally arbitrary, based on the perception association with that sign. Thus, denotative meanings are fixed and are, therefore, stable. Yet, this stability is a relative matter. Often, it is not possible to make a clear distinction between denotation and connotation (Machin 2007:26–7; Thwaites *et al.* 2002:63). The arbitrary nature of signs means that they have many meanings and are, therefore, polysemic (Bennett *et al.* 2006:145–146;

Van Leeuwen 2005:173). Denotations also alter with time and need not be true in any singular sense.

Our understanding of signs cannot limit to the level of denotation. Connotation is the second layer of the [hidden] meaning (Machin 2007:27; Fourie 1996:71). Berger (2005:16) says that connotations of a sign involve the symbolic, historic, and emotional matters that are attached to that sign. This means that there are specific associations with a sign that pave the way of understanding. These associations are a second-order system of signification (Machin 2007:25–26; Berger 2005:16–17; Lacey 1998:58–59). When interpreting a sign, it becomes necessary to look for elements that transfer meanings that connote specific ideas and values (Machin 2007:25; Van Leeuwen 2005:37-42).

Connotations are highly structured and are not simply a personal construal of a sign. The structured connotations are the codes one accesses to make meaning of the sign. Readers of *MH* have particular associations of signs that colour their understanding of those signs. Many connotations have the status of social consensus and are similar to myths. Although they are regarded as the third-level of meaning (Barthesian), these connotations are very powerful (Machin 2007:25–27; Bennett *et al.* 2006:187–188; Lacey 1998:58–59). Machin (2007:25–27) and Thwaites *et al.* (2002:60) maintain that connotations comprise the set of possible signifieds that emphasises the plurality of a sign. In this way, metaphor and metonymy are processes of connotation and are generated by signifieds. Barthes (1972) addresses the cultural connotations of many aspects of everyday French life and illustrates that the connotations of a word involve the symbolic, historic, and emotional matters attached to the word. (Thwaites *et al.* 2002:62) assert that the denotations of a sign are the most constant and accurately confirmable of its connotations

Machin (2007:26) warns that the following three arguments need to be considered with regard to denotation and connotation:

- The more abstract the image (content of the sign), the more foregrounded and overt the connotative communicative purpose becomes. While no image is free

from connotation, it depends on the degree to which the sign is represented and on the meaning attached to the sign.

- The extent of the context plays an important role when texts are used, i.e. whether the communicative purpose of the image is denotative or connotative.<sup>32</sup>
- When a sign has to convey an explicit meaning, it will depend on recognised (conventional) carriers of connotations that the target audience understands. In some contexts, the connotations of an image may be a matter of free association.

Machin (2007:27–38), Van Leeuwen (2005:37-42; 146-9) and Lacey (1998:8–13; 20–22) identify the following carriers of connotation:

- Poses: Participants/characters [for example in advertisements] can use certain poses to connote specific meanings; poses and the values that they transfer can be used as a significant part of branding (Machin 2007:27–30; Van Leeuwen 2005:37-42; Lacey 1998:8–13).
- Objects: Participants/characters [for example in advertisements] are depicted in relation to specific kinds of objects. These objects are used in combinations with other signs to connote certain meanings, for instance a laptop connotes mobility and independence and a medical doctor sitting behind a desk means authority to the viewer (Machin 2007:31–33; Van Leeuwen 2005: 146-149; Lacey 1998:20).
- Settings: A Street where there are impressive buildings, such as the Cape Town Waterfront, connotes a cosmopolitan and sophisticated setting. Successful brands work in this way: In *MH*, men are either portrayed in large and airy interior spaces that are flooded with light that connote modernist corporate interiors of high-powered business, or designer décor that connotes freshness, physical freedom, and peace of mind in a setting of blue skies and flowers (Machin 2007:34–36; Lacey 1998:22).

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<sup>32</sup> For example, the image of people being killed during the Sharpeville (South Africa) massacre in 1961 could be used to document (denote) the moment or it can be used to connote the effects of *apartheid* in general and the resilience to never be oppressed again.

- Participants: Children carry several differing meanings in western ideology, for instance they can either be considered as pure and closer to nature, or to be protected from corruption. They may symbolise goodness and vulnerability. Fatherhood and adorable children complete the picture of a modest, stunning, and multi-coloured world where the human spirit will always endure (Machin 2007:36–38).
- Photogenia stems from the techniques of photography that include angles, distance and composition, depth of field, lens type, film stock, mobile framing, and lighting (Machin 2007:38, Berger 2005:33–34, Lacey 1998:23).

Symbols are depictions that signify other things, since they are often hidden and not obvious. A symbol can either embody a mode of thought, an idea, an institution, and ideas from the subconscious, or any number of wishes/interpretations (Berger 2005:88; Lacey 1998:66). The study of iconographic symbolism refers to the investigation of the way that certain objects, poses, gestures, or other elements in a visual composition represent people, values, or ideas. It is important in the process of analysis that one should be cautious when establishing how these meanings have come about. This process requires one to know something about the context of the symbolism (Machin 2007:39; Van Leeuwen 2005:49).

According to Van Leeuwen (2001), abstract shapes can also have symbolic value, for example the Christian cross. Likewise, the logo of a university represents the ideas and values of that university. There is no noticeable connection between the sign and its referent. It is also important to bear in mind that symbols are culturally agreed upon.

Barthes (1973) refers to connotative meanings as myths. For example, the South African flag could be used to connote all the myths associated with South Africanism. In this sense, the flag can connote similar myths, for example the national anthem: Loyalty, glory, and the landscape. Barthes (1973) is particularly interested in how signs assume the meaning of the leading value system of a specific society and cause these values to appear normal.

Barthes applied theories of representation from a semiotic perspective to signs. He claims that myth develops from denotative signs. Denotative signs consist of a

signifier and a signified (similar to De Saussure's model of the sign) but are easy to understand. Barthes proposes that this is the third-order semiological system (Berger 2005:16–17; Rose 2001:91; Lacey 1998:67–68). Barthes (1973:117) says that:

myth is not defined by the object of its message, but by the way in which it utters this message: there are formal limits to myth, there are not 'substantial' ones.

He further argues that myth is defined by its form, not its content. He suggests that myth is a 'second-order semiological system' (Barthes 1973:123).

For example, consider a cologne advertisement for men that include the image of a fast car. In this visual text, the fast car connotes masculine power and is part of a system of signs that creates the myth of masculinity. Masculinity forms part of gender and is socially constructed rather than biologically defined. To be defined as masculine in Western society, a man needs to be strong, bodily trained, rough, and skilled in the use of technology. The use of cars in advertising often represents aspects of masculinity as a metaphor: They are influential (speed), corner exquisitely and – noticeably – is advanced technological creations.

In order to deconstruct the use of myth, a commutation test can be used (substitute the car with a bicycle in the aforementioned example). However, when doing a feminist reading of the visual text, the car in the cologne advertisement could highlight the speed of the car that signifies men's lack of remaining sexual power. This kind of reading reinforces the deconstruction of myths, since it accentuates the fact that the connotations of speed and advanced technology are not natural but socially constructed. Visual representations are discussed in the next section.

### **6.3.3 Modality**

Modality relates to mode or form (shape or arrangement of parts) as opposed to substance, i.e. it could be essential material forming a thing, or a particular kind of material having uniformed properties. Modality is either denoting the mood of a verb, used to express the mood of another verb by acting in a denoting manner.

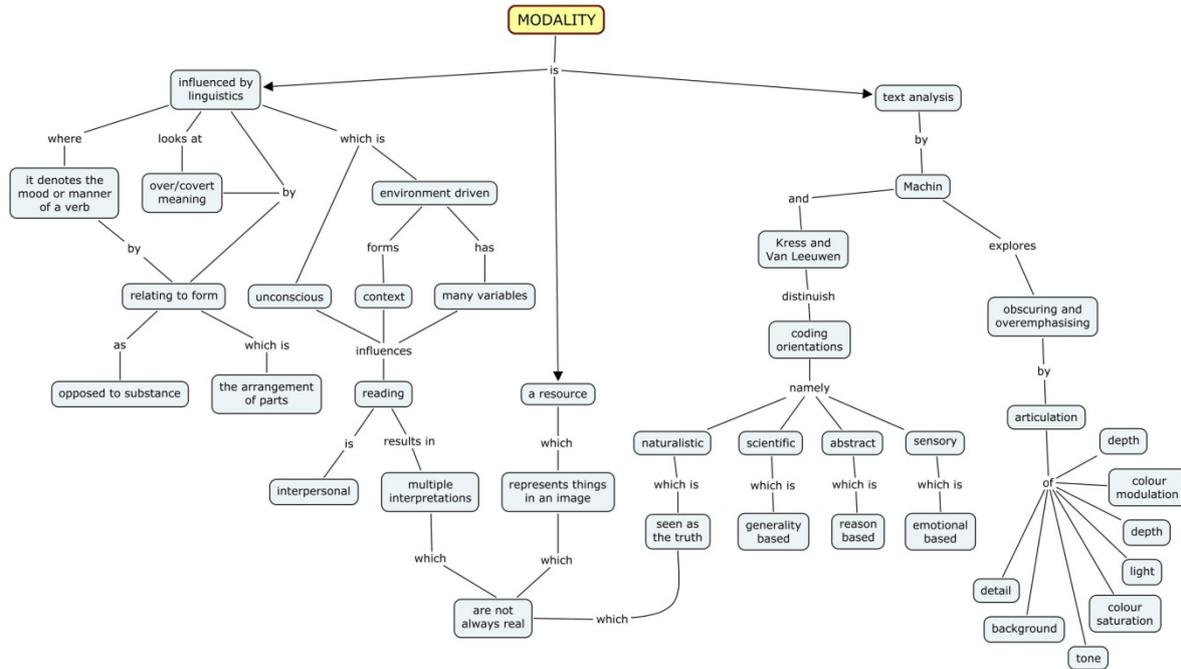
In visual modality Machin (2007:46–48), Van Leeuwen (2005:160-76), and Rose (2001:151–159) view modality, as a way of analysing texts, that has been inspired by

linguistics. It presents overt and covert significance to the readers of the media. One needs to note that language is often used and understood in an unconscious fashion (Van Leeuwen 2005:47; Lacey 1998:83). Since human beings are not always aware of the vast amount of information their brains are processing, one needs to be aware of the subconscious reading, including the way in which one reads his/her social environment and deconstructs visual texts (Rose 2001:158–159). The social context of the reader is assumed by the visual text when reading *MH*. In the case of *MH*, the social context of discourse production matters in terms of the audience assumed by visual texts. Furthermore, when one is writing a discourse analysis then the arguments about discourse, power, and truth/knowledge are just as pertinent to one's work as to the materials one is analysing (Burton 2005:52-4; Rose 2001:160). Since there are so many variables determined by the social environment that influence the reading of a text, it may have no preferred reading. It therefore becomes difficult to eliminate the independent variables.

In analysing texts from *MH*, one needs to carefully establish how representative the text is. Visual texts in magazines are altered or composed [constructed] either to improve, or to hide certain elements. Gillespie and Toynbee (2006:107–108) confirm that in visual style, the use of lighting, colour, clothing, décor, props, presentation, and acting style collectively play an important role in establishing the image. The spatial organisation of actors and objects and their relationship to one another in visual texts influence the comprehension of what one can see and the way in which one is encouraged to see it.

Thwaites *et al.* (2002:181–183) caution that meaning is not primarily a quality contained within an individual sign, but something that exists outside the sign, its various relationships with other things, and the environment. These qualities include the aspects that are internal to a sign system, as well as signs that are concerned largely with systematic structuring, such as genre (*MH*) and narrative structures. Signs are never produced without a context. They are also produced in a variety of ways, for instance textuality as social practices (Thwaites *et al.* 2002:181–183).

Chapter 6  
The construction of a semiotic visual analysis model



**Figure 6.4: Mapping the concept of modality**

Machin (2007:45) suggests that the meaning of texts has evolved and that the potential meaning of texts can be determined by analysis. Therefore, in the next section an overview is provided about the way in which texts can be changed and how it subsequently influences the meaning potential (reference) of those texts.

Van Leeuwen (2005:160-76) regard modality as a way of analysing texts that has been inspired by linguistic analysis that assists one to distinguish between what is certain and what is hidden. For authors such as Van Leeuwen and Jewitt (2007), modality is interpersonal; it is not about expressing complete truths but more about supporting readers with accepting some truths to the exclusion of other truths (see Figure 6.4). It is a way in which modality in images is viewed as a resource for representing things, places, people, and ideas as if they were not quite real but rather as vague notions or as fantasies (Bennett *et.al.* 2006:85; Thwaites *et al.* 2002:82–85).

Machin (2007:45–57) and Van Leeuwen (2005:160-76) explore the obscuring and overemphasising of components in texts by using the following eight modality scales:

- Degrees of the *articulation of detail* [elements] vary on a scale from lacking decoration and beautification, such as an ordinary line drawing to the most acute, delicate, and sharp details of a photograph.
- Degrees of *articulation of the background* [setting, milieu] vary from a scope with a bare background, by means of evenly sketched in- or out-of-focus backgrounds to the greatest possible sharp and comprehensive backgrounds. One can find elusive variations between a blank background and a detailed setting (Machin 2007:51; Van Leeuwen 2005:273). For instance, when there is a slight lessening in articulation of detail, it proposes a general rather than a specific background.
- Degrees of *depth articulation* [expression] vary from the lack of any depth to comprehensive deep perspective with other possibilities in between; for example simple positioning, or extending over / past each other. For instance, where one sees three-dimensional objects drawn flat on a page in a way that preserves their original proportions. One knows there are depths, since one has seen it in the real world when looking at three-dimensional objects (Machin 2007:53).
- Degrees of *articulation of light and shadow* [shade, silhouette] vary from almost no expression/articulation to an ultimate/comprehensive number of degrees of shade variation in between. The lack of shadow along with the “presence of bright light gives the effect of optimism that can, of course, be transferred to products and promotions” (Machin 2007:54).
- Degrees of *articulation of tone* [quality, pitch] vary from only two shades of tonal nuance; i.e. either black and white, or a light and dark version of an alternative colour) to a comprehensive tonal degree.
- Degrees of *articulation of depth* [intensity] vary on a scale of differences in tones, altitudes of shades of brightness, or meek polarities of dark and bright at the opposite limit of the range. It can, therefore, range from maximum depth and articulation to simple overlapping of objects.
- Degrees of *colour modulation* [accent, intonation, inflection] vary from flat, unmodulated colour to the demonstration of all the fine nuances of a specific colour. For instance, colour modulation can include a range of colours based on

the way the contours and folds capture light and shadow (Van Leeuwen 2011:21).

- Degrees of *colour saturation* [diffusion, infiltration] refer to how many colours there are; colours can vary from black and white to comprehensive spectrum of colours<sup>33</sup>.

Van Leeuwen and Jewitt (2007) refer to the various modalities in a more interwoven way. In this case, the logic of what is real depends on how reality is defined by social groups who have power to do so. In social semiotics, Kress and Van Leeuwen (1996:154) distinguish between four different coding orientations of visual modality; each is recognised by specific social groups. Machin (2007) distinguishes three coding orientations; namely naturalistic, abstract, and sensory modalities. The discussion that follows is a combination of Machin's (2007) and Van Leeuwen (2005) and, Kress and Van Leeuwen's (1996) coding orientations of visual modality.

The first coding orientation is ***naturalistic modality*** where what one sees is the truth. Photographs are often thought of as 'real texts' that show things in the way they might be as seen in reality (perception). It is important to note that "...naturalistic modality became the dominant truth criterion in visual representation" (Van Leeuwen 2011:22). For instance, a mountain climbing photograph can carry enormous weight as truth, besides the fact that it only captures subjective moments. Mountain climbing photographs cannot capture complex processes or events that happen progressively; they capture multifaceted moments that must somehow reflect an event or something impressive, although the reader/viewer sees these photographs as truthful. It is noteworthy that, when it comes to the modality of photographs, it is also based on convention that could be built into the most realistic image technologies (Van Leeuwen 2011:22; Machin 2007:59 & 61; Van Leeuwen & Jewitt 2007:151; Thwaites *et al.* 2002:65; Rose 2001:198–199).

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<sup>33</sup> Saturation is the scale from the most intense, pure manifestation of a colour to 'chromatic grey', a grey with just a tinge of that colour and ultimately to complete desaturation, achromatic grey. If colour conveys emotion, then saturation is the fullness of that emotion and the saturation scale is a scale that runs from maximum emotive intensity to maximally subdued, maximally toned-down emotion (Van Leeuwen 2011:61).

As far as the second coding orientation (**scientific modality**) is concerned, truth lies in what an object is like generally while individual differences are less important. Scientific modality is not based on what things from a specific angle look like, but on how things are generally (or regularly) according to some 'hidden' truth. It, therefore, means that the scientific image probes beyond the surface and abstracts from detail. This kind of truth may be challenged by other social groups (Van Leeuwen 2011:98; Machin 2007:59; Van Leeuwen & Jewitt 2007:151).

The third kind of truth is **sensory coding** orientation that is based on emotion and the effect of pleasure (or displeasure), and relates to feeling (Van Leeuwen 2011:22; Machin 2007:59; Van Leeuwen & Jewitt 2007:157). An example of sensory coding is when a visual image of a motorbike in *MH* is displaying more sharpness and deeper colours of black-and-greyness to emphasise the hardness or steeliness of the bike [richness] that becomes 'more than real' or 'surreal', depending on the way this particular meaning potential is contextualised, since sensory modality is realised in the specific context. With reference to this example, saturation and perspective [of a sharp and dark coloured versus a typical colour visual image] challenge the idea of objective reality, since sensory coding is not independent from one's own perceptions (Van Leeuwen 2011:22; Machin 2007:59; Van Leeuwen & Jewitt 2007:151).

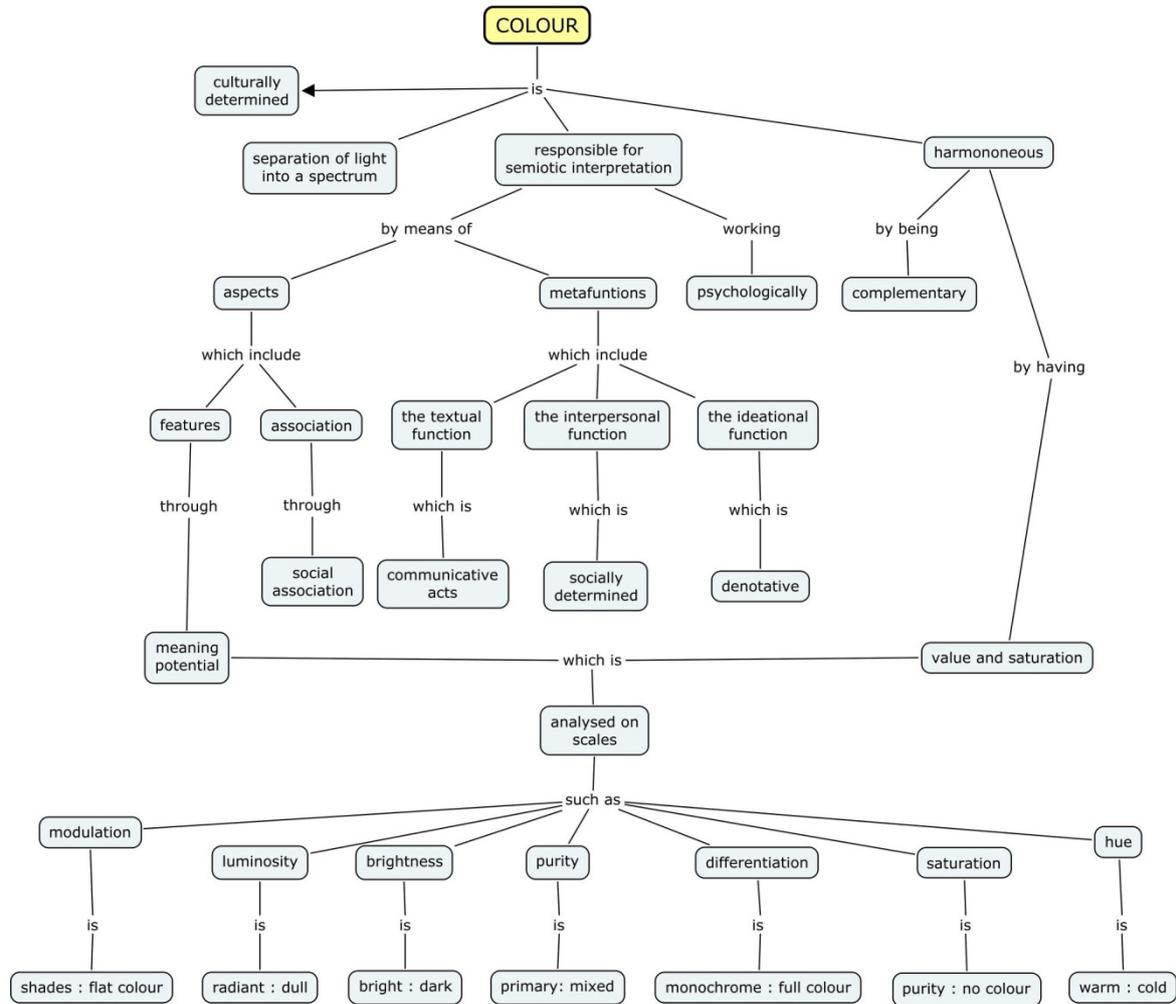
The fourth coding as described by Kress and Van Leeuwen (1996:154) is **abstract modality**, where the truth criterion is reasoned, based on whether a representation denotes a common pattern of primarily casually different instances, or the deeper 'essence' of what is portrayed (Van Leeuwen 2011:22). For instance, lack of colour and the flatness of an image propose an abstract representation, heading more towards the scientific and less towards the naturalistic modality (Van Leeuwen & Jewitt 2007:152). Here, the use of naturalistic representation is reduced, and it appears to be very similar to the scientific or technological orientation that deals with abstractions (Machin 2007:59; Van Leeuwen 2005:273).

#### 6.3.4 Colour

The palette of colours can be defined as one, or any mixture, of the constituents into which light can be separated into a spectrum, sometimes including black and white.

In Western society (and also from a Western 'way of seeing' in a developing country such as South Africa), there is a tradition of associating colours or shades of white and black with good and evil respectively (Lacey 1998:38–39). This feeds into many stereotypes. These associations could be regarded as racist, since the word black contains negative racial associations. Specific colours take on different meanings among different cultures. In China, for example, the colour associated with mourning is white, whereas in the West it is black. Since colour adds to the credibility of an image, colour needs to be considered as a code because it has potential to express meaning (see Figure 6.5). The chromatic experience of everyday life represents one type of realism, whereas achromatic black and white images represent a totally different form of realism. It is at times difficult to describe the depiction of an image. Therefore, Rose (2001:33) uses the approach 'compositional interpretation' and explores an excessive vocabulary to describe the approach to imagery that has developed through the history of certain styles of art. This approach is used, since the method has a tendency to describe by example rather than by explication (Machin 2007; Van Leeuwen & Jewitt 2007; Rose 2001). This method is contingent on what Rogoff (1998:17) calls the 'good eye', i.e. a way of looking at paintings with the purpose of establishing their quality. Therefore, compositional clarification claims to look at texts for 'what they are', rather than for what they do or how they are used. The 'good eye' mostly looks at the site of an image in order to understand its significance, and pays most (although not exclusive) attention to its compositional modality as discussed previously (Rose 2001:34). Machin (2007:63) claims that one's vocabulary for thinking about the potential meanings of colour is inadequate. It is inclined to move rapidly to adjectives, such as 'vibrant' or 'exciting' to describe the special effects of the colour rather as opposed to an exact description of what one is seeing.

Chapter 6  
The construction of a semiotic visual analysis model



**Figure 6.5: Mapping the concept of colour**

As far as compositional interpretation is concerned, colour plays an important role as a semiotic resource and as an autonomous communicative mode (Van Leeuwen 2011:8; Machin 2007:64–65). Colour is used textually in producing consistency between the different elements of a larger whole and/or by emphasising different parts (Van Leeuwen 2011:12). One significant difference between colours as a semiotic resource in *MH*, for instance, and the information on a music sheet is that colours as a semiotic resource never is independently used.

Machin (2007:65–67) distinguishes between the three metafunctions of colour: The ideational, the interpersonal, and the textual. Colour fulfils these three metafunctions simultaneously (Van Leeuwen 2011:12).

The **ideational function** explores the constructing representations of the world where colour can denote specific ‘things’ about places, and even classes of these places (Van Leeuwen 2011:10–12; Machin 2007:65–66). For instance, the colour green in the South African flag denotes one of the corporate colours of the South African nation and corporations, such as Standard Bank, use the colour blue to denote their identity.

The **interpersonal function** is the function of enacting communicative interactions that are characterised by specific social purposes and relations. In *MH*, the colour red, particularly in the mast head, is used to draw attention. In the magazine, yellow is used to highlight, for example, the most important part of the article/text.

**Textual function** gathers communicative acts; such as conversations, lectures, and reports; into larger entities, i.e. into the communicative events or texts that realise particular social practices. Most of the mast heads in *MH* are presented in red. This supports the creation of coherence. In a similar manner, the codes of colour are used on the contents page to indicate an order of things. Red is used in *MH* for either headings with the same status, or for indicating a particular theme. In the compositions of advertisements, the colour can either be repeated in the background, or in the clothes the model in the advertisement is wearing. This creates a connection and flow between the background colour and the clothes of the model. In the same way, colour can be used to either group, or distinguish between, different parts of a composition. Certain words or sets of cover lines in *MH* are printed in the same colour while other cover lines appear in another colour; it creates semiotic meaning (Van Leeuwen 2011:10–12; Machin 2007:66–67).

Van Leeuwen (2011), Machin (2007), and Van Leeuwen and Jewitt (2007) agree that reference to the value of colours cannot describe colour effectively. Colour can induce emotions and assist with creating meaning, since readers respond to colour in a physiological way. These authors conclude that colour can intensify page unity and that readers indicate that they prefer pages that contain colour, since this creates the impression that the page provides more information. Van Leeuwen (2011) shows how certain combinations of colours, although not done in an organised way, work well together.

Machin (2007:69), and Van Leeuwen and Jewitt (2007:167–171) identify two aspects that advance to semiotic creation of meaning:

**Association** refers to the cultural association that a colour might have. For example, a purifier used in a washing powder may be colourless but in an advertisement it is presented in a white bottle to signify purity. Other associations with the colour white include: Purity, sins ‘washed away’ by becoming white, starting afresh on a white / clean slate, and cleanliness. Likewise, a virgin marries in a white dress in accordance with religious custom. However, blue is also associated with purity; in Catholic religion, the Virgin Mary is dressed in blue. On maps, water is indicated in blue to signify oceans, rivers, and dams. Blue is also associated with knowledge, truth, and science; as well as with royalty (royal blue). To be able to establish these mentioned examples of colour use, there is usually a need to refer to other elements or understanding by drawing cultural associations in the composition (Machin 2007:69; Van Leeuwen & Jewitt 2007:167–171).

**Features** are attempts to describe the distinctive features of colour along a continuum such as from light-dark or saturated to desaturated. These features of colour are not seen as sets of values, but as potential meanings. Instances of colour can be analysed according to combinations of these scales (Machin 2007:69; Van Leeuwen & Jewitt 2007:167–171).

Van Leeuwen (2011) and Machin (2007) identify the measurable extent of colour:

- **Brightness** communicates truth as opposed to darkness and includes very bright and optimistic values (Van Leeuwen 2011:46-7; Machin 2007:79).
- **Saturation** is the scale from the most intense, pure manifestation of a colour to ‘chromatic grey’ – a grey with just a tinge of that colour – and ultimately to a completely desaturated achromatic grey. If colour conveys emotion, then saturation is the fullness of that emotion; the saturation scale is a scale that runs from maximum emotive intensity to maximally subdued and maximally toned-down emotion (Van Leeuwen 2011:61). Saturation is regarded as the degree of intense purity or pure manifestation of a colour.
- **Purity** is the scale that ranges from the concentrated ‘purity’ of unmixed colour to concentrated ‘hybridity’ or ‘mixedness’ that is regarded as clean and

unpolluted. (Van Leeuwen 2011:61). A pure colour might be a pure red or blue, such as the ones represented on a colour palette (Machin 2007:76). It is important to note that purity as a concept of colour is already culturally determined, especially when mixed colours are seen on a continuum from inferior to undefiled. Colours with generally used solo names such as 'brown' or 'green' are regarded as pure, while colours with composite names, such as 'blue-green' or 'yellow-green' are considered to be mixed.

- **Modulation** is the scale that runs from fully modulated colour to colour that is adjusted with the aim of avoiding extremes, for example from red that is richly textualised with different tints and shades to flat colour, as in comic strips where distinctions of saturation also plays a role in modulation. Modulated colour can be used for purposes of naturalistic depiction signifying potentials as either 'nuanced' and 'subtle' or, if one does not like it, 'fussy' or 'overly detailed'. Flat, unmodulated colour may be experienced as simple, bold, or basic (Van Leeuwen 2011:64; Machin 2007:77). Highly modulated colour can be used to show the crucial colour of things ('sky is blue'; 'grass is green') but can also be used as a source on its own, and thus generates its own meaning for either 'boldness', or 'simplicity' (Van Leeuwen 2011:64). Besides having the quality of a single colour, it can also be part of a colour scheme that relays texture, for instance subtly shaded reds and maroons.
- **Differentiation** constitutes a difference in or between colour schemes. It ranges from monochrome to the use of a maximally varied palette. This can either be used to indicate timelessness as in black and white, or to illustrate the differences between the descriptive and the symbolic qualities of texts. The signification flows from what it is. High differentiation can mean 'diversity' or 'exuberance'; low differentiation can mean 'restraint' (Van Leeuwen 2011:65; Machin 2007:78).
- **Luminosity** stems from the word lumen which means the amount of light that is emitted. The luminosity of a colour is contained in its ability to glow from within; the semiotics of meaning could, for instance, reflect on radiance, brightness, and shine. "Lighter or more strongly saturated colours are more luminous [glowing / shining], but the impression of luminosity also depends on the surrounding colours" (Van Leeuwen 2011:35; 62–63; Machin 2007:78–79).

- **Hue** is the variety or shade of colour caused by a mixture with another; an attribute of a colour by virtue that it is discernible as red, green, etcetera. Hue includes the scale from the warmth of red to the coldness of blue (Machin 2007:79). Modern colour theory regards colour as joining three dimensions: Hue, value, and saturation. The key focus is hue: It focuses on categorising and hierarchizing colours into 'pure' and assorted colours, and on inventing systems of colour harmony (Van Leeuwen 2011:40). This is also the reason why hue is relevant when creating meaning in semiotic analysis.

Colour harmony that creates a pleasuring effect that results from an aesthetic arrangement of parts can be distinguished on two levels in visual compositions:

- **Complementariness** – complementary colours are used to harmonise: Red and green; blue and orange, and yellow and violet (Machin 2007:81).
- **Value and saturation** – colours harmonise when they are matching in terms of one of the dimensions of colour, specifically value; for instance darkish saturated colours harmonise, and powerful or pastel colours harmonise with one another. Colours also harmonise warm/cold elements. However, it may be true that colours – even when they are inharmonious and incongruous – are like notes in music (Machin 2007:81).

### 6.3.5 Typography

*Typeface* is a collection of characters designed to complement one another in a coordinated manner. One can regard typeface as an alphabet with a certain design. Typeface further means the style of the printed character (for example roman or bold), as well as the side of a printing block (historical) that has the shape of the printed character on it (Bennett *et al.* 2006:27-29). Generally, typeface means letters and numbers of the same design that are used in printing or on a computer. Each character in a typeface is constructed by means of a glyph, a form of a pictograph or graphic symbol. In this sense, type needs to be treated as an image. A roman typeface consists of upright letters, normally used for long texts (Felici 2003:317), while italic is a slanted form of typeface used for emphasis, based on a slanted (or oblique) version of the roman form (Felici 2007:308).



the background to show which results in the headlines assuming the meaning of a more 'silent personality'. The serif all caps will be more appropriate for a feature story, while the sans serif all caps adds impact and drama which is suitable for grabbing readers' attention to read breaking news. The sans serif down style is bold and good for a follow-up story (Bennett *et al.* 2006:34-6)

*Typography* is regarded as an art and a style that influence the appearance of printed words. As a semiotic system, it also fulfils the three principal functions (Section 6.2.4) that are concurrently present in every act of social communication: Ideational, interpersonal, and textual functions (Van Leeuwen 2011:9–11 & Machin 2007:89–92).

The ***ideational function*** constructs representations of the world. For instance, using slimmer (condensed) characters with a wider space between them suggests the idea of sophistication while it appears less traditional than heavier characters. This function represents ideas; for example on a front cover of *MH*, a metallic typeface could represent the idea of durability (Van Leeuwen 2011:10–11; Machin 2007:89).

The ***interpersonal function*** enacts [or helps to enact] communicative interactions categorised by precise social purposes and definite social relations. In speech, this is done through words; typography can achieve this objective through size and weight. For instance, cursive typefaces suggest informal address or give a personal touch. In this way, typography expresses attitudes; such as serious, official, or fun. A typeface can also be used to convey a mood. The text on the page may be justified to the left. This will create an informal mood which differs from text that is both left and right justified (Van Leeuwen 2011:10–11; Machin 2007:92).

The ***textual function*** arranges communicative acts into larger clusters, into the communicative events or texts that recognise particular social practices; such as discussions, addresses, and information. Typography is often used to specify links between textual features by using the same typeface (Machin 2007:92). A 'drop cap' can be used, for instance, in parts of an article either to indicate the beginning of a paragraph, or to order the article. Headings can be used in different typefaces to distinguish between subheadings; it can also help to create a hierarchy of

informational value. In *MH*, yellow is used to highlight the important parts of an article (Bennett *et al.* 2006:32).

Typefaces are normally not intended to be printed in black ink on white paper. This means that when exploring meaning in a typographic profile, the meaning potential only is actualised when the letterforms are combined with features such as colour, texture, dimensionality, and the context it is used in. (Machin 2007:93–104; Van Leeuwen 2005:27-9; 34-6; 41-5). A summary of the typographic meaning potentials is:

- Weight is regarded as a measure of the thickness of the strokes that create the character (Felici 2003:324). Therefore, weight includes the range from extra light, medium to bold, heavy, and beyond. Bold characters are used for display purposes and can express meanings that are significant, steady, and adventurous as opposed to conveying flimsy and timid messages. Bold characters can also have domineering meanings as opposed to meanings that are delicate / refined. Within the running text, bold characters are obtrusive (Felici 2003:72). Light or condensed typefaces are used for captions, foot notes, etcetera (Felici 2003:73).
- Expansion describes the range from narrow to wide. Wide typefaces illustrate space which could have either bad or good associations. Narrow typefaces are used to illustrate cramped and unassuming meanings.
- Slope entails the variance between upright and slanted and is best described by the difference between cursive writing and print. Upright characters are associated with proper, machine-driven, and mass produced appearance, while slanted typeface is associated with an organic and manually crafted appearance.
- Curvature entails the variance between thinness / sharpness and curvature. A sharp, square typeface can be associated with tough and mechanical features, while more rounded characters are associated with organic and smooth qualities.
- Connectivity entails where letters can be spaced apart or touches. Disconnection means fragmented or atomisation. Connection can mean closeness [intimacy] or unity [harmony].

- Orientation refers to the horizontal and vertical dimensions of a typeface. Subtlety, condescension, ambition, and even overconfidence can be illustrated by using tall letters. Steadiness [firmness], weightiness, and even inactivity can be illustrated by using squat letters.
- Regularity refers to measured regularities and sometimes deliberate irregularities, or deceptively random, dissemination of specific features, of a typeface. This can be the variance between formality, order or disorder, and confusion or liveliness.
- Flourishes may be smooth-edged and spread-out and contain large loops or circles for the dots on the letter 'i'. This typography is also known as swash characters; they need to be used with care, for example one should never use all caps with swashes (Felici 2003:20). The function is largely ornamental, but it is a powerful device that needs to be used with caution, since it adds a dramatic quality.

Another mode of typography is line spacing and justification. Justification is the filling of lines of a given measure with letters and spaces (Felici 2003:133). Every line is justified over the length of the possible space it can occupy. There is a variety of meaning potential in aligning (or justifying) typeface. It communicates attitude or mood, for example an arrogant or relaxed mood. When both sides of the text are fully justified, the text appears to be bordered and controlled and could communicate correctness, power, and proficiency.

If the alignment of the text is even on the left only (left justified), it can appear somewhat more organic. It does not manipulate space and seems slightly more peaceful and ordinary (Machin 2007:106; Van Leeuwen 2005:12-13). When alignment of the text is even on the right only (right justified), it makes reading somewhat more difficult to follow, but does result in unconventional writing. It, therefore, could convey either a confident attitude, or simply a less formal and diverse approach (Machin 2007:106; Van Leeuwen 2005:12-13).

When the text is uneven on both sides but symmetrical (centred), it creates a sense of balance. This is usually used on invitations, greeting cards, or memorial plaques. It communicates a sense of tradition, convention, and history. Greater gravity can be achieved by increasing line spacing (Machin 2007:106; Van Leeuwen 2005:12-13).

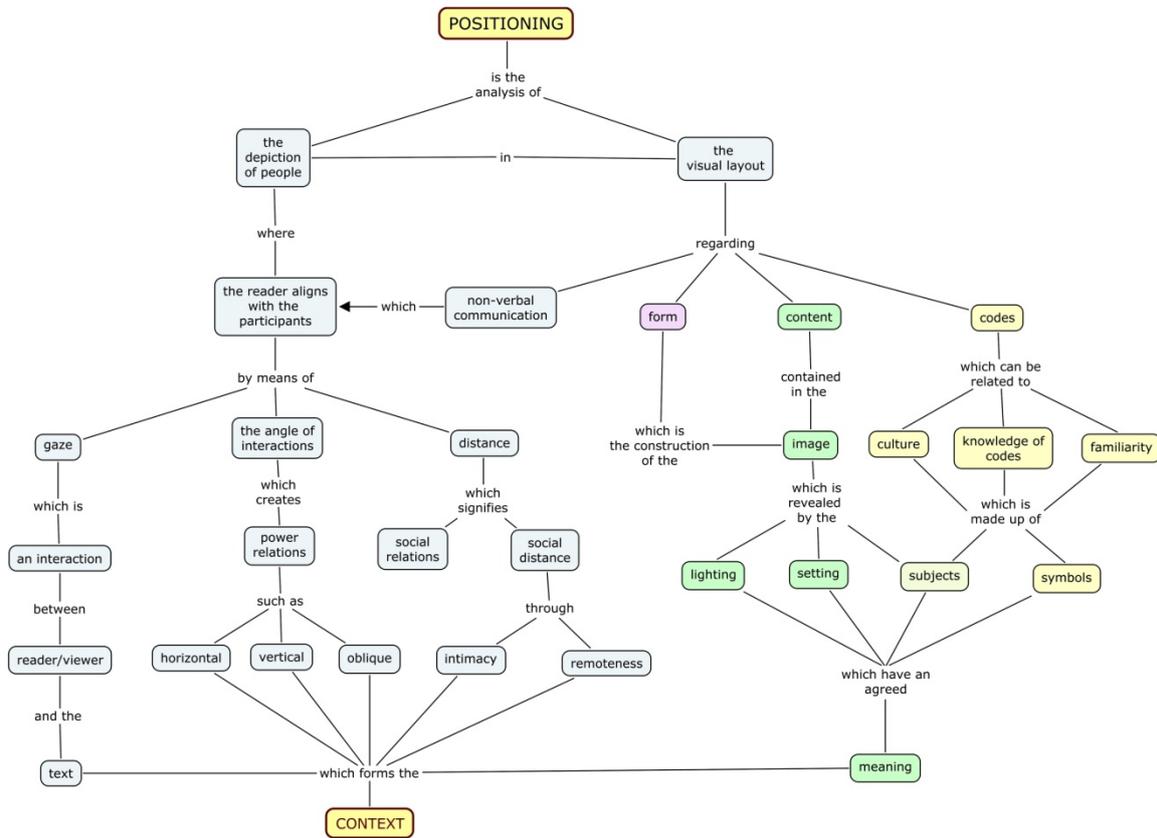
When the text is bumpy on both sides and not symmetrical, it communicates a sense of surprise; it also has a broken tempo, since both edges are raggedy without equilibrium (Machin 2007:105–108; Van Leeuwen 2005:12-13).

### 6.3.6 Positioning

Positioning focuses on the depiction of people in visual communication, i.e. in cartoons, photographs, and advertisements. One is concerned with the semiotic resources available for positioning the viewers in relation to the participants in an image, how the readers are encouraged to relate and assess the participants on the covers. Goffman (1979:2) refers to positioning as a version of gender display where an individual's behaviour and appearances inform those who witness the individual, telling them something "about his social identity, about his mood, intent and expectations and about the state of his relation to them". Goffman (1979:2) further calls these "indicative events display" where indicative behaviour becomes a kind of routine and informing function that is part of performance. The images of people that one sees on the covers of magazines, for example, go through a variety of editing and restyling stages. The main aim of the end product on the cover page is to communicate the choosing and designing of specific ideas and attitudes towards the meaning of the cover page.

Machin (2007:109) and Bennett *et al.* (2006:187-90) say that in textual analysis one can achieve this objective by interrogating the use of verbs. One can apply the same principle to visual texts by looking for 'visual verbs'. Questions that one can ask of images are who possesses the agency that has the ability to act upon the world. Furthermore, it is also important to establish what activities of people are depicted, since it may be very different from the description of their activities in accompanying cover lines, captions, and texts (Machin 2007:109; Bennett *et.al.* 2006:187-90). At times, one can also examine individuals and groups who are depicted in the image. The purpose of the image is to unite the reader with the experiences and interests of the group. At times, the participants are categorised to inform the reader what kinds of participants are involved, since people can be depicted to connote stereotyped characteristics. Some of these connotations are constructed. Sometimes, no participants are used to create a sense of anonymity and hidden accountability for actions.

Chapter 6  
The construction of a semiotic visual analysis model



**Figure 6.7: Mapping the concept of positioning**

The next section deals with the semiotic resources for aligning the viewer with the experiences of the participants in the image.

- **Positioning of the viewer in relation to people in an image**

Three aspects of alignment of the viewer with the participants (on covers) are important:

**Gaze:** The people portrayed in images can look at the reader (or viewer) as if there is symbolic contact or interaction between them and the reader. For example, the man's body (on MH cover) meets your gaze as viewer; he addresses one in his bodily stance. This symbolic interaction can take many different forms. It can be friendly, arrogant, seductive, pleading, etcetera (Machin 2007:117; Bennett *et al.* 2006:103-105; Thwaites *et al.* 2002:20-21).

The **angle of interactions** can create involvement and power relationships. Machin (2007:113–117) distinguishes between the horizontal, vertical, and oblique angles. In the case of **horizontal angles**, one can be directly engaged by the person(s) represented in the image. Machin (2007:113) says in the case of images “we become voyeurs on the scene”. One’s involvement with the depiction in a visual text can be changed through viewing positions, i.e. through the angle of interaction in relation to the horizontal plane. Depending on what is depicted in the visual text, by moving in relation to the horizontal plane; it can reduce connection and create disinterest. **Vertical angles** are used for power and the association with superiority and height. Looking up at someone creates the metaphorical association that the person in the image has a higher status, or that the person is physically in a stronger position than the viewer. Size is associated with power and status. Looking down on someone gives the taller person a sense of power while the shorter person experiences a sense of vulnerability. **Oblique angles** are used by tilting the camera in order for the person in the visual text to appear at an angle rather than being positioned vertically in the frame.

**Distance:** In visual images, as in real life, distance signifies social relations. One needs to consider how one keeps one’s distance from people one wants to keep at arm’s length. In visual images, distance means ‘size of frame’ (close shot, medium shot, long shot, and etcetera). In this sense, social distance suggests either intimacy, or remoteness. This simply refers to how close to the viewer is to a person represented in an image. Close shots make it easier for the reader to identify with individuals. Close-ups of faces allow readers to view the characters as individuals with feelings. Extreme close-up shots can symbolically represent intimacy.

- **Non-verbal communication in positioning**

In order to reach an interpretation of what is communicated in a visual text, it is vital to read the body language of characters (if any) in the visual text.

Non-verbal cues are learnt and they change as society changes. This is also true of language. One also has to remember that different cultures uphold different norms. One spends every second of ones’ waking life unconsciously interpreting the information our senses receive from our environment. This interpretation is possible

because we automatically follow the codes one has learnt in order to give meaning to the world. These codes are either linguistic, or non-verbal. If one has to do all this decoding consciously, one would probably suffer from information overload (Lacey 1998:13).

The following eight aspects of ***non-verbal communication*** (NVC) are described:

- *Facial expressions* provide important information. Eyes and the eyebrows are used to communicate the mood of characters, and are likely to mean: Fully raised = disbelief, half-raised = surprise, normal = no comment, half-lowered = puzzled, and fully lowered = angry (Lacey 1998:12).
- *Gaze* is a term used to define the focus of a person's look and is a general dominant form of NVC. Eye contact is specifically meaningful. When analysing visual texts, are the characters in the visual text looking straight at the audience, at one another, or off the edge of the frame?
- *Gestures* and other bodily movements, since most people communicate with their hands.
- *Posture* also communicates much information: For example, from the careless pose of the man on the couch to the erect stance of the iron man in the front cover.
- *Bodily contact* is greatly constrained in Western culture, since it carries a high degree of intimacy except when it either happens in a professional setting (visiting a medical doctor), or part of etiquette like shaking hands. Both the professional setting and etiquette have their own set of codes that defines what is permissible.
- *Spatial behaviour*: Some cultures require more space than what is conventional for other cultures.
- *Clothes and appearance* make a statement about a person. At one extreme, a man may appear to be very fashionable, while at the other extreme, another man exemplifies no sense of colour coordination. Even the man's haircut (long hair, beard, chest hair, no chest hair, or shaven) on a front cover (for example) makes a statement.
- *Non-verbal aspects* of speech; for instance, tone of voice, or grunting agreement.

- **Image analysis**

In analysing the visual texts, the composition and positioning of what and where something is placed on a page play an important role, since it contributes to the readers' understanding thereof. Van Leeuwen (2011), Van Leeuwen and Jewitt (2007), Machin (2007), Van Leeuwen (2005), Lacey (1998), and Kress and Van Leeuwen (1996) focus on three systems that can be used to classify the interactive and representational meanings of spatial composition:

- *Saliency* refers to something that is particularly noticeable or relevant. One sees saliency when certain features in a composition are more prominent in order to catch one's attention (Van Leeuwen 2011:93, 95; Machin 2007:130; Van Leeuwen 2005:198, 284). This can be achieved by foregrounding, overlapping, size, colour, and repetition. For instance, as far as size is concerned, one needs to identify: Elements that occupy greater space on the page (greater saliency), colour (bold, bright) that creates a salient feature in a composition (red in the case of the masthead of *MH* is a very salient colour), tone where one specific element is emphasised through, for example, directional lighting. In the case of *MH*; direct lighting most often emphasises objects, focus is used to draw one's attention to the experiences of the participant, and foregrounding puts the most important element in front (Machin 2007:130–138; Van Leeuwen & Jewitt 2007:150-151; Van Leeuwen 2005:198, 284).
- *Information values* are understood by the location of the elements in a composition. The role of any specific element in the whole composition depends on whether it is positioned to the right or to the left, at the margin or the centre, or at the lower or upper part of the page (Machin 2007:130–132; Van Leeuwen & Jewitt 2007:147–149).
- *Framing* specifies that elements of a composition are either portrayed as separate identities, or represented as belonging together. In simple terms; framing 'connects', 'disconnects', or contrasts elements (Van Leeuwen & Jewitt 2007:149–150). Machin (2007:157) summarises semiotic resources for creating framing and connectivity:
  - Segregation uses physical frames to create difference.

- Separation is created by space rather than frames. In this instance, the difference between elements is not as pronounced as when they are isolated in frames; space can be connected.
- Integration happens when elements occupy the same space.
- Overlap allows elements not to be constrained by frames and spaces. Meanings can also bleed into other spaces.
- Rhyme includes features such as colour, posture, and size; these features are used to create links amongst elements.
- Contrast is accentuated by colour, posture, and size with the purpose of showing difference.

Van Leeuwen (2005:171-2) and Lacey (1998:14) say that photography is [literally] 'writing with light'. Visual text analysis aims at understanding the meaning of the text. This distinction can be applied to any text; whether it is an image-based text, a written one (such as a novel), or a combination of words and text as in the case of *MH*. For the purpose of this discussion, it is assumed that texts are created by using a camera. However, the same principles also apply to texts that are either computer-generated, or drawn.

- *Form* refers to the manner in which an image is produced, including the vantage point of the camera, and the position an artist takes in relation to the subject of the image (Fourie 2009:55).
- The *content* is merely what appears in the image (Fourie 2009:55).
- Since *codes* are related to culture, knowledge of codes is often interpreted in terms of factual knowledge. Also, such knowledge depends on familiarity that is established by living within the culture (Fourie 2009: 58; Machin 2007:184; Gillespie & Toynbee 2006:19). *Codes* deal with subjects or symbols (like words) that have a generally agreed meaning. One cannot only consider what codes are, for example angles, distance, etcetera (see discussion of denotation in Section 6.3.2). The true meaning of codes relies on the agreement considered during the process of connotation (Section 6.3.2). Coding comprises the simultaneous interpretation of form and content.

- **Form**

As far as *form* is concerned, one needs to realise – although information about the forming of an image or the taking of a photograph can be very handy – that information is not always accessible (Fourie 2009:61-62; Lacey 1998:14).

When scrutinising texts, the formal aspects almost solely relate to the frame of the image. The frame is the border between the image and what surrounds it; it is the edge of the image (Lacey 1998:14–15).

- Frame dimensions and shape – all frames have a shape – in the case of *MH*, it is A4. The frame can be used in either the portrait, or landscape orientation.
- Angle refers to the perspective of vision of the camera in relation to the vertical (upright) position of elements; the most common is the ‘straight on’ position. The other two common angles are from above the object (high) and from below the object (low) (Van Leeuwen 2005:19; Lacey 1998:16).
  - A low angle is used in *MH* to indicate a position of power where the audience is forced to look up at a character. A low angle is, for instance, used in an advertisement that features the South African Olympian swimmer Ryk Neethling as representation of a hero.
  - A high-angle shot requires the audience to look down at the object or character and suggests that the object or character assumes a submissive position.
- Height indicates the elevation at which the shot is taken. The most common height is at eye-level.
- Level refers to the camera’s horizontal angle; the camera can also be tilted on its side to the left or the right (Fourie 2009:74, 88).
- Distance refers to the space between the object and the camera. Lacey (1998:18) distinguishes between the following six types of distance: extreme long shot (landscape), long shot (a group of men), medium shot (one or two men), medium close-up (part of body, for example, torso / legs of a man), close-up (face of a man), and extreme close-up (beard of a face).
- The depth of field, or focus, refers to the distance between the nearest and furthest area from the camera. Deep focus includes the whole scene (man

picking up weights), whereas soft focus is created by using special lenses or filters.

- Lens type refers to the standard single-lens reflex (SLR). In the case of a still camera, it is 50–55mm for a 35mm film and is usually held to estimate human sight (Fourie 2009: 200; Lacey 1998:19).
  - Wide-angle lenses are used for deep focus photography.
  - An extreme wide-angle lens creates a ‘fish-eye’ effect that results in strong visual distortion intended to create a wide panoramic or hemispherical image.
  - The telephoto lens pulls objects closer together, for example men running toward a camera seem to be running in a proximate pack until the cut to a side shot shows the true distance they are apart.
- The stock, or type, of film refers to the speed at which it responds to light.
  - A fast stock is used in low light to shoot fast moving objects and produces grainy texts.
  - A slow stock requires plenty of light and gives a fine grained image.

Fourie (2009:174-175) and Lacey (1998:19–20) look at the mobile frame and distinguishes between six types of moving text:

- Panorama (or pan for short) requires the camera to move horizontally from a static position.
- Tracking (or dolly) requires the camera to move on tracks, adding a specific or smooth movement to the image.
- Tilt requires the camera to move on tracks, to the left or to the right.
- Crane requires the camera to move up, down, and sideways on a device. The best use of the ‘crane’ is the aeroplane shot.
- Handheld, when it moves, gives the frame a shaky look.
- Zoom (no movement at all) requires the camera to be held stationary and the focal length is changed during the shot to either bring something closer (the zoom), or further away (wide angle).

- **Content**

*Content* is also referred to as *mise-en-scène*. It literally means to put on stage. In the visual text analysis, one can assume that all elements have been included for a reason. Therefore, everything in the image has meaning; it is a series of codes waiting to be interpreted.

The three main components of a *mise-en-scène* analysis are the subject, lighting, and the setting of the image.

- The subject of an image can be anything that can be seen: A group of men, one man, or a product. When one is trying to make sense of the subject, one depends on one's own cultural knowledge and understanding of social rules to influence one's conclusions. The positions [spots] where subjects are placed form the composition of the image.
- The lighting refers to how the image is lit (daylight or flashlight).

Three main aspects that should be considered in the study of lighting are:

- Where the lighting is coming from: Below, above, back, side, or front?
- Is the lighting of equal intensity?
- Where is this light coming (or supposed to be coming) from?

Fourie (2009:150-152) and Lacey (1998:22) identify the most common form of lighting as 'three-point lighting' made up of the key, the fill, and back light.

- The *key light* is concentrated, direct light that sharply defines shadows; it can be either dim (low), or intense (bright).
- The *fill light* is a soft or indirect light that 'fills in' the shadows formed by the key light.
- The *back light* shines from behind the subject, usually to distinguish it from the background.

- **Codes**

Berger (2005) asserts that it could happen that people understand messages in terms of their own codes rather than the intended codes when the messages have initially been transmitted. It is possible that the transmitters of messages (addressers) – because of their social class or education and even their political and educational level – do not assign the same codes as their audiences. It is also likely that the audience understand the messages they receive from their own perspective (Bennett *et al.* 2006:46–47; Berger 2005:31).

Collective communicators use the same codes one uses in everyday life to send and interpret messages. Since the media forms part of the ‘real world’, the media uses codes from ‘real life’. To consider coding that is specific to the media, in addition to the formal codes already considered; one needs to investigate the use of:

- Anchorage is used in *MH* when an image is accompanied by a caption and an article. The advertisements in *MH* include words that range from slogans to detailed description of products.
- Anchorage is not only created by words. The actual image choice and cropping determine the meaning. Photographs are often cropped to either fit the available space, or to emphasise the subject of an image. For instance, a long shot of a male kick-boxer has a different meaning than a cropped version that is used in an article to promote moisturising. A close-up of a man’s face in *MH* also suggests that one has a closer understanding of his thoughts and it appears to the audience that he is alone (Gillespie & Toynbee 2006:32–33).
- Juxtaposition means ‘being placed side-by-side’ (Lacey 1998:34). Any information close to the image is used to influence the reading of an image. Juxtapositioning of texts creates different meanings from texts that appear on their own. In *MH*, ‘before and after’ USN (Ultimate Sports Nutrition) advertisements for muscle building products create a narrative simply incorporating texts. If these texts were analysed on their own, it would have led to a different narrative (Van Leeuwen & Jewitt 2011:51; Fourie 2009:182-183). Collage takes juxtaposition to its limits by placing numerous, at times unrelated, texts together within a single frame.

- Genre provides recipients [addressees/audiences] with a clear set of anticipations that is used to interpret the text. The genre of *MH* determines how an image is read; various types of men's magazines could generate different meanings despite the fact that they use the same image on their front covers. In practice, *MH* is inclined to use known faces, male and female. At times, *MH* also uses male models. Part of our understanding of the text of a genre is derived from the anchoring provided by the title. The appearance of a man on the front of the *Men's Health* plays a role in anchoring the meaning of physical and mental health. It is not only titles that anchor meaning; the lettering, font, or colour can do the same (Van Leeuwen & Jewitt 2007:188–189; Gillespie & Toynebee 2006:43-78; Lacey 1998:36). Iconography is another important code used by genres. It refers to the specific meanings of objects that one associates with the genre of the text. In *MH*; “six-pack abs”, “sure-fire sexxx!”, “look sharp this winter”, and “melt fat – with beer” invariably are undeniably *MH* texts. The purpose of image analysis is to establish what the combination of all these codes means.
- Colour takes its cue from social codes: White is associated with virginity and purity while red is associated with love and passion (Section 6.2.4).
- Storyboarding is the visual representation of an image to include further details; such as the action, dialogue and sound, any camera movement, and length of the shot. Storyboards are further used to create texts sequentially (Lacey 1998:55).

#### 6.4 SUMMARY

The developed visual semiotics multimodal model emphasises that even if the inventories and patterns considered in this chapter do not reasonably have the same qualities as language it does not detract from the analytical powers they offer. This chapter attempts to demonstrate that this multimodal model and its social semiotic approach to visual communication offer useful tools for allowing one to contemplate the details of visual composition, and for using visual semiotic resources to systematically analyse visual texts.

In the next chapter, following the multimodal model analysis, a quantitative and qualitative interpretation of the visual texts is provided.

## **CHAPTER 7**

### **A SEMIOTIC ANALYSIS OF VISUAL IMAGES IN *MEN'S HEALTH* (SA) MAGAZINE**

#### **7.1 INTRODUCTION**

This chapter illustrates the application of the developed model and contains the quantitative content analysis, as well as the qualitative multimodal semiotic analysis that is based on the model developed in Chapter 6. The focus of this study is on the significance of *MH* as a cultural phenomenon and an important media form in constructing male identity. For the quantitative content analysis 12 covers, 12 editorials and three back covers were analysed. For the qualitative analysis, the visual texts of *MH* October 2010, *MH* December 2010, and *MH* April 2011 were analysed: three front covers, three flip covers, and three editorials. The term 'covers' are used to refer to both front and flip covers, unless specified otherwise.

#### **7.2 *MEN'S HEALTH* MAGAZINE IN CONTEXT**

To reflect on the main research issue, the context of the study is briefly highlighted. Certainly the women's movements, the gay rights movement, and the men's movements – whether pro-feminist or men's rights orientated – have all interrogated what it means, could mean, and should mean to be a man (Synnott 2009:1). The way feminism reacted and viewed patriarchal masculinity is one of the reasons why men's roles were put into question. Feminists questioned gender relations and found traditional masculinity to be problematic. This changed the face of popular culture and social relations as feminists questioned traditional masculinity's characteristics. Feminists accused masculinity of being uncommunicative and emotionally detached which led to the emergence of new masculinities. The new masculinities included what were previously thought of as being feminine characteristics, such as expressing emotions and nurturing (Connell 1995). For the purpose of this study a brief overview of the men's magazine market is given.

The only predominantly men's magazine on the market in South Africa in 1990, *Scope*, led the old-style girlie magazines that were dominating the market at the time. However, the popularity of the magazine started to decline owing to its reliance

on controversial nudity, sex, and violence. The frequent banning of copies of *Scope* led to its ultimate demise.

Although South Africa was experienced political change in the early eighties, in 1991, South Africa practical political change started to feature. One feature of this change was the liberalisation of censorship laws that allowed previously forbidden magazines such as *Playboy*, *Penthouse*, and *Hustler* to be sold in the country. These magazines relied heavily on sex and nudity to sell their product. *Hustler* created the most controversy in the 'girlie' magazine market, with its highly explicit copy of nudity and pornography that negatively and substantially influenced this market. Consequently, the censorship board was forced by a conservative community to remove pornographic material and large supermarkets refused to stock these magazines. It resulted in the sales of the 'girlie' magazine market to decline dramatically without ever recovering again. Points of sale were limited to dedicated bookstores with the result that the circulation figures dropped drastically. Advertisers were also pressured to dissociate them from the disreputable image of such magazines (Simpson & Dore 2004).

Despite entering the market with sales of over 100 000 in December 1993, *Playboy* sales plunged to 20 000 by 1996. The circulation figures of *Penthouse* dipped to around 25 000, while the collapse in circulation of *Scope* continued from 169 052 to only 56 637 in 1994. In South Africa, *Scope* had ceased publication in 1994 while *Penthouse* and *Playboy* followed six months later (Simpson & Dore 2004:232-233). The initial success of the 'girlie' magazines had demonstrated, however, that a bigger audience of male readers existed who were not previously being catered for. *This brings us to the discussion of MH.*

*MH* started in the United States of America (USA) in 1988 to address issues of health, and then extended to the United Kingdom (UK), Australia, Latin America, Germany, and Russia. The entry of *MH* to the market reflected the trend of the 1990s of men's lifestyle magazines that were making inroads into the market as male versions of the female magazines such as *Cosmopolitan*, *Elle* and *Marie Claire*. These lifestyle magazines form a subsection of the magazine industry, which has witnessed a fundamental change from the status quo of the 'macho' pages of *Scope* to the exciting success story of the *Men's Health* magazine of the Touch Line Media

Group. Simpson and Dore (2004:231) mention that the key differentiating feature of *MH* creates a magazine *about* men, not *for* men. *MH* offers general information about matters that affect every day male life; therefore, it does not rely on nudity for sales like men's magazines of the past.

The South African magazine market had grown considerably since 1994, with about 25% growth that was occurring between 1994 and 1999. South Africa's return to political acceptability signalled an opportunity for well-known international publications to enter the market, and the past 15 years had witnessed the release of celebrated international magazine titles such as *House and Garden*, *Elle* and *Men's Health* (Simpson & Dore 2004:231-237).

*MH* reached South Africa around 1997 when the South African market was finally considered by the overseas markets to be ready for such a magazine. The South African edition proclaimed that "*MH* provides focused penetration directly at the affluent, male market, delivering sophisticated, upscale males to discerning advertisers" (South Africa 2000). The magazine was seen as offering an answer to the ongoing masculinity crisis in South Africa that was affected, among other things, by the political shift in government. The rapid decline in the so-called 'girlie' magazine market catered for by *Scope*, *Penthouse* and *Playboy* provided a gap in the market for a men's magazine. The fact that male South Africans tend to be sport loving, and some men are active and health conscious augured well for sales of the *MH* concept. Caution was exercised when the magazine was launched. The first four issues appeared bimonthly, since it was still uncertain whether *MH* would have been successful in the men's lifestyle magazine market.

*MH* achieved considerable success, and early predictions anticipated that sales would level off at about 75 000 copies per month by 2000. The magazine exceeded market expectations by increasing circulation figures, since South African men are looking for a magazine that catered for their hobbies and sporting interests. The most prominent sales pitches on the covers lines of *MH* are based on sex and fitness. Since the introduction of *MH* in the United States, using cover lines to sell sex and fitness have worked.

*MH* was not the only magazine in South Africa to capture significant sections of the men's market. There were competitors such as *Directions*, *Car*, *Getaway* and *SA Sports Illustrated*. Initially the real competition was *Directions*, but after sales declined, *Directions* withdrew from the market at the end of March 2000. At the beginning of 2000, there were already three high profile men's magazines on the market, namely *Men's Health*, *GQ* (*Gentleman's Quarterly*) and *FHM* (*For Him Magazine*). These publications were followed by the launch of *Maxim* at the end of March 2000. *FHM* entered the South African market in 2000, with a specific target audience. This magazine was produced for the lad, the man who loved sports, drinking, and women. *GQ* joined the marketplace in 2000. While it shared qualities with *FHM*, *GQ* had a subtle representation of women as the magazine catered for the style-conscious metrosexual. Other magazines that entered the market included the Afrikaner-orientated *Maksiman*.

Men's lifestyle magazines concentrate on aspects of the contemporary lives of men, which earlier men's magazines, for example hobby and special interest magazines, did not address. Excluding *MH*, these lifestyle magazines all include reviews of films, music, video games, and books. In other respects, however, these magazines differ significantly from one another, for example, *Loaded* celebrates watching football and beer drinking, while the typical *MH* reader would be waiving the drink and playing the game instead of reading about it. In contrast, *FHM* encourages quality sex, whilst *Front* promotes the quantity thereof.

*MH* was selected for analysis, since it is a lifestyle magazine<sup>34</sup> that focuses on the male body independently from the identity of the male: The male body has become the object of the gaze.<sup>35</sup> One of the assumptions of this study accepts that the

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<sup>34</sup> Mac an Ghaill and Haywood (2007:122) provide evidence that emerging representations in popular culture technologies suggest a mutable connection between gender and sexuality. If this is the case, *MH* tackles the urgent act or duty of young men to disown traditional forms of dysfunctional heterosexual masculinity. This perspective indicates a toppling of dominant popular cultural practice by maximising diversity and underemphasising similarities between the genders and sexuality.

<sup>35</sup> In most forms of mass media, women and female characters are much more likely to find their roles prescribed. It is a hegemonic common sense prejudice. Women understand the experience of being looked at as an object; something that women label as the male gaze (Bennett, Slater & Wall

representations of masculinities are becoming more and more concerned with bodies and health issues. *MH* focuses on issues regarding men and women from a male perspective, for example prostate and breast cancer awareness. Male sentiments are clearly directed towards the seriousness of illnesses. Men are also provided with lifestyle health and dietary advice.

### 7.3 ANALYSIS

With reference to the quantitative content analysis, the front covers (12), flip covers (three) and editorials (12) are discussed together with the qualitative semiotic analysis of the multimodal model. In the quantitative research section the tables reflect numerical data findings; while in the qualitative multimodal semiotic analysis the visual texts are the object of research. This procedure organises, summarises, and visualises quantitative data to identify underlying patterns in the representation and construction of masculinity in the visual texts to situate the main research issue in context; and to use as evidence and claims about the topic as investigated by the researcher. The tables illustrate the data is collected from the sample, and not from the population. The multimodal model developed and described by the researcher in Chapter 6 was applied during the qualitative analyses. With the purpose of making the process more coherent, these nine visual texts are discussed thematically according to the six main functions of the multimodal heptagon.

By displaying the quantitative content analysis in table form, the researcher illustrates methodically and objectively how variable features were assessed in a set of items. This is deployed in the analysis of covers, and editorials.

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2006:104). In the case of *MH*, males become the sexual object to gaze (look) at. In his research, Mort (1988) claims that self-pleasuring and sexualisation of the male body challenge earlier heterosexual masculine representations. Bodies are now to be looked at (by oneself and other men) by means of fashion codes and the culture of style (Mort 1988:193; 201).

**Table 7.1: Masthead colour and front cover guy**

<b>MH Issue</b>	<b>Masthead colour</b>	<b>Front cover guy</b> <b>A = Actor; M = Model</b>	<b>Clothes</b>
July 2010	Red	Denton Blomquist (male) (M) Lyndall Jarvis (female) (M)	Blomquist: white unbuttoned formal shirt with a pair of jeans Jarvis: topless with a black bikini bottom
August 2010	Red	Josh Holloway (A)	Black T-shirt and a pair of jeans
September 2010	Red	Kellan Lutz (A & M)	Black vest and a pair of jeans
October 2010	Orange	Warren McAslan (A & M)	Blue V-neck T-shirt and a pair of jeans
November 2010	Orange	Dovian Isaacson (M)	White V-neck T-shirt and a pair of jeans
December 2010	Red	Marcel Snyman (M)	Grey T-shirt with buttons and a pair of jeans
January 2011	Red	Bryce Thompson (M)	Grey V-neck T-shirt and a pair of jeans
February 2011	Blue	Brett Roux (M)	Light blue vest and a pair of jeans
March 2011	Red	Mark Wahlberg (A)	Black T-shirt and a pair of jeans
April 2011	Orange	Jo Maree (M)	Dark blue vest and a pair of jeans
May 2011	Red	Chris Hemsworth (A)	Grey T-shirt and a pair of jeans
June 2011	Red	Mike Fitch (M)	White golf shirt with buttons and a pair of jeans

**Table 7.2: Career of *MH* front cover guy<sup>36</sup>**

Actor	Model	Total
5	7	12

Segal (2007), Whitehead (2006) and MacKinnon (2003) argue that the male character has been represented on front covers by using visual appeal. The male characters require authority and so power is suggested by means of visual appearance. In the 1990s, men's visual representation frequently suggested the strength and health that is lurking inside the uniforms of South African rugby and soccer players. The images of bikers have also become an obvious trend in South Africa, since it suggests a distinct separation from the androgynous masculinity associated with, for example fashion advertisements.

The cover guys are eight professional models and four actors. In these professions, the body provides the main source of income. The personal identities of the cover guys is either known to the reader, or given to the reader. The precise impact of misandry on men in general is difficult to establish. It seems that the negative cultural values (a culture that systematically demonises men) are internalised and is becoming self-fulfilling prophecies. Synnott (2009:231) claims that 40% of formalised marriages end in divorce or separation. Many boys in South Africa grow up without a biological father and the culture of divorce is harming those children. Not only does it relate to the initial trauma, but also to the frequency and intensity of parental alienation syndrome and, at times, both parents are at work. Therefore, the question of whether fatherhood has really changed is one of the most highly contested issues in masculinities studies. The professions of the cover men clearly indicate a departure from traditional occupations of fathers by not conforming to conventional domestic roles as illustrated in the research of Anderson (2010). The representation of images of the men on the covers (however) 'oozes' masculinity as discussed by Crew (2003). Men are strong, physically well-built, and are the

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<sup>36</sup> As *MH* refers to the male on the covers as a cover 'guy' implying that the male is like any other 'guy' or the next door 'guy'; also to make it more informal, the researcher also uses this concept to refer to the male that appears on the cover.

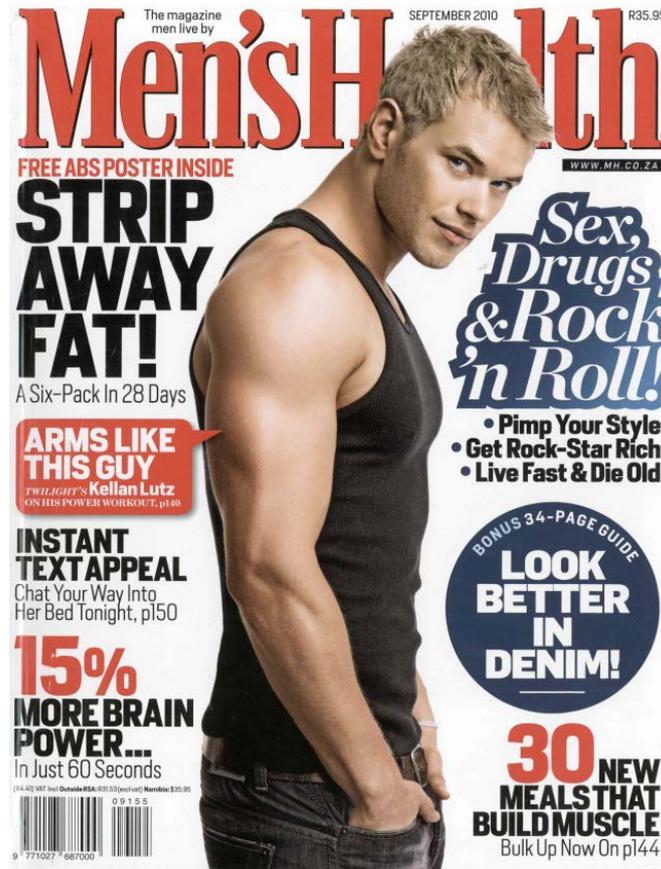
representation of masculinity. The men are not necessarily depicted as anti-sexist men who are relating to women in non-oppressive and anti-sexist ways (Segal 2007), but the magazine with the various editorials is encouraging men to think different of, and view themselves as less hegemonic and patriarchal. The cover pages employ realism where the viewer is knowingly involved in a kind of “make-believe, treating the depicted world as if it were real-like, but of course not actually real” (Goffman 1979:15).

What is then the gender display in these front covers? Goffman (1979:6-9) says that it is in social situations that individuals can use their faces to engage in social appearances. It is also in social situations where the “individual can signify what he takes to be his social identity”. He further asserts that sign production can be circumstantially phrased but not situationally governed. The natural indexical signs are seen as expressions given off by humans – of whom emotions are primary, can at times be fake, but they constitute familiarity by society and are referred to as “the doctrine of natural expression”. These emotions (expressions) are seen as an “essential attribute” and conveying evidence of “internal states in a particular manner that can be seen as a characteristic”. Goffman (1979:48) argues that smiles often function as ritualistic to calm or soothe somebody who is angry or upset, and also to make something less intense or severe, indicating that nothing contrived is intended or invited, that one understands the meaning of the other’s act, and that the other is appreciated and approved. The following table illustrate the number of cover lines on the front page together with if the male character on the front page has no smile, a grin, a smile or a big smile. From the 12 front covers two men are smiling, three have a big smile, two have a grin and five (which is almost half of the sample) has no smile at all.

**Table 7.3: Cover lines and smiles**

MH issue	Cover lines	No smile	Smile	Big smile	Grin
July 2010	6	✓			
August 2010	7				✓
September 2010	7	✓			
October 2010	6				✓
November 2010	7	✓			
December 2010	8			✓	
January 2011	8			✓	
February 2011	8		✓		
March 2011	8			✓	
April 2011	8		✓		
May 2011	11	✓			
June 2011	8	✓			
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>92</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>

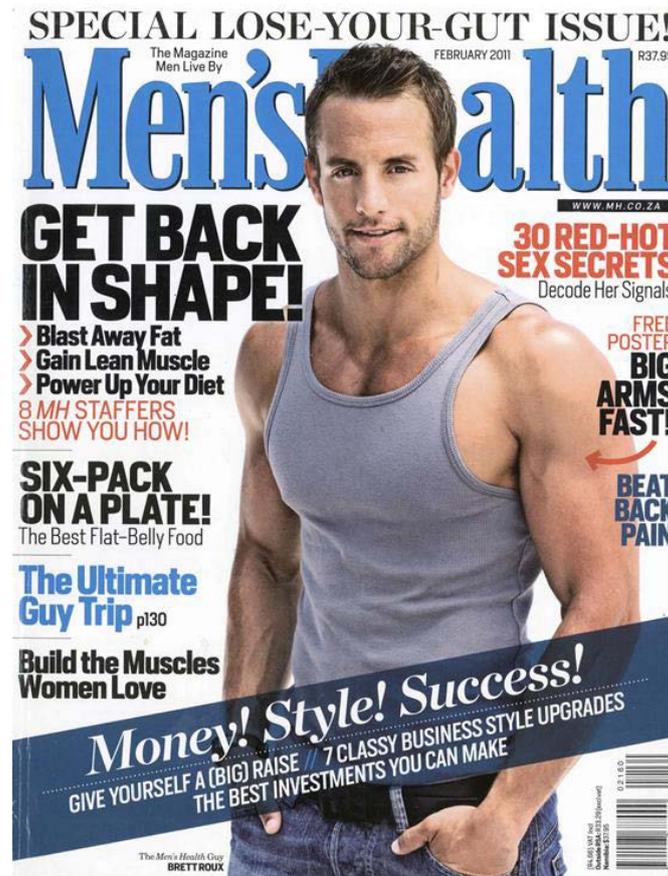
In analysing the combination of words and visual texts in *MH*, the researcher considered all the aspects of the multimodal model, and examined the form (framing, angles, height, levels, and distance) and the content (subject, lighting, and the setting of the image). For the purpose of this analysis, form refers to how an image has been created, including the position of the camera, or the position an artist takes in relation to the subject of the image. The content is simply what appears in the image (Lacey 1998:14). In the 'readings' of *MH*, it is possible that different people [men] contribute diverse codes to given messages and, therefore, interpret messages in different ways.



**Figure 7.1: Cover line as an anchorage function (*MH* September 2010)**

In the quantitative content analysis and multimodal qualitative semiotic visual analysis, the visual language texts are not as clearly distinguishable as the word signs of verbal language. The front covers of *MH* contain cover lines and the editorials mainly use language text. It is unusual to see images on the covers of *MH* that are not supported by cover lines. Barthes, in his article, *The rhetoric of the image*, distinguishes between two types of functions that language text can have in relation to images: anchorage and relay (Gillespie & Toyne 2006:32; Berger 2005:16-17). Cover lines thus reinforce the addresser's intended meaning. The cover lines are used to point out which of the many possible articles in the magazine are considered to be the most important (Addenda A – L). They perform an anchorage function (Lacey 1998:32). The cover line is in a red square with an arrow pointing at the arm of the actor:

Arms Like This Guy *Twilight's* Kellan Lutz On His Power Workout, p140  
(*MH* September 2010)



**Figure 7.2: Cover lines as staples and mandatory text (*MH* February 2011)**

The analysis of the covers yields noticeable patterns. Some words are used as staples and are mandatory text. For example:

Fight Flu With Sex! Seriously, It Works (*MH* July 2010)

Pull Her Sex Trigger! (*MH* November 2010)

Special Lose-your-gut issue! (*MH* February 2011)

Goffman (1979:19) claims that a feature of the photographic frame is the possibility of avoiding the portrayal of everyday life for high symbolism. Thus, an image of part of the man's body can be made to fill a large part of the picture. In Figure 7.2, the cover line is on the right hand side of the page, and a red arrow is drawn from right to left in a curved way to Brett Roux's arm. The researcher noted that particular words regularly appear on the covers: Fit, fat, muscles, sex, and money. The relay function, on the other hand, draws attention to certain potential interpretations and

identifies them by means of further information. The image also anchors the verbal text, i.e. swaying or shaping it in some way or to some degree.

Free Poster. Big Arms Fast! (*MH* February 2011)

The covers as visual texts are the focal point of understanding the production of meaning when using text, as well as mediating reality. These covers are created by human beings: products of computer design. Capozza and Brown (2004:15-21) point out that essentialist categories have important consequences. Essentialism requires an all or nothing approach. In the context of this research, it implies that a man either fits the category or not, without allowing the in-between diversity. In non-essentialist categories, a man is at liberty to choose how to identify with some attributes of a category.

Burn Fat Fast! Your Gym-Free Training Plan (*MH* August 2010)

Strong & Fit Build Muscle & Blast Fat in Just 4 Weeks (*MH* October 2010)

Hi-Def Abs! 3 Moves That Make Them Pop! (*MH* May 2011)

There should be a lot more room for diversity when it comes to cover lines (coded into categories) on the magazine (Crew 2003). People choose to be more or less typical representations of the gender categories they belong to. The categories (of the cover lines) on the covers are also noteworthy. From the cover lines, the following categories were coded: Adventure, body, brain, career, and fat, fashion, fitness, food, gym, health, money, muscles, sex, and relax.

**Table 7.4: Content categories on front covers**

Content category	Number of times out of 12	Percentage
Adventure	7	58%
Body	4	33%
Brain	2	17%
Career	5	42%
Fat	5	42%
Fashion	7	58%
Fitness	5	42%
Food	8	67%
Gym	7	58%
Health	11	92%
Money	3	25%
Muscles	7	58%
Sex	14	117%
Relax	1	08%

Table 7.4 illustrates that – of all the categories in the cover lines – sex appear 14 times (117%), since it appears on all 12 covers and, is mentioned twice in cover lines on the covers of two issues (*MH* July 2010 & March 2011). Second to sex, health appears 11 times on covers. Since health is used twice in cover lines on three covers (*MH* August 2010, February 2011 and May 2011), it does not appear on each and every *MH* cover. Thirdly, the category of food is used eight times, which translates to a 67% prominence. Adventure, fashion, gym, and muscles respectively appear seven times on covers, and collectively represent the fourth highest category (58%). These categories are followed by career, fat and fitness that respectively appear on five covers (42%). The least frequently categories used in cover lines include: Body (four times 33%), money (thrice 25%), brain (twice (17%), and relax (once 8%).

The cover lines are straightforward and almost act as orders rather than providing advice; it assumes that no reader would get offended by its tone. For example:

## Chapter 7

A semiotic analysis of visual images in *Men's Health* (SA) magazine

Strip Away Fat! A Six-Pack in 28 Days (*MH* September 2010)

THE NEW RULES FOR MEN (*MH*. Flip cover October 2010)

Lean Muscle Fast! One Month To A Cover Model Body (*MH* March 2011)



**Figure 7.3: Lean Muscle Fast! (*MH* March 2011)**

On each cover, at least one number is used in a cover line, either in the format of a list, a top 5 or 10, or a particular year (Figure 7.7). Numbers are important because “numbers do not lie”. Therefore, the reader is likely to believe what is listed, or what has been statistically numbered and counted.

69 Ways To Turn A Good Girl Bad (*MH* July 2011)

In the cover line “69 Ways To...” the number 69 also correspond with the sexual position 69. Also, the number 7 is repeated several times on the covers.

Adventure Special 39 Trips Every Guy Must Take (*MH* October 2010)

7 Guy Skills You Should Know (*MH* January 2011)

7-Second Metabolism Boosters (*MH* March 2011)



Figure 7.4: Using numbers on the front cover (*MH* January 2011)

Table 7.5: Masculinist discourse in *MH* editorials

Month	Headline of editorial	Discourse of the editorial
July 2010	<b>Sexy Time</b>	Sex
Aug 2010	<b>Power To The People</b>	How men deal with life's challenges
Sept 2010	<b>The Stage is Yours</b>	The metaphor of men being rock stars
Oct 2010	<b>What Makes a Real Man</b>	The qualities that make a <i>MH</i> man
Nov 2010	<b>Anything We Can Do</b>	How men need to eat well and get into shape
Dec 2010	<b>Just Press Play</b>	What men can do during summer and the multi-uses of the iPad
Jan 2011	<b>Fitter. Faster. Better. More.</b>	Plans for the new year and the Urbanathlon®

Month	Headline of editorial	Discourse of the editorial
Feb 2011	<p><b>Wanna Take a Bet?</b></p> <p>If 2011 has taken you by surprise, don't panic – here's how to reshape your body, and your bank balance.</p>	How men can reshape their body and their bank balance
March 2011	<p><b>I Can Do That!</b></p> <p>The ability to confidently take on anything is one of the immutable laws of being a man. You can really pull it off.</p>	The ability for men to confidently take on anything
April 2011	<p><b>You, and Improved</b></p> <p>As summer slowly winds down, why not use this time to recharge your comeback plan. Looking for an excuse to get started? Here's how.</p>	Time for men to recharge and have a comeback plan
May 2011	<p><b>A Test of Manhood</b></p> <p>How much of a challenge do you really need to balance your daily routine?</p>	Challenges for men to balance their daily routine
June 2011	<p><b>Food For Thought</b></p> <p>Learn the secrets of living well, and create a space that you – and your mates can enjoy</p>	For a lot of men the kitchen is the new garage

Critical theory assumes that the media (in all its variety) is symbolic forms in terms of how it expresses itself. Here, *MH* inter alia assigns specific meanings to editorials. It is not merely an editorial; it is also structured in such a way that it communicates to the readers the attitude that the magazine has towards the content it is presenting. One also reads *MH* and its editorials as texts. As recipients, men interpret these texts in their own manner. One creates one's own meaning about what one has read; the text is read, interpreted, and understood from the premise of one's own economic, political, cultural, and educational background. The editorials in *MH* emphasise pleasure as integral to consumption more than it does work. Work is addressed in an intriguingly subconscious way.

The editorials in *MH* need to be viewed in context, namely a (mental) health magazine for South African men. Also, the profile of the intended reader needs to be considered. *MH* has different sections that deal with national, regional, and international stories. Owing to this focus, one can assume that men learn to perceive themselves as members of the global community by consuming media products and media representations. *MH* addresses readers as South Africans with the result that a process of interpellation is taking place. It is positioning South African men and constructing a South African subject position. Some of the editorials also establish other religious identities (for example Muslims) as other. It divides men into two camps: us and them. *MH* further uses language, structure, paradigms, syntagm, as well as news frames and angles to assist readers with understanding editorials by painting a representation of reality as theorised by Bennett *et al.* (2006:74-91) and O'Shaughnessy & Sadler (2006:73-90).

In the context of the editorials, the researcher would assume that journalists who are working at *MH* are taught to write from an objective perspective; in a certain way, *MH* presents the views of men as natural, formal, and factual. Such a perspective agrees with research of Anderson (2010), Wykes and Gunter (2005) and, Kimmel *et al.* Connell (2005) who assert that anti-sexist men are active supporters of women's demands for equal opportunity, family reforms, political participation, sexual autonomy, and education. The editorials in *MH* are not necessarily balanced, at times even sensational and journalists quote the personal perspectives of experts in a particular field. These quotations are reported to endorse opinions and to separate facts. Men are depicted in these editorials as the product of recent economic, cultural, and demographic changes that have influenced traditional masculinity to be less and less sustainable. As Christian (1994:3) puts it, "many men's experience and expectations of life and traditional ideas of masculinity have been seriously called into question in the late twentieth century".

One needs to keep in mind that the argument here is that *MH* is only one influence. Other influences – especially when it comes to the construction of masculinity – are family and culture. But how does *MH* focus and construct masculinity (as the focus of this research) in an environment of mediating opinions and beliefs about masculinity and male identity? As the researcher has argued earlier, popular culture

is one of the most influential conveyers of ideologies. Macnamara (2006:33) claims that ideology was a “product of institutions, practices, and value systems that produce and validate some ideas and denigrate or exclude others”. These representations permeate and persuade the lives of the target audience; they are not merely remote and theoretical mumblings. However, one is tempted to assume that *MH* is playing (or attempting to play) an integral part in changing beliefs or ideologies about the various ways of viewing (or reading) masculinities. As a result, the balance of power and knowledge could be shifting from a hegemonic view to a more balanced and integrated opinion of viewing masculinities.

The editorials could be criticised as middle class, Western-centric and elitist, while being removed from the lived experience of most men, but the stereotypical image of the anti-sexist, caring, sharing man, nevertheless, is gaining credibility throughout the representations and constructions in *MH*.

There seem to be a variety of writers in *MH*, and two discoursers are prominent throughout the magazine: the discourse of the ‘guy’ and the discourse of medical science, with specific reference to mental and physical health. The discourse of the guy is also represented in the shirts that he wears; the guy is portrayed as casual and informal (Table 7.4).

By addressing men as ‘guys’, men are of the same status as the journalists themselves writing for the magazine. The tone is friendly, ironic, and laddish. Carter and Steiner (2004) say that the male body is treated as an ‘objectified commodity’, much like the female body have been treated for a long time. The appearances of the men and their possessions become vehicles for providing meaning.



Figure 7.5: Tone: friendly, ironic, and laddish (*MH* August 2010)

Some of the cover lines that illustrate tone as friendly, ironic and laddish:

CHEAT AT WORK (AND WIN!) YOUR CAREER SKYROCKETS (*MH* August 2010);

INSTANT TEXT APPEAL Chat Your Way Into Her Bed Tonight, p150 (*MH* September 2010) and

Disaster... the Condom Broke! And 21 Other Epic Fails Fixed (*MH* June 2011)

illustrate how irony and humour are used as a kind of defensive shield: The writers anticipate that many men may reject serious articles on relationships, or advice about sex, such as

SEX. MEN THINK ABOUT IT A LOT. WHEN WE last had it. When we will have it again (*MH* editorial July 2010),

In relation to health or cooking (*MH* editorial, June 2011), the editor elaborates on how “for a lot of men the kitchen is the new garage”, and so drench their pieces with humour by saying at

*Men's Health*, we understand that the closest you'll come to sharing the stage with the Stones is watching them on DVD while smashing your air guitar into the couch, which is why this issue has a special rock-star theme (*MH* editorial September 2010).

There is also a code for *MH* to ‘live by’ while constantly re-assuring men.

You can really pull it all off.

To achieve greatness on a daily basis, men must be hard-wired to believe that nothing is impossible and that

...sexual prowess is not something that is being challenged – that goes against the guy code... (*MH*, editorial March 2011).

These examples also illustrate how silliness and irony are used to ‘sweeten the pill’. The researcher does not intend ‘silliness’ to be criticism: The way in which *MH* combines serious advice with funny and ‘inappropriate’ humour can be quite clever.

Rather than going through the editorials and covers one-by-one, the researcher highlights some of the main discourses of masculinity that are most commonly presented in these texts.

### **7.3.1 Men do not know much about women**

The *MH* (December 2010) is a rare issue in the sense that it has a female on the flip cover. The flip cover is “*Men's Health* Tech Guide 2010” with Olympian athlete, Tanith Belbin, discretely topless and in a black panty on a white couch. It is clear that Belbin is reflected as ‘ready’ to try out the technical equipment. In this cover where the only woman appears (displayed without a bra and wearing only a panty) is very different from how men appear. Men are never displayed in underpants on the covers. The name of the Olympic athlete with the cover line “test drives this year’s hottest tech” underneath suggest that she is accompanying the technical equipment; it appeals to the heterosexual desire, specifically the pleasures of male penetrative sex. Thus, female identity is constructed as the pursuit of male pleasure. This is

observed in the fact that the female body is objectified. Her sexual appeal means also that heterosexual men are included as admirers. The male reader is meant to admire the sexual appeal of the woman. The page is laid out horizontally. Belbin is poised in the centre of the flip cover. This is the focal point according to Kress and Van Leeuwen (1996:203). They probably argue that if she is in the centre, she receives more attention than any part of the image that surrounds her. At the bottom of the horizontal flip cover, it reads:

SMART SPLURGES TO MAKE RIGHT NOW

EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO DIRECT YOUR OWN HIGH-DEF MOVIE

\*\*Naked girl not included



Figure 7.6: A female on the flip cover (Flip cover *MH* December 2010)

Synnott (2009) and, Wykes and Gunter (2005) describes how images have come to reflect stylisation of the self by young men. Belbin who is half nude in a horizontal position is supposedly inviting men to watch the image of her sexual pose and bodily display. This is meant to excite the male audience and plays clearly on the male

gaze. The gaze is a concept used for analysing visual culture that deals with how an audience views the people presented. The types of gaze are primarily categorised by who is doing the looking. On this flip cover, Belbin is 'displayed' for the male readers of *MH*. For Berger (1972:64), these images record the inequality of gender relations and a sexualisation of the female image that still remains culturally central. They reassure men of their sexual power and at the same moment deny any sexuality of women other than the male construction. They are evidence of gendered difference because any effort to replace the woman in these images with a man *violates* 'the assumptions of the likely viewer'. The verbal text is aligned left underneath one another in red on the white couch where Belbin is lying topless. This flip cover is the "TECH GUIDE 2010", but these words contain sexual innuendos: What has been "tested", "ridden", or "ranked"? The message is always the same: buy the product, get the girl (Belbin). In this way, the male gaze enables women to be a commodity that helps the products to get sold (the "sex sells" saying that comes up in reference to modern marketing).

Goffman (1979:41) implies that lying on the floor or on a sofa or bed seems to be a conventionalised expression of sexual availability. From all the covers where only one white woman appears, she is pictured on a sofa (in comparison with the men standing on all the covers). She achieves this sexual appeal through several vectors that are found in the image. She is exposing her upper body and legs. She is wearing a black panty that highlights her buttocks as the black is evident and contrasting on the white couch. Clearly, she is already 'waiting' on the couch. This could also be interpreted as a ritual of subordination. The verbal text

Everything you need to direct your own high-def movie

suggests that a man can make his own film with Belbin. In red capital letters the verbal text says

TESTED, TALLIED,

RIDDEN, REDLINED,

AND RANKED ...

THE 75 BEST

## NEW PRODUCTS

FOR MEN (Figure 7.6).

The culmination of objectification is that the legs and face of Belbin are less significant than the body where most of the vectors seem to intersect. Belbin is gazing at the viewer – her breasts hidden by the way she is lying and her arm stretches to pick up headphones – indicating that this image is breaking the stereotype that sex is meant to be enjoyed by men and women (and not only by men) (Figure 7.7).

This further illustrates that men like to look at women, but according to the cover lines with advice, it seems men do not know much about women. From the cover lines, it is clear that [men] readers of *MH* need instruction about getting along with women. All 12 issues investigated include advice on how to be better in bed, and how to satisfy your female partner. Other articles of this type, for instance, offer advice:

30 RED-HOT SEX SECRETS Decode Her Signals (*MH* February 2011)

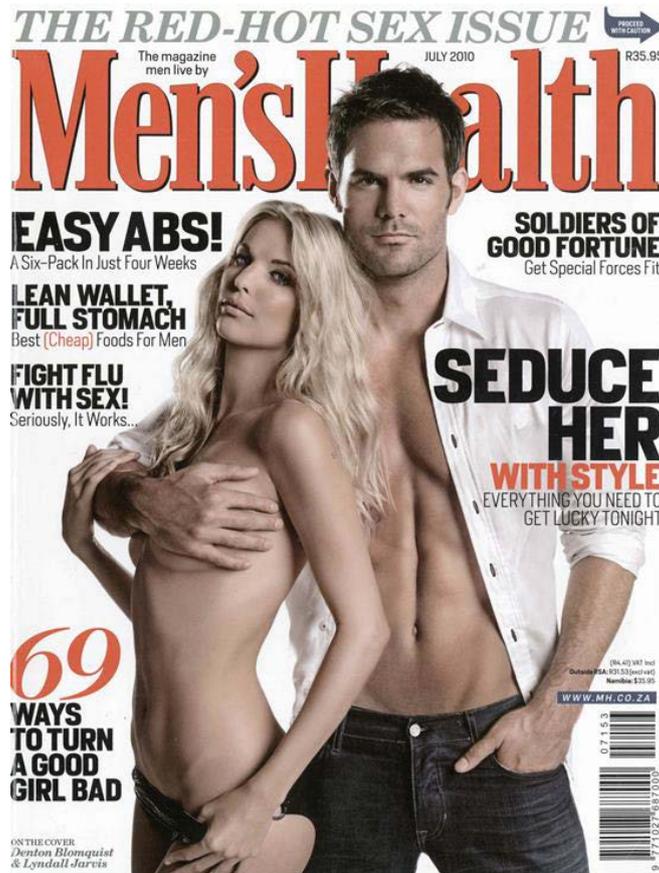
READ HER DIRTY MIND P154 (*MH* March 2011)

MORE SEX BETTER SEX (*MH* May 2011)

These cover lines are indicative of men's reactions to social change and the changing role of men in the 1970s and 1980s, particularly men's reactions to First Wave feminisms (Carter & Steiner 2004). With these cover lines, *MH* attempts to raise fellow men's consciousness and to foster a more caring, sharing, nurturing man. The men that *MH* is appealing to are middle-class and well-educated and the magazine plays on men's willingness to assume a supportive role that results in knowing and understanding what women need. This results in the emergence of the new man as an idol.

### **7.3.2 The ideal man is a sexual champion**

Sex is used in cover lines to sell more copies on all the covers (at times, even twice in two different cover lines on one cover). The *MH* (July 2010) issue is the only cover out of the sample, that displays a female and a male on the front cover.



**Figure 7.7: The Red-Hot Sex Issue (MH July 2010)**

The male and female appear in a sexually provocative depiction with the cover line

THE RED-HOT SEX ISSUE

above the masthead, and printed on the arrow next to it saying:

PROCEED / WITH CAUTION

Denton Blomquist and Lyndall Jarvis depict the couple on the cover. He stands facing the reader with an unbuttoned white formal shirt that exposes his torso and six pack, while she is wearing a black panty only, with his arm covering her right breast and his hand holding her left breast. Goffman (1979:54) claims that a male sometimes employs an extended arm, in effect marking the boundary of his sexual property. Four fingers of his left hand are tucked into his jeans pocket with his thumb sticking out as an indexical sign to draw attention to his crotch. Her right hand holds his arm that covers her breasts, while the other hand holds the panty with her thumb tucked in behind the waistband. As depicted on this cover, her gaze is turned away

and can be regarded as having the importance of withdrawing from the current thrust of communication, allowing one's feelings to settle back into control while she is somewhat sheltered from non-stop scrutiny. Since the couple is standing next to each other, no confrontation or some sort of fight is displayed in her gaze. It is a display of aversive behaviour, some sort of submission that implies trust in the source of stimulus. Indications of social distance are also coded on this cover (Figure 7.7). On the same note, Kress and Van Leeuwen (2001) describe the role of camera factors in the depiction of images, such as a close up shot (as one example) when full objects [images] are captured closely from a short distance. This is further a 'front on' image and is closer to the viewer to invite him to pay attention to the front 'bodies'. Men appear even manlier next to a lean (almost fragile) woman. The cover line reads

SEDUCE HER WITH STYLE EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO  
GET LUCKY TONIGHT (*MH* July 2011).

The first two words of the cover line bleeds over Blomquist's formal shirt in 48 point bold, while "WITH STYLE" is printed in bold orange, and the rest of the cover line appears in normal 16 pt. black.

The sexual goals offered by *MH*, such as

Seduce her in 60 Seconds (*MH* August 2010),

SEX ON FIRE! Touch her here, here and... here p164 (*MH* December 2010), and

30 RED-HOT SEX SECRETS Decode Her Signals (*MH* February 2011)

are prominent and have the potential of creating performance anxiety, which keeps readers coming back to the magazine for tips.

Most issues of *MH* offer techniques for giving "best sex tips ever" (*MH* editorial July 2010). From the cover lines, it was established that sex appeared 14 times (117%) as a category on 12 covers. The goal is not just quality sex but "THE RED-HOT SEX ISSUE" is largely attributed to sex, hence the headline *Sexy Times* of this editorial (Figure 7.7). The word sex is repeated eight times in the editorial, and men are constantly assured of

Oh yes. Sex. It's important to us men...; SEX. MEN THINK ABOUT IT A LOT. WHEN WE last had it. When we will have it again... (*MH* editorial July 2010)

The editorial refers to this issue as the

...red hot couples cover... how to... heat up your bedroom... [and be a]... record-breaking Olympian in the bedroom... (*MH* editorial July 2010).

From the cover lines, it is clear that *MH* is written as if all its readers were heterosexual. Good quality heterosexual sex is yet another goal of the magazine:

69 ways to turn a good girl bad (*MH* July 2010)

INSTANT TEXT APPEAL Chat Your Way Into Her Bed Tonight, p150 (*MH* September 2010)

A SUMMER OF SMOKING HOT SEX! Light Her Fire On p77 (*MH* October 2010)

SEXPLOSION! Push Her Lust Buttons (*MH* March 2011)

... sexual prowess is not something that is being challenged – that goes against the guy code... you probably have a black belt in horizontal fitness... with detailed instructions on what she really wants... (*MH* editorial March 2011)

Her Secret Sex Thoughts p118 (*MH* April 2011)

Initially, part of the strategy of *MH's* was to exclude women and celebrities from the covers. Ever since, its policy includes the respectful treatment of women. There are no vulgar or distasteful pictures of women in the magazine, which confirms its positioning away from the traditional 'girlie' magazine category. It can be argued that despite the fact that *MH* does not have the same readership and popularity as magazines such as *FHM*, *MH* endeavours to play a role in moving away from objectifying women as sexual objects and in getting 'real men' in touch with the so-called 'modern man' or 'new man' that respects and views women as equals.

In Anderson (2010) and Christian's (1994) small but noteworthy studies, many of the men are aware of their sensitive and vulnerable feelings which they believe are assisting them to have better relationships with women and children, as well as with other men.

Synnott (2009:239) warns against the stereotyping of woman as innocent, nurturing, kindly and morally superior, and as victims of men. The negative stereotyping of men as 'bastards', 'rapists', villains and criminals, and morally inferior has neatly complemented the stereotyping of women by applying polarity. Synnott (2009) sees this as part of his mandate to indicate that this moral duality of woman/good and man/bad is unrealistic, despite its reputation and approval among both men and women. It is women who have denounced the construction of women as victims while they are pronouncing themselves as, if not villains, then definitely ambitious, mercenary, and sexy: Just human beings who are in many ways similar to the men whom they might love (Burton 2005:242-3).

### **7.3.3 The ideal man is a powerful muscular man**

As far as semiotics and making meaning are concerned, one can assume that some men who are reading *MH* do not find meaning in the world (or in the magazine), nor do they necessarily internalise already known meanings. Another assumption is that the men who are reading *MH* cannot ignore their cultural environment. The examples from *MH* confirm the difference between men and women with various embedded fashion elements, watches, sport, ways of thinking, and behaviour. Also, men live within the maps of meaning of a particular culture. Therefore, it is easily assumed that every word has its own meaning, whether it relates to an object in the world or a concept in men's minds.

The men on the covers are all good looking, handsome, and muscular; each one epitomises a body feature that the magazine wishes to emphasise, for example, Marcel Snyman (*MH* December 2010) and Jo Maree (*MH* April 2011). In the September 2010 and April 2011 issues of *MH*, both men appear in vests while standing almost sideways. These postures express either superiority, victory (the fight is over), or disdain. The men on all the covers appear relaxed. Only one (*MH* January 2011) sports a big smile. Some of the cover men unobtrusively display their muscles. On the covers of *MH* issues (August & September 2010; January & February 2011) men are exhibiting their arm muscles. Accentuated muscles seek to show off strength and power.

From the qualitative and quantitative analysis of the editorials and covers, it is evident that true masculinity, according to Connell (1995:45), is almost always believed to progress from men's bodies. All the men on the covers are posing, and in this way behaving in a way that is not genuine, but is intended to deceive the audience (pretence); also an activity clearly different from 'posturing'. Goffman (1979:17) claims that someone pretence for an advertisement is not doing so in the commercial model's sense. There is no effort to offer the reader cues for an understanding "that a make-believe world is pictured whose subjects have a social and personal identity little matching that of the men on the covers". In the case of *MH*, the men who model for the covers have unique personal identities; making this identification is also central to the ritual function the cover has (Goffman 1979:18). As masculinity proceeds from men's bodies, it is closely linked to health which is the focus of self- and health construction (health as a category on covers appears 92%). The cover lines target men's interests by carefully cultivating goals for them: physically toned bodies, sex, appearance, food, and style. The fitness aspect of building muscle is reinforced by comparisons with the cover guy. The size of the text in the cover line is also a quick attention grabber.



**Figure 7.8: The Hardcore Issue (MH May 2011)**

Male power is maintained and justified by biological determinism that views gender differences as biologically based and is in this way seen as natural, inescapable, and consistent (Macnamara 2006:27).

In fact, operating anything with an engine, from a motor boat to a chainsaw, falls within our innate expert abilities... (MH editorial March 2011)

One of the main goals of *MH*, established through necessities, is increasing muscle size:

EASY ABS! A Six-Pack in Just Four Weeks (MH July 2010)

56 MUSCLES IN JUST 6 MOVES (MH August 2010)

BIG ARMS GUARANTEED! In 5 Simple Moves (MH December 2010)

FREE POSTER: BIG ARMS FAST! (MH February 2011)

In the cover lines, *MH* uses noun phrases in the same way:

**LOSE YOUR GUT! THE COMPLETE PLAN** (*MH* January 2011)

**FREE POSTER: BIG ARMS FAST!** (*MH* February 2011)

**HI-DEF ABS! 3 Moves That Make Them Pop!** (*MH* May 2011)

From these cover lines; a desire for big muscles reflects reality as confirmed by Synnott (2009), Wisneski (2007) and Macnamara (2006). The ideal shape is present and reflected in the cover models. Since *MH* represents these ideals, it might be best understood as a near-impossible version of masculinity to which males in society are encouraged to aspire when they desire to identify as real men (Segal 2007; Seidler 2006; MacKinnon 2003). While these ideals are embodied in *MH* (covers and editorials), they are perceived as very real. It is, therefore, important for one to review the process, as well as the purpose of the representations in *MH*.

The men on the covers are almost identically shaped men: big, lean, and muscular with some facial hair (Table 7.1). With this analysis, one may claim that *MH* has a function to entertain men and is not simply a window to the world or a reflection of the real world. However, *MH* provides men with a paradigm for viewing the mediated world (Grossberg *et al.* 2006:16-17, Burton 2005:59). The knight and warrior ideal or model of masculinity is as ancient as written history, dating back to the Homeric heroes up to modern warriors (Synnott 2009:27). The passion to 'live dangerously' is exactly what so many of the heroes of myth or history have done, and carry on doing. Furthermore, one also valorises those who are the first to achieve goals that are defined as worthwhile and who do certain tasks best. On all the covers, one applauds the medal winners, working hard, fitness, and running bodies (even Tenith Belbin as Olympian swimmer. Figure 7.6). Another theme is conquest of the other and conquest of the self – often the same process in different guises – that is intrinsic to heroism. The repetition of messages in *MH* about, for example gaining muscle, fitness, and heroism reinforces the masculine beliefs and creates a natural appearance. It also confirms the dominant world view or the status quo for men who are reading *MH*.

Heroism, conquest, and male competitiveness are frequently cited in the South African media, and *MH* is no different. The cover lines and editorials in *MH* portray

men and male identities predominantly as causing harm rather than bringing benefits. This is illustrated in

SPECIAL REPORT: CHEAT DEATH! Drive a Car? Read This (*MH* April 2011).

Macnamara (2006:139) confirms that mass media references to male competitiveness cause harmful effects, such as risk-taking, and oppressive actions appear more “than twice as often as male competitiveness associated with benefits such as success” in an undertaking or accomplishment. Although Macnamara (2006:139) also says that male “teamwork and cooperation were cited even less frequently” *MH* encourage men “to take charge of your own life” and “fight back” in an editorial (*MH*, August 2010) about the challenges of life; and how one as a man deals with these challenges. In the editorial that has not been written by the editor, but by a collaborative *MH* team, the magazine encourages team work by getting

eight staffers (that) will bare their chests (and their souls) by subjecting themselves to an intensive training programme and diet plan devised by the Sports Science Institute of South Africa.

This editorial (*MH*, November 2010) is followed-up in the *MH* (editorial February 2011) to report back on the eight staff members (referred to as guys) that took part in the staff challenge over eight (8) weeks. *MH* constructs a masculine image of teamwork and exercise by referring to the

power breakfasts [these men had and how they] headed out for their midday workout like a hit squad... these guys were looking great... It went way beyond any cover lines or promotional copy writing ... By week seven... routines tightened... diets were refined...

The above example of teamwork and cooperation is illustrated in the *MH* (editorial January 2011) by referring to the Urbanathlon® (a combination of a fun run and an obstacle course) that took place in Gauteng where over 1 300 readers had trained themselves and participated.

When *MH* carries these messages, it is mediating them, simply carrying the message from one place to another; it virtually acts as an intermediary between the audience and the world (Bennet *et al.* 2006:76). However, mediated communication also involves technical considerations which mean that reality can never be captured

owing to social, economic, and political factors. In the case of *MH*, people make decisions during the mediating process about the selection of material from *MH*, the choice of English as the communication medium, the framing and composition of shots that are representing a variety of masculinities, the style, and presentation. In this case, *MH* is involved in creating perception – selecting certain elements that are significant and comprehensible for the male audience and communication – by fashioning texts to voice particular perceptions and by making another series of selections.

In this way, *MH* represents social values and not social reality. Some men perceive the mediated world on behalf of other people; therefore, a constructed reality will necessarily invite comparisons between our own and other experiences. When male characters are used on the covers, the reality is idealised, since the representation and construction of masculinity get done in a believable way. The visual representation of men is also playing on the image of the new man that started in the 1980s when visual representation of masculinities appeared in advertising. As mentioned previously, the male body began to be objectified and eroticised in the same vain as the female body previously. Carter and Steiner (2004:203) say “a narcissistic new man emerged, self-confident, well groomed, muscular, but also sensitive”.

The construction of the ideal man as muscular previously serves the ideological goal of imitating male power. Imitating male power may also serve commercial goals. The new man is, in this way, associated with commercial masculinity and the spectacular expansion of consumerism; certainly this new man with his interest in clothes and house music is far removed from the Old-Spice-scented generation (Carter & Steiner 2004:202). Most readers do not look like cover models and without a big extent of effort, they will never look like cover models. Wanting to look like cover models has the possibility to generate anxiety, which keeps readers buying the magazine for the assurance of shortcuts to the far-off goal (Stibbe 2004:39). One needs to read the construction of the ideal man together with the feminists and pro-feminist constructions of men is the conflation of gender and power in both the public and private domain. Kimmel (1992:162) says “Everywhere we look – politics, corporate life, academic life – men are *in power*“(emphasis in the original).

Synnott (2009:160) says men are “NOT in power”. He says that Kimmel should look at the homeless, the hospitals with the victims of violence, the prisons where men are raped and brutalised, and the war cemeteries.

#### 7.3.4 The ideal man likes cars, gadgets, sport, and danger

...I've never met a man who didn't consider his driving skills on the verge of a semi-pro... (*MH*, editorial March 2011).

MacKinnon (2003:90) claims that it is more likely in recent covers that the purchase of particular consumer goods by a man will result in female attention of him. The to-be-looked-at male covers of *MH* seem to equate to the strategy of the regularly eroticised female covers of previous years. This approach seems to suggest that the new imagery of men in *MH* mostly speaks to men by means of their gender, as part of a community of men, while recognising the conditional nature of masculinity.

In *MH* (editorial April 2011) the focus is on April when “summer's on the way out and things are beginning to slow down...” Men are encouraged to “recharge your comeback plan” as “...we've declared April the new January...” since the month of April is a “great time to recharge” and to “reset the clock”. Getting back to one's goals is compared with a mulligan in golf:

...a free hit...

...a chance to have another go...

...to take another swing...

Synnott (2009:109-110) sees physical bravery as a core component of the ideal male. To be a coward is not to be a “true” male, even if he is a biological male. Men are encouraged to meet their trainer who is the

Sharks rugby legend Stefan Terblanche... his workout and pep talk start on page 126 ... (*MH* editorial April 2011) and

...Fight Night (p108), a gritty report on the state of Martial Arts (MMA)... (*MH* editorial May 2011).

A fascination with fast vehicles and electronic gadgets (although always been gendered) is reflected in almost all of the *MH* issues. Synnott (2009:195) confirms that it is not clear why many men engage in such dangerous and extreme activities.

T-shirt philosophies explain the T-type (Thrill-type) personalities: “Just do it!” or the Nike slogan, and Jane Fonda’s very similar slogan for very different goals: “No Pain, No Gain”. Such attitudes can be productive with immense benefits, but they are achieved at immense cost of human endeavour. Consumerism as a dimension comes to the fore with the fascination of hardware and masculine products. The *MH* man, in particular, buys his way to a sense of male specialness with expensive cars, meals, shoes, grooming products, jeans, and suits.

**Table 7.6: Jeans and beards**

Appearance	Number of cover guys
Jeans	12
Stubble / trimmed beard	12

The men on all 12 covers are wearing jeans. The *MH* (September 2010) includes a “Bonus 34-page guide Look Better in Denim!” Another recurring feature on the covers is facial hair. The men on all 12 covers have either stubble or a trimmed beard. A beard symbolises masculinity. The hair of the models is always short, groomed, and combed. Only one cover guy – Josh Holloway, television actor in *Lost* (*MH* August 2010) – has longer hair.

Both flip covers of *MH* (October 2010 and April 2011) are devoted to style. In these two issues

Wear This, Not That 50 Instant Style Upgrades [and] The Perfect Suit To Fit You – And Your Budget [with] THE NEW RULES FOR MEN [with Nico Panagio’s (actor and television presenter)] 5 tips for looking great every day [sitting on a arm chair in a suit] (*MH* flip cover October 2010);

[while] 7 NEW RULES OF SUIT COOL [and advice on jackets] LAYER UP WITH THE PERFECT JACKET [and shoes] THE RIGHT SHOES TO WEAR WITH EVERYTHING [are given] (*MH* flip cover April 2011).

From these examples, it is evident that *MH* appeals to the new trend for males to create their bodies or to enhance the contemporary perception of manliness. These

trends – which include awareness articles that are dealing with self-analysis in relation to a variety of issues and encouraging the transformation of the traditional male behaviour – are characterised by individualism and commercialism.<sup>37</sup> Shopping and moisturisers are slowly shifting to becoming a part of the male territory; such as leisure, pleasure, and appearance. *MH* encourages the characteristic of self-disclosure that is historically not considered as masculine. However, it maintains a clearly distinctive style when these issues are addressed to a male audience; this is a further example of the sensitive new man.

For instance, the *MH* (editorial December 2010) is about summer and the multi uses of an iPad:

...This new-fangled piece of gear would benefit my life...

...I haven't done a stitch of work on the iPad, it's all been play

...rolling out our new website with a range of nifty tools and tricks that takes *MH* to a whole new level...

The flip cover (*MH* December 2010) is called "TECH GUIDE 2010" and includes cover lines on a "camera camcorder", "hi-fi smartphone" and the "3D TV Robo-cleaner". (Figure 7.6). The cover page is laid out horizontally with four cover lines appearing horizontally:

4 ESSENTIAL BUSINESS COMBOS; THE CELL PHONE OF THE FUTURE; 9 IDIOT-PROOF CAMERAS; and YOUR HOLIDAY SHOPPING – DONE! See page 32.

Devine (a well-known opinion feature writer) sees this as a suspicious marketing ploy intended to sell products through manipulating men's ego and insecurity in the same way that women have been persuaded to buy make-up, hair products, and stay up-to-date of fashion. "The new masculine heterosexual ideal seems to be imposing the same tyranny of lookism on men which women have long endured" (*Sydney Morning Herald* 18 September 2003:17).

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<sup>37</sup> Mac an Ghail and Haywood (2007:70) claim that the media as a "highly influential space of modern iconography, has made visible the commercialization and commodification of modern (young) men, with projected notions of the *New Man*, the *New Lad* and the *New Father*."

While size may grab attention, it can also lead the reader to dismiss information. The price tag is one of the smallest captions on the covers, even though it might be the most important information to the consumer. In this way, men are addressed as consumers – by tradition the role of women – although here it seems that ultimately it is a sense of masculine pride that is to be bought (Macnamara 2006). This is not necessarily bad, as research on working-class men in the suburbs of Mexico City serves to contest the existence of the 'ubiquitous' male. With the strong economic and cultural relationship between Mexico and the United States (15% of Mexico's labour force work in the US) a key element is interrelation of import/export of fashion, music, and consumerism (Haywood & Mac an Ghail 2003:90-91).

**Table 7.7: Shirts**

Formal Shirt	T-shirt (buttons)	Vest	Golf shirt	V-neck T-shirt	Round neck T-shirt	Total
1	1	3	1	3	3	12

The stretch fabric shirts of the cover guys are not slim fit, but they fit tightly enough to show the concealed muscles (11 covers). The *MH* cover of July 2010 is the only exception, since the cover guy (Denton Blomquist to the right of Lyndall Jarvis) wears an unbuttoned white formal shirt. All the main muscles of the arms and torso are exposed on the 12 covers; the muscles of the lower body (from the waist down) are excluded. On all 12 covers, the images focus on abdominal muscles, chests, arms, and shoulders. Carter and Steiner (2004:203) confirm that the commercial exploitation of men-as-sex-objects has become big business. The voyeuristic sexualisation of the female body packaged as visual erotica, is now transferred to the male body with the same ultimate purpose in mind: To secure sales. Segal (2007:75) claims that the last two decades observed a change in politics of looking, since the 'male-on-male' gaze integrated the 'male-on-female' (along with female-on-male and even female-on-female) ogle as socially acceptable; especially among young, fashionable men with high disposable incomes.

### 7.3.5 The ideal man is healthy, eats right, and is not fat

Men are generally portrayed as not taking care of their health, with leading issues reported in relation to men's health being alcohol and drug abuse. Disease among men is increasing, but pre-emptive treatment and programmes to address men's health problems are little reported (Segal 2007:156; Macnamara 2006:137-138). This is also happening in *MH*, with a few notable exceptions. For example, prostate cancer, a big killer of men, is discussed in one of the 12 issues studied in this research. HIV is another major issue in South Africa, but risk taking sexual behaviour by men is not addressed in any of these issues.

Men are not proficient in terms of personal self-care. This seeming failure in self-care is partially a result of the traditional male values of self-reliance. Synnott (2009:226) claims that the cultural paradigm is also relevant as men not only have the most dangerous jobs with the highest mortality rates (and excellent pay), but they also have less healthy life-styles and the deadliest hobbies. Maybe, it is for this reason that health appears 11 times (92%) on covers. Although health is used twice in cover lines on three covers (*MH* August 2010, February 2011 & May 2011), it does not appear on each and every *MH* cover. The category of food is used eight times, which translates to a 67% prominence. Although men tend to exercise more, they also have similar obesity rates to women (Synnott 2009:226). Fat appears on five covers (42%). The researcher looks at these three categories in combination, since the health categories encourage men to live healthily, eat the 'right' food and must not put on weight. With reference to health:

5-Minute Lifesavers (*MH* August 2010)

Lower Your Blood Pressure, *Naturally* (*MH* December 2010)

BEAT BACK PAIN (*MH* February 2011)

STRESS TIPS FROM SA'S DANGER MEN (*MH* May 2011)

Food is used to encourage men to be a bodybuilder or a muscular man:

30 NEW MEALS THAT BUILD MUSCLE Bulk Up Now On  
p144 (*MH* September 2010);

or to encourage to lose fat: MELT AWAY KILOS! 95 Best Foods for Men (*MH* November 2010) [plays on which food to eat, and losing weight]; and

SIX-PACK ON A PLATE! THE Best Flat-Belly Food (*MH* February 2011).

Losing weight is part of becoming a muscular man:

**LOSE YOUR GUT! THE COMPLETE PLAN** (*MH* January 2011)

SPECIAL LOSE-YOUR-GUT ISSUE! (*MH* February 2011)

Free poster fight fat & win! Ditch 4kg by June (*MH* May 2011)

Synnott (2009:226) and Segal (2007:156) claim that men drink, smoke, and use illegal drugs more and start these unhealthy habits at younger ages than women. The non-inclusion of tobacco or alcohol (spirits and wine) advertisements in *MH* publications is part of policy. The latter ensures that *MH* maintains an image of health and fitness. Moreover, the withdrawal of all cigarette advertising as required by law in South Africa has had no adverse effect on the long-term financial success of *MH*.

### **7.3.6 The ideal man needs help**

As Synnott (2009:217-221) claims that patriarchy is mythic, one would assume identities that are strongly influenced by a set of stereotypical feminine and masculine characteristics and traits, which are frequently identified by the gender categories of women and men. Then one can argue that women are re-defined as the superior gender, and should rule. As the T-shirts proclaim: "Girls rule. Boys drool." The advantage of this binary model of power is not that simple; changing the old patriarchal system by reversing the model is not going to bring "paradise on earth" (Synnott 2009:218). With reference to patriarchy, it can be argued that it might be difficult for new fathers to accept their role of supporting the primary relationship between mother and baby during the first few weeks. The primary relationship does not exclude the relationship with the father, but owing to breast feeding the relationship is different. It seems, however, that the 'new father' is

different from the older images of fatherhood: the new father is present at birth; he is involved with his children as infants, not just when they are older; he participates in the actual day-to-day work of child care and not just play; he is involved with his daughters, as well as his sons.

When the entire field of gender difference becomes represented by the masculine, it is myth at work, especially when one views patriarchy as the universal structure that privileges men at the expense of women: Patriarchy functions through ideology and as myth (Synnott 2009:218; Berger 2005:100; Thwaites *et al.* 2002:160). Morrell (2001) describes South African men as chauvinistic, misogynistic, and homophobic. He concludes that there is not a single typical South African man; there is much diverse masculinity. South Africa is still enduring changes that drive gender responses. Some of these responses are violent but there are also scenarios for realising gender justice. Such change can be quite fast as in the case of state involvement that put gender legislature on the statute books and which, more subtly, challenge a project of re-masculinisation to present new images of manhood for a new country. *MH* is supportive of 'men's' activities in general, but they suggest that their readers need help along the way:

BECOME BETTER AT EVERYTHING!

Hit A Great Golf Drive

Buy Lingerie Like A Pro

Look Good in Photos

And 15 Other Guy Skills You Need to Know (*MH* August 2010); and  
HOW TO WIN AT EVERYTHING

Love \* Sex \* Golf \* Pool \*

Money \* Twitter \* Work \*

Touch Rugby \* Fighting \*

Poker \* Push-ups... (*MH* November 2010).

Fashion and grooming advice appears seven times (58%) as cover lines on the 12 covers, and two flip-covers *MH* (October 2010 & April 2011) are devoted to style. Men are also advised on relationships and sex (Section 7.4.2), but the advice does

not stop there. Here are just some examples from covers and editorials on how men are also assisted with issues about how to improve:

*health*: 92%, “Lower Your Blood Pressure Naturally” (*MH* December 2010), ...Prostate cancer remains one of the biggest (yet preventable) health threats for men. ‘I want my Prostate Back’ (p124) is one man’s journey that should be required reading for all...”

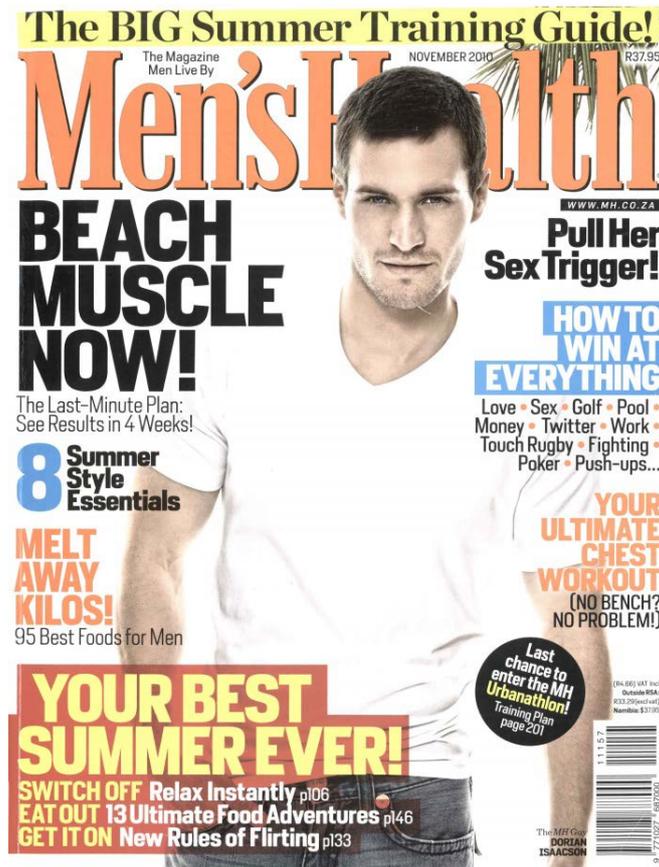


Figure 7.9: How To Win At Everything (*MH* November 2010)

*eating / cooking*: 67%, “power breakfasts” (*MH* editorial February 2011), “You, Master CHEF! 5 Gourmet Guy Meals p164” (*MH* June 2011);

*their careers*: 42%, “Hungry to rocket your career to rock-god status” (*MH* editorial September 2010); “ACE THAT INTERVIEW Say this, Not That” (*MH* October 2010);

*using money*: 25%, “...Key financial milestones... best ways to save... spend your money wisely” (*MH* editorial February

2011), "MAXIMISE YOUR CASH FLOW! 7 Get-Rich Money Rules (*MH* April 2011);

*using their brain*: 17%, "15% MORE BRAIN POWER...In Just 60 Seconds" (*MH*, September 2010); and

*relaxation*: 8%, "RELAX & RECHARGE 17 Best Local Hide-Aways" (*MH* December 2010).

All the men and the two women (*MH* cover December 2010 & *MH* flip cover July 2010) are Caucasian. Gates (1977) was concerned with about what he saw as portraits of Blacks in the media that were negative, stereotypical, and homogeneous. Therefore, he offered his own essays on black men whom he knew well or had met or interviewed. Keeping in mind the cultural stereotypes of men, the majority in Euro-America being white, are reinforced by stereotypes of the other. Black men and Muslim men, in particular, are victims of sexism and racism. Here sexism and racism reinforce each other. The apartheid era was a critical period for black people in South Africa. It created ethnic labels and promoted assumed ethnic identities (Morrell 2001:17). In a predominantly black country like South Africa, none of the front covers use the image of a black man. One flip cover (*MH* April 2011) displays a black male. This is an obvious consumer ploy (Figure 7.5) and might also be a demographic indicator of the *MH* readership.

In *MH*, social and personal success of men is commonly viewed in terms of jobs and careers. As mentioned previously, *MH* portrays a caring, sharing; and nurturing man who does not identify with traditional fathers, who rejects macho behaviour, and who strives towards men being in touch with their sensitive and vulnerable feelings while believing that this will assist men to have better relationships with women and other men. This is confirmed by Morrell (2001) who says that there has been no single or clear response to gender conditions in democratic South Africa. But the diversity of responses and the relative absence of gendered organisation amongst men should not obscure the fact that the gender order is changing. This is as much an effect of an interventionist state committing itself (at least at the level of policy) to gender equity than it is the small moves made, often in contradictory ways, by men themselves. Movements, like ADAPT (Agisanag Domestic Abuse Prevention and Training) founded by young men to combat domestic violence and discourse of

peace, seek to guide South African men in the direction of emancipatory masculinity. Hegemonic masculinity has shifted and continues to shift.

The explanation above has dealt with the quantitative content analysis and supports the multimodal analysis. Now, this chapter changes its focus somewhat to the analysis of the qualitative research and this dissertation's multimodal semiotic model.

## **7.4 HEPTAGON MULTIMODAL MODEL ANALYSIS**

In this section, the qualitative analysis of the nine visuals is discussed. Some quantitative findings are also reported, to support the mixed methods approach discussions.

### **7.4.1 Visual grammar**

Machin (2007:2) says that visual semiotics has considered lexis rather than grammar by focusing on individual signs as opposed to the way in which individual signs can be assembled into meaningful sentences. Because meaning can only be constructed with the active consent of readers, there is never a single discourse, since all media text can be read in a variety of ways and with many meanings. A simple link between one element and an idea, such as muscle man equals stupid male, can be read differently depending on context and gender. A grammatical approach is interested in how individual signs are used collectively with other signs to create meaning. The objectification that is used to categorise men as groups is important characteristics and cover lines on front covers of *MH*; such as "your perfect body", "shrink your gut", "more sex – less begging", and "run longer and faster". From these examples, it is established that the grammatical approach involves treating images as complex semiotic systems, like language, when meaning is created by grammar rather than by individual signs with fixed meanings. Also, by using these cover lines in conjunction with the repetitive visual images of muscularly toned men on all the front covers, *MH* is constructing a deceptive view of a precise truth or reality for their readers.

Discourses are not just clusters of words; they also determine our social responses. A discourse does not represent what is 'real'; it actually produces what one comes to understand as real. It determines what can be said and even what can be thought

(Woods 1999). A discourse is also interpreted as the way objects or ideas are talked about publicly that gives rise to extensive opinions and misinterpretations (Lull 2000:173). The representations of men as a social group in *MH* also facilitate the creation of identities for men. *MH*, as an example of the magazine genre, further contributes with visual texts to myths, discourses, and ideologies. *MH* tells stories and portrays visual texts of and about men that men would like to hear or read. Therefore, if genres contain ideas about whom one is, how one should live, and what kind of moral and social structure one should inhabit; then one has generated, repeated, and reinforced those ideas. Genres are not, of course, the only influence on people's development. They are significant among other texts owing to the very occurrence of repetition and reinforcement, and the inclination to consume genres and their ideas owing to their pleasurable focus (Burton 2005:74). Since genres are ideological and naturalise ideas about social roles of men, they endorse ideas about power and as such promote ideas about what is appropriate and what is inappropriate. *MH* assumes an essential role in the dynamic relationship between media and society owing to the magazine genre that reflects and promotes ideological positions, especially by means of visual texts (Burton 2005:74).

As in the instance of semiotics, there is a linguistic base to Foucault's theory (Grossberg *et al.* 2006:174-178, Helsby 2005:4-6, Lacey 1998:105-112). During the language selection process of the *MH* front cover lines and editorials, these texts revealed beliefs that at times are unintentional. That is why Foucault suggests that discourse is a major factor in exercising of power. Discourse is, therefore, crucially and successfully used in deconstructing the visual texts in *MH* to bring an understanding about how these meanings and beliefs of masculinities become dominant in the South African society.

The discourse on front covers illustrates muscular strength and fitness. The words strong, fit, sex and muscle represent arbitrary signs in conjunction with the iconic image of Warren McAslan (model, actor, and partner in a family business) on the October 2010 cover of *MH* (Figure 7.11). The recognised connotations that one finds in these visual compositions are not simply assumed but are continually developing in cultures. Such established connotations can, of course, appear neutral while they are not (Machin 2007:22).

Just as one is familiar with the use of language, one is also familiar with thinking about the way metaphors allow one to understand or represent phenomena. Signs are part of a system of choices; there can be a finite number of choices in the context of a sign system. For example, in one of the cover lines of the February 2011 issue of *MH* (Figure 7.2)

**STRONG & FIT Build Muscle & Blast Fat In Just 4 Weeks**

the verb blast metaphorically denotes the explosive shattering and removing of fat. This is another example of a grammatical approach that is interested in how different signs can collectively be used with other signs on a cover to create meaning. This is done on another cover of the July 2010 issue of *MH* (Figure 7.7) that reads in small red capital letters on a white background

**Blast Fat With the Blitz Rugby Workout.**

Does the word “blast” appear to be more real or hyper-real, especially to those readers who are experiencing weight problems? The way one reads this cover line determines whether new value systems or ideologies are implied in the written article and constructed in the narrative. The values appear so obvious that one does not even question them: be “fit” and “fat-free”. If that is the case, one unequivocally accepts the view of reality that is presented by the cover line.

Haywood and Mac an Ghail (2003:95) confirms that using metaphors celebrates men and masculinities, by conveying heroism, bravery, and emotional toughness that in turn celebrate particular types of men, serving to displace women and other men.

Another topic in terms of discourses and reality change begs to be explained. When one looks at the cover lines and the way in which masculinities are portrayed by

**GET BACK IN SHAPE!, Build the Muscles Women Love, or “FREE POSTER BIG ARMS FAST!” (Figure 7.2),**

it seems that these images become fixed as fact, not only about the use of specific words, but also about the message values that they are conveying.

Discourse is illustrated in terms of the models on three covers: Warren McAslan is positioned almost in the middle (slightly to the right hand side) of the cover (*MH* October 2010) with the top part of his head covering some letters of the masthead, Marcel Snyman (*MH* December 2010) [Figure 7.10], and Jo Maree (*MH* April 2011) [Figure 7.13]. The models at the approximate centre of the covers influence how one understands that the magazine specifically focuses on male issues. The discourse on the cover about “a summer of smoking hot sex”, “building muscle”, and “30 trips every guy must take!” creates the impression that all men are familiar with this kind of talk. It interlocks with social practices and reinforces the beliefs and values of men who are reading the magazine. It also portrays the new man as different from his father: He is groomed and fashionable while knowing and trying to understand interaction with women and his family.



Figure 7.10: Example of Men's Health cover lines (*MH* December 2010)



**Figure 7.11: Example of discourse lurking into the text (*MH* October 2010)**

In the cover line

A SUMMER OF SMOKING HOT SEX! Light Her Fire On p77 (*MH* October 2010)

a complex permutation of signs has the common effect of including more specific meaning and of introducing a range of associations. At times, the discourse lurks inside the text, making the language evident thereof: Emerging signs inspire one to link the invisible discourse and its meanings. The discourse of gender is evident, since many words are associated with the male subject:

STRONG & FIT Build Muscle... [and] ADVENTURE SPECIAL 30 TRIPS EVERY GUY MUST TAKE! (*MH* October 2010);

...SUMMER 7-PACK! ...BUILD MUSCLE; BIG ARMS GUARANTEED, Boardies for Every Body (*MH* December 2010); and

Light Her Fire, PACK ON / MUSCLE (*MH* April 2011).

This selective use of signs produces precise meanings about how men think about themselves and about what other men think of them.

You know *that Men's Health* is a force for good. And you want to be good.  
In fact, you want to be the best (*MH* editorial October 2010).

The phrase “you want to be good” and “you want to be the best” assume that men want to look like the cover models, or as the editorial headline says, “What Makes a Real Man”. This gives no option for the reader to choose an ideal shape – perhaps a well-toned sporty body – from a number of options. In the same editorial, “the pillars” (as in the words of the editorial) of a true man are seen as someone with “integrity”, “responsibility”, “dignity”, and “courage”. The “qualities” that define the ‘ultimate *MH* man’ is “dynamic”, “strong”, “balanced”, and “stylish” saying “...no subject is too hard for us to tackle... too difficult for us to confront...” while the *MH* (editorial May 2011) asks whether “modern men were turning soft” bringing men articles such as “fight night” where the average guy “step into the cage” and “this month’s poster will get you fighting fit”. These representations of the male ideal as real men provide mediated versions of the world and a mediated version of reality with the aim of linking media representations to the identities of *MH* audience members (Bennett *et al.* 2006:78-79). These representations is also confirmed by the research of Carter and Steiner (2004), Crewe (2003), Christian (1994) Kimmel and Messner (1992) and indicating that the qualities of the new man (as outlined in the editorial of May 2011) constructs and represents a sharing, caring and anti-sexist man.

This discussion needs to be read in conjunction with the explanation of iconography (Section 7.5.2), since words also provoke discourses and their meanings when one considers binary oppositions. If the binary opposition of strong is weak and of fit is fat, one reads the approval of a given ideological position that is reinforced by evidential disapproval of an opposing view about the man on the front cover. From the cover lines, the discourse and its underlying ideology of fitness and muscular strength dominate the perception of what it means to be a man. In the case of the editorials, the *MH* discourse seeks to define and produce knowledge.

Power relationships are a key issue in discourse (Segal 2007:219-20). While it is grappling with power, it also directs the ways in which men control one another’s

behaviour, including how men think and talk about objects and ideas in the same fashion that it is represented in *MH*.

In the editorial of the October 2010 edition of *MH* (Figure 7.12), the editor asks the question: "Which qualities define the ultimate *Men's Health* man?" To answer this question, the words that are used in the editorial are dynamic, strong, balanced, and stylish. The editor takes the discussion further by stating

...when I think of a true *MH* man, I think of my dad...

The editor lists the "qualities" (the editor uses the word 'qualities' in the editorial) of his dad as a father, grandfather, devoted husband, someone who sacrifices for family, as well as a person one can trust, wish to be with, and who has a good name. The editor summarises by explaining that for the men of *MH*

...no subject is too hard [for us] to tackle... [or] ...too difficult [for us] to confront.

The use of the word tackle invokes the metaphor of sport, since the term denotes meaning with which rugby players and supporters are familiar. This editorial clearly elects how men talk about building muscle and fitness plans and it influences men's ideas and practices about masculinities. The issues that men can tackle and confront are

drug addiction, circumcision and fertility, adoption across racial barriers, retrenchment, and forced emigration.

The editor concludes by saying:

You know that *Men's Health* is a force for good. And you want to be good. In fact, you want to be the best.

FROM THE EDITOR

BY RIDWAAN BAWA

# What Makes a Real Man

**O**NE OF THE QUESTIONS I HAVE BEEN MOST frequently asked during my time as editor has been: "Which qualities define the ultimate *Men's Health* man?" My answer has always mentioned words like "dynamic", "strong", "balanced" and "stylish".

Now, as I sit here writing what is my final editorial, I realise I've learnt that there's much more to it than that. The truth is, when I think of a true *Men's Health* man, I think of my dad. He is 71, has probably seen the inside of a gym only a couple of times in his life, if that, and very reluctantly gave up smoking after a double bypass (although I'd bet my house he still sneaks a puff or three).

He is also a father of five, a grandfather to a further five and a devoted husband to a loving wife for 50 years. He is a man who has made many sacrifices for his family, a man who people trust, a man who has that very thing we all wish to die with – a good name. And this he has achieved without a title, without riches, without any sense of expectation.

He is a man whose character can be summed up in four words: integrity, responsibility, dignity and courage. And, when you lift the T-shirt off *Men's Health* and peel away the six-pack, these are the pillars that define this amazing, all-encompassing, multi-layered brand. It's embedded in the DNA, imprinted on every page of the magazine. No subject is too hard for us to tackle, too difficult for us to confront. Drug addiction, circumcision, fertility, adoption across racial barriers, retrenchment, forced emigration – and how to have smoking hot summer sex, of course (turn to p77 for more on that essential lesson). These are just a few of the subjects that have been put through the *Men's Health* filter. And we've done it with writing that has inspired, informed and entertained you.

It's why you're so loyal to *Men's Health* – you know it's a force for good. And you want to be good. In fact, you want to be the best. In a South Africa with enough talent and *gees* to stage an incredibly successful World Cup, but still riddled with corruption and poverty, every guy should aspire to be a *Men's Health* man. It can only make this amazing country an even better place to live in. Not only for our generation, but the generation of our children.

Integrity. Responsibility. Dignity. Courage. These are the pillars that my dad and *Men's Health* stand for and which I will be taking with me on my next great adventure, and which I will try to pass on to my children.

Okay, I was hoping to leave with a six-pack, too. But hey, what's life without a challenge?

RIDWAAN **MH**



**"You know that *Men's Health* is a force for good. And you want to be good. In fact, you want to be the best"**

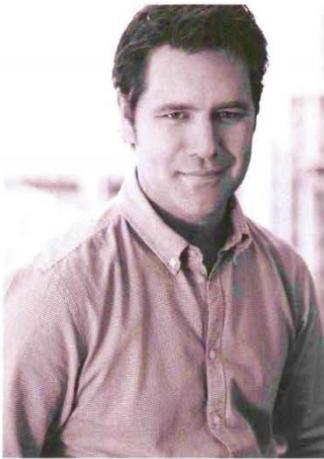
Figure 7.12: *Men's Health* editorial – October 2010

FROM THE EDITORBY JASON BROWN

# You, and Improved

As summer slowly winds down, why not use this time to recharge your comeback plan. Looking for an excuse to get started? Here's how.



**“W**HAT, APRIL ALREADY?” I hear you say. It's okay, don't stress – we've declared April the new January. We get it, the year started too quickly and ever since you got back to the office it's been go-go-go. You literally haven't had a moment to consider the goals you set yourself by the end of Jan. No worries, we've got your back.

In golf it's called a “mulligan” – a free hit, a chance to have another go. Here's why April offers the perfect opportunity to take another swing: it's an in-between month. Summer's on the way out and things are beginning to slow down. Which makes it a great time to recharge and reset the clock before winter gets its grip. The plan:

- **STEP 1** Commit: Go directly to the Belly Off Club on page 56. It's one of the most successful sections in the magazine because it makes your goals seem achievable. There's nothing like reading a real-life success story for inspiration. At some point each one of these guys decided enough was enough and got going. It's a brave statement of intent: I'm not at my best, it's a problem and today is the last day doing nothing. No more putting it off, start today and you'll begin to see results in two weeks.

• **STEP 2** Meet Your Trainer: At 36, Sharks rugby legend Stefan Terblanche is in the shape of his life. Lean, mean, fitter and faster than when he was a Springbok 10 years ago – the right guy to have in your corner. We met up with him just before the Super 15 season to learn just what it takes to reshape your body. His workout and pep talk start on page 126. For more workouts go to The Staff Six-Pack Challenge on [www.mh.co.za](http://www.mh.co.za).

• **STEP 3** Reward Yourself: Whether you're starting out or filling out, there's no excuse not to look your best with the *Guide to Style*. Flip the mag for our seasonal bonus style special with the 27 winter wardrobe essentials to dress slimmer and sharper. Plus, use our first-ever Grooming Awards on page 111 to navigate your way through the best products for your skin, hair and body selected by an expert panel, readers and our fashion and grooming director, Neil Doveton.

Let me know how you get along and we'll check in same time next month.  
Enjoy!



Email: [tellmh@touchline.co.za](mailto:tellmh@touchline.co.za)  
Twitter: [@MensHealthZA](https://twitter.com/MensHealthZA)  
Facebook: [MensHealthSA](https://www.facebook.com/MensHealthSA)

**Win a Tailor-Made Suit!**  
Always wanted a bespoke suit? Four lucky readers will not only win a suit from Frank Bespoke, but also be featured in a *Men's Health* fashion shoot! Enter at [www.mh.co.za/stylechallenge](http://www.mh.co.za/stylechallenge).



“

**THE BEST ADVICE...  
FITNESS**  
*“No matter who you are or how fit you are, you're an athlete – and the sooner you think of yourself that way, the better.”*  
– Sharks biokineticist Jimmy Wright, p126

**SEX**  
Want to try something new in bed? *“Don't just spring a new position on her. Women need time to process. She wants to feel included.”* That means planting the idea before you two hit the sheets.  
– Author Jeffrey Bernstein, p118

**FOOD**  
*“There isn't anything hotter than a guy who cooks. And if you cook together, even better. There's teamwork. There's chemistry. And that's where things heat up.”*  
– Extreme chef and passionate foodie Jenna May Viney, p104

**HEALTH**  
Prevent accidents with music. *“If you choose the right music when you're driving, it can stimulate you enough to hold your interest, and keep you conscious, aware and awake.”*  
– Psychology professor Daniel Levitin, p90

**WEALTH**  
A quick way to save cash: ditch the plastic! *“Studies show that buying something with a credit card doesn't register with your brain the way it does when you pay cash.”*  
– Professor of organisational behaviour Chip Heath, p86

22 APRIL 2011WWW.MH.CO.ZAM-H

Figure 7.13: Men's Health editorial – April 2011

Another editorial (*MH* April 2011) focuses on “summer’s on the way out and things are beginning to slow down...” An all-encompassing style for the editorial is used to remind men about the goals they have set for themselves in January:

... we've declared April the new January...

The month of April is further described as a

...great time to recharge...” [and to] ...reset the clock...

Visual syntax is also used in the editorial of the April 2011 issue of *MH* by dividing the editorial into three steps:

**Table 7.8: Editorial use of visual syntax**

Step 1 Commit	Step 2 Meet your Trainer	Step 3 Reward Yourself
<p>...Go directly to the Belly Off Club on page 56...;</p> <p>...reading a real-life success story for inspiration...</p>	<p>...Sharks rugby legend Stefan Terblanche... his workout and pep talk start on page 126 ...</p>	<p>...look your best with the Guide to Style...</p> <p>...winter wardrobe essentials, to dress slimmer and sharper...</p> <p>...best products for your skin, hair and body...</p>

The visual syntax of the underlying values of the South African society is confirmed by the given, renewing, and ideal status of men. *MH* reinforces what men want to be, or at least, what it wishes to define as male aspirations. The given is, therefore, intensely ideological. In the analysis of the texts in *MH*, the visual syntax contributes to the definition of the ideological masculine ideal (Chapter 4).

#### 7.4.2 Iconography

The first levels of meaning of these visual texts are men (in the approximate middle) and cover lines on the left and right hand sides of the front covers. Different kinds of men are either viewed as typical or atypical. Similarly, typical masculinity varies from culture to culture. Typical men, for example, might have most of the characteristics that one would expect of men in general. Atypical men, on the other hand, have rather fewer of the characteristics one might expect. A typical man might neither

enjoy watching sport on television or have a toolbox, nor object to talking about flower arrangements. To recognise the men, one needs to know something about what one is looking at. Here one is making meaning rather than just seeing. For instance, the masthead of the flip cover for the April 2011 edition of *MH* reads “*Men's Health* Guide to STYLE Winter 2011” (Figure 7.14).



**Figure 7.14: The Red Hot! Right Now! (*MH* Flip cover April 2011)**

The background of the page is a glossy black. The masthead of the flip cover contains the word **STYLE** in big bold white letters on a black background. The model is dressed in a black buttoned shirt and black open jacket, wearing a pair of jeans with a black belt. The model's face is well-groomed, his eyebrows are styled neatly, and his hair is short, but not framed in stark lines. The picture fills the page and bleeds over the masthead. At the level of denotation, the photograph is an iconic sign of a man who is defining the subject. The model is a solid black male where signifiers are used to convey particular ideas. In this case, the cultural associations of manliness provide the readers with a script, i.e. the paradigm of masculinity. The

man on the cover connotes a masculine body, muscular strength, and fitness. The manner in which the image of the man is used in conjunction with the other visual elements on the cover aligns the composition with iconographic symbolism. One views the cover man's body posture as part of a visual composition that represents masculinity, as well as the values and ideas of being a virtuous *Men's Health* man. On the April 2011 flip cover (Figure 7.14) of *MH*, the left hand side of the page contains cover lines in white print on the glossy black background:

While one may read these images of men as conventional images, conventions are deeply ideological. By recognising these conventions, the contemporary representation seems natural. The cover lines accompany and sometimes surround the images.

7 NEW RULES / OF SUIT COOL [bold white on black],  
[LAYER UP WITH THE PERFECT JACKET [normal white on  
black], 21 CASUAL COMBOS FOR ANY OCCASION [bold  
white on black], and THE RIGHT SHOES TO WEAR WITH  
EVERYTHING (normal white on black).

This flip cover (Figure 7.14) is another example of iconographic symbolism, where the male posture, the values presented of the man, and the objects illustrated are all elements that form part of the visual composition. Machin (2007:39) says that one needs to know something about the context of the symbolism before one could understand the process and interpretation of the meaning.

In the above flip cover (Figure 7.14), numbers are used three times:

7 New Rules of Cool suit;

21 Casual Combos For Any Occasion (Three times seven);

27 Essential Winter Fashion Upgrades (Four times seven is 28, but now 27 is used, to repeat the number seven the third time).

The way in which the men are depicted on the front covers and situated on the page has an effect on how one views them. An iconic sign exemplifies a particular representation of masculinity. In an ideological sense, the covers represent ideas; the reader interacts with the text and the interaction produces ideas. The visual

images of the men seek to portray what they are meant to look like in the real world (denotation). However, one knows that it is a reconstruction of reality. The constructionist approach emphasises the illusion of the representation and falseness of a number of ideas that it may suggest about men and society.

Based on the analysis of the covers in conjunction with Gillespie and Toynbee (2006:161-162) and Lacey (1998:101), one can accept that ideology expresses itself not as an ideology but as reality, since it hides its own construction. It can be argued that meaning is a social construct and not a product of objects which implies that reality is mediated by signs. By taking Barthes (1973) into consideration, one needs to ask what the hidden meanings of this image are. One could refer to these signs as having meaning potential rather than signs with fixed meanings.

The images of the cover men connote ideals and values that are communicated by what and how it is represented. In the same way that one realises that society (ideological construct) is not an unbiased alignment of individuals but a system of competing power relationships and contending ideologies, it becomes clear that mediation may have a political purpose (Gillespie & Toynbee 2006:162; Lacey 1998:102).

*MH* also produces myths that are dominant ideas and discourses about male culture, and men in society. To this end, *MH* focuses on visual images about dominant ideological positions while naturalising views about men. Myths have cultural roots and are part of the history of the magazine genre. Cultural myths also structure the text and visual images in *MH*, and by doing so, it illustrates how South African male culture has embodied both mythical archetypes, which are of specific relevance to the myth of status, and the favourable myth of the dominant ideology. In conjunction with the mythical archetype, the new man (although a member of middle class Western-centric intellectual minority) is also portrayed as pro-feminist and anti-sexist. However, in spite of the survival of the new man into the new century, his involvement in domestic labour has not significantly changed (Carter & Steiner 2004:201).

At times, myths such as the masculinities in *MH* position the audience in a specific relationship with a sign (iconography) and simultaneously disguise themselves.

Therefore, a deconstruction of myths on the front and flip covers facilitates an understanding of how it works, as well as how and in which way these myths shape meanings for men in society. The changing myths herald the advent of male clothing outlets, new visual representations of masculinities in magazines, advertising on television, and magazines for men (lifestyle manuals); the three flip covers of *MH* focus on retail technology, a style manual, and visually sophisticated masculinity.

### 7.4.3 Modality

As far as modality is concerned, one has to assess how true or real the visual representations are. The iconic signs of the men seem naturalistic; what one sees is the same as what was perceivable at the time that the photograph had been taken. It is an example of high modality. In the case of images, Kress and Van Leeuwen (1996) claim that in western aesthetics the primary or default modality is 'naturalistic representation'. Naturalistic presentation is what can be seen by one's naked eye. The *MH* (October 2010) presents the man with three-day old stubble; the dark blue V-neck thin jersey reveals his pectoral muscles and it is noticeable that his chest hair is shaven. The sleeves are rolled up to the elbow to create an open and casual look. The hair on his strong arms is visible. His hands are halfway in the jean pockets with the thumbs outside; it connotes a confident posture. A variety of modality scales are used in this visual text. Since modality has been motivated by linguistic analysis that is positioned in a specific grammatical system called the modal auxiliaries (Halliday 1985), the cover line

A SUMMER OF SMOKING HOT SEX! Light Her Fire On p77 (*MH*  
October 2010)

has a high modality value because it expresses certainty. The white background is filled with cover lines on the left and the right hand side of the cover man. Degrees of tone articulation are expressed by a range of different tones in text and background colour. It ranges from warm orange and bright yellow text to a splash of grey-blue background for a combination of yellow and white text (Figure 7.11). The colour blue creates a degree of colour modulation; there is no point at which one can argue that there is a true colour (Machin 2007:54; Kress & Van Leeuwen 1996:160). Some colours such as the orange and grey-blue, as well as the V-neck dark blue jersey are fuller and intense; a naturalistic modality lies in between. The increased

saturation of colours is a sensory process (Machin 2007:56). Kress and Van Leeuwen (1996:170) refer to this process as the modality of the senses. The appropriate masculine dark blue colour of the V-neck jersey is associated with decency and respectability. There are also degrees of colour saturation on the *MH* (October 2010) that range from black and white to intensely saturated orange, yellow, and blue.

Kress and Van Leeuwen (1996) distinguish between four different coding orientations of visual modality and each one is recognised by particular social groups. In the three flip covers, the naturalistic modality is conveyed as reality, since it reinforces what one sees: A man in the approximate middle of the cover. Since one views the images as truthful, the scientific modality also applies. The third kind of truth refers to sensory coding orientation that is based on the effect created by a cover. This sensory coding orientation is the truth of feeling.

#### **7.4.4 Colour**

Colour is a supplementary key semiotic source that is methodically used on all the covers to more or less create an anticipated meaning potential. Kress and Van Leeuwen (2002) claim that even though colour as a communicative mode may not be so well expressed in the evaluation with language, one can still refer to it in terms of grammar, since some noticeable rules and predictabilities exist. From this perspective, colour does allow one to fulfil the basic functions of language. Kress and Van Leeuwen (2002) draw on Halliday's (1985) meta-functional theory when thinking about what kinds of communicational and representational requirements a semiotic mode, such as the meta-function of colour, must fulfil in order to function as a system. The covers, furthermore, use bright colours on the glossy ivory white background that communicates meaning potential associated with clarity and truth. The saturation of colours on the covers is intense, bold, and engaging. Highly saturated colours give a sense of optimism, emotional intensity, and increase the sensory visual experience when one reads the cover lines.

**Table 7.9: Masthead colours**

Red	Orange	Blue	Total
8	3	1	12

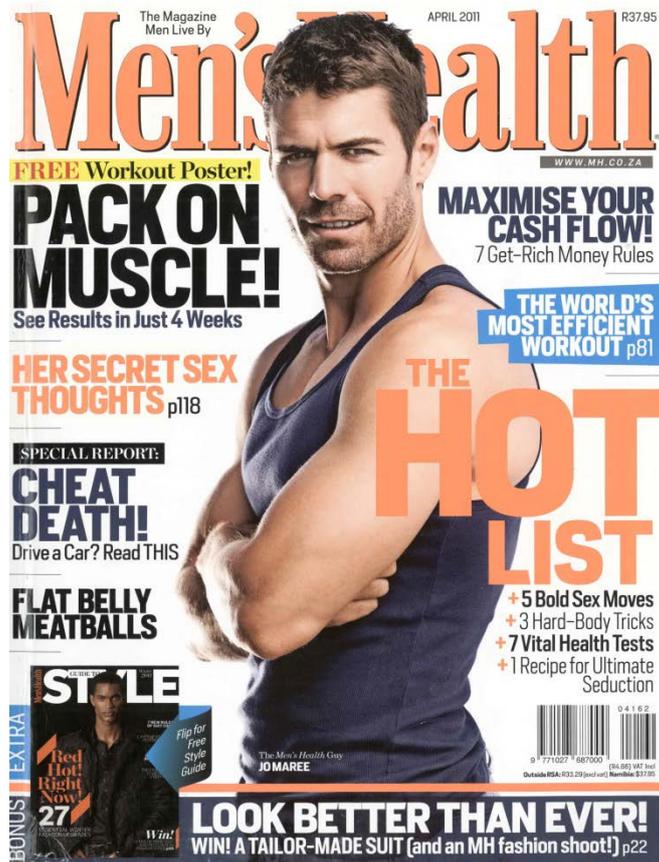
Colour photography is one means of establishing 'realism'. This is how the world of the real, unreal, dreams, and fantasies might get expressed in conjunction with other signs. The red and orange of the mastheads that are repeated in cover lines add a feeling of sensuality and emotional richness to the covers. In two of these covers (*MH* October 2010 & *MH* April 2011), yellow and blue have been artificially saturated to emphasise exceptional masculinity.

On the covers, colour modality refers to forms of factuality that may be coded by kinds of realism. The colour coding and sizes of the cover lines draw the eye to the most pertinent topics. Red (used in eight out of the 12 mastheads) represents the colour of danger and catches the eye quickly. Orange (used in three out of the 12 mastheads) symbolises warmth, while blue, symbolises 'coolness' and masculinity (see Table 7.9).

The magazine masthead is displayed at the top all the covers in Serif typeface and the colours red, orange, and blue are used. A line running along the top of the masthead lists the style guide of 48 pages which is run from the flip cover. The colour is picked up on the cover, where one cover line is in orange, and another one (in different sizes of capital letters) has an orange background.

On the front covers, colour has an ideational function. By drawing attention to cover lines, colour assumes an interpersonal function on all the covers. The red masthead denotes the identity of *MH*. Although on two of these covers orange is used for the masthead (*MH* October 2010 & April 2011), orange is also selectively used in cover lines on these covers. In one of the December 2010 *MH* cover lines, "SEX ON / FIRE! / Touch her here, / here and... here p164" white lettering on a red background is used (Figure 7.9). The red background reinforces the association with fire of the red masthead. It emphasises the meaning potential that is realised in a communicative context: The sex is going to be as hot as fire. The repetition of the

word 'here' creates the illusion that by touching her "here, here and... here" the touching will continually cover the entire body. Yellow is also used in the magazines to highlight the most important sentences in short articles. If one has no time to read everything, only the highlighted parts could be read.



**Figure 7.15: The use of colour (MH, April 2011)**

The colours of the front cover guys' shirts are white (three), black (three) and dark blue (three). Two are wearing grey T-shirts and one a light blue vest. Colour also has a textual function on a cover. With the orange mastheads (*MH* October 2010 & *MH* April 2011), the colour is repeated in cover lines or as a background for a cover line.

**Table 7.10: Colour of shirts**

White	Black	Grey	Dark blue	Light blue	Total
3	3	2	3	1	12

On the April 2011 cover of *MH* (Figure 7.10), orange is used four times. The cover line

THE HOT LIST + 5 Bold Sex Moves + 3 Hard-Body Tricks +  
7 Vital Health Tests + 1 Recipe for Ultimate Seduction

is very different from the other cover lines on the three covers of the sample. Vibrant colours are used collaboratively in the composition while the colour of the masthead rhymes with some of the cover lines in the same colour. Contrast as a semiotic element is further applied on these covers by means of colour. On the flip cover of the April 2011 issue of *MH* (Figure 7.13), the colour orange is transposed from the front cover. On the right hand side of the page (framed between two thick diagonal orange lines), one reads in big bold orange letters: "Red Hot! Right Now!" above "27" in bold white 72 point letters, while the cover line concludes with "ESSENTIAL WINTER / FASHION UPGRADES" in normal 48 point white letters at the bottom right hand side of the cover.

The use colour of contributes exceptionally to the look of the new man. There are two domain lifestyle images of masculinity – resonant with virility, sexual prowess, and masculine sensuality – that are very different from the image of the hegemonic patriarchal man. Firstly, the corporate power look is portrayed. Examples are the image of what Nico Panagio (Figure 7.16) is wearing and the outdoor casual look on most front covers. What is happening on the covers and editorials of *MH* is far removed from the traditional male careers (the mine worker is one example) of marginalised men. While ever-changing masculinities influence all men, they do so in an unequal manner. A hierarchy of masculinities based on appearance is developing which gradually replaces the more traditional masculine divisions based on work roles, ownership, and sexual orientation. Edwards (1997:133-4) echoes these examples of the unequal participation of the men in a consumer society:

Wealthy, good looking and well-located young men have increasingly [been] socially valorised over older, uglier or poorer men... those with the looks, the income and the time on their side have never had it so good in terms of the opportunities which the expansion of men's style and fashion have to offer them... But those without the luck, the looks or the time have never had it so bad and are consigned to looking and longing, or even exclusion and castigation for not playing the game. In this sense, fashion

is fascism: conform in the mirror of judgements, or else take the consequences.

#### 7.4.5 Typography

Semiotics is further used for assigning typographic meaning. On the April 2011 cover of *MH*, the words "THE" and "HOT" bleed across the shoulder and top arm of the male model, Jo Maree, who is standing sideways, wearing a dark blue vest, and facing the reader (Figure 7.13). The words of the cover line "THE", "HOT", and "LIST" appear underneath one another in 16, 72, and 48 point orange letters respectively.

In this instance, orange creates an association between the masthead, cover lines and information. This major cover line appears on the right hand side and covers more than a third of the page. The words of the cover line are carefully arranged: "THE" is right aligned above the "H" of "HOT" and "LIST" is left aligned underneath the "O" of "HOT". The increased and expanded size of the word 'hot' enhances the prominence of the word. The orange plus signs below the main cover line are staggered owing to the right aligned text with the purpose of assisting one's eye to be drawn to the major cover line. The sequence of the uneven numbers 5, 3, 7, and 1 is also interesting, since it deviates from the anticipated sequence 1, 3, 5, and 7. It causes the readers' eyes to linger on the cover line. The use of orange in the composition of the cover creates flow and harmony. These examples illustrate how cover lines emphasise salient content of the magazine. Usually, the positioning, colour, and size of the cover line text are craftily employed to stir one's interest in the most important elements of the magazine content. Tone in the form of brightness on a cover also attracts the eye to salient content. The covers portray harmony with respect to the use of colour, other compositional elements, the cover men, and the setting. The same objective is achieved on the April 2011 flip cover of *MH* (Figure 7.13) by using the colour orange on both the front and the flip cover. Furthermore, the cover line augments the sense of harmony by alternately using alliteration (red and right) and assonance (hot and now). This cover line on the flip cover also sprawls over about two thirds of the right hand side of the cover.

On the December 2010 cover of *MH* (Figure 7.10), blue is used behind the right aligned cover line

### MASSIVE 256 PAGES OF SUN, STYLE SURF & SEX.

The first phrase "MASSIVE 256" appears in yellow typeface while "MASSIVE" is smaller (12 point), than the 48 point stencil font of "256". The remainder of the cover line appears in a bold, white, uppercase font. This illustrates how meaning is enhanced by using the semiotics of colour to evoke emotions and to create moods. By association, one imagines an azure blue sky, a yellow sun, and a turquoise blue sea. The poetic use of alliteration also enhances the mood of holiday, surfing, sun, and having sex. It almost assumes and advocates the ultimate enjoyment of men. Blue is also used on the April 2011 cover of *MH* (Figure 7.13), but in the cover line,

### THE WORLD'S MOST EFFICIENT WORKOUT p81

(right aligned white font on a sky blue background) on the right hand side of the page bleeds onto the shoulder of the main image of a man with well-defined shoulders. The semiotics of colour guides perceptions, since one associates white with purity and blue with certainty and knowledge. A blue font colour is also used in cover lines on the December 2010 issue of *MH* (Figure 7.10):

### Lower Your Blood Pressure Naturally [and] BIG ARMS GUARANTEED.

In these cover lines; blue unlocks scientifically centred potential meanings. Tone as a contributor to salient meaning is also evident, since a bright hue of blue is used to catch the eye.

Machin (2007:86) claims that typefaces have always been used to convey different kinds of meaning. Below the masthead and on the left hand side of the October 2010 edition of *MH* (Figure 7.8), the cover line starts with 'STRONG & FIT' in 72pt bold black capital letters on a white background, while the rest of the cover line 'Build Muscle & Blast Fat in Just 4 Weeks' appears directly below in a normal 24pt black font over two lines. The metaphorical associations are made between the bold font and strength; between a normal font and slimness, being more refined, or weighing less. The same design approach is used in a cover line of the April 2011 issue of *MH*:

### Free Workout Poster! PACK ON MUSCLE! See Results in Just 4 Weeks (Figure 7.10).

Typeface can be compared to the difference between a twig of a tree that breaks easily and a tree trunk that has to be sawn off. The use of either bold or normal typeface suggests that the association with the toughness of a stronger and fitter body has been transferred from the domain of objects in the real world to the visual elements on a magazine cover.

The combination of typeface and design is used in the cover line of the December 2010 issue of *MH*:

**YOUR PERFECT SUMMER 6-PACK! GET LEAN BUILD  
MUSCLE LOOK SHARP** (Figure 7.11).

is a typographic example of a semiotic system. The text of the cover line is presented in different sizes below one another. "YOUR PERFECT" appears in 24 point bold in the first line; "SUMMER 6-PACK!" appears in 72 point bold in the second and third lines while "GET LEAN BUILD MUSCLE LOOK SHARP" appears in 16 point bold in the next three lines. The red arrows in front of these three phrases catch the eye. This font is clean and readable in black on an ivory white background at the top left hand side of the page. A semiotic system has the ability to apply font size for adding credence to the six-pack that can be achieved in summer. Furthermore, the semiotic system in this interpersonal meta-function uses big and bold letters to emphasise confidence, or to communicate urgency. In this cover line, the textual meta-function is also present. As a semiotic system, these signs form a coherent unit in the context of their production. The text of the cover line is arranged over six lines in different font sizes. The arrangement of the text creates a hierarchy of informational value.

In a right hand side cover line of the same cover (Figure 7.11)

**RELAX & RECHARGE** 17 Best Local Hide-Aways",

the bold 36 point font of "RELAX & / RECHARGE" carries more weight than the "17 Best Local / Hide-Aways", since the latter is printed in a very thin and much smaller typeface. The thin typeface also establishes a certain connectivity that suggests wholeness or integration.

As a design element, it is possible to either condense or stretch typeface. The metaphoric association of expansion draws on one's experience of space (Van Leeuwen 2006). The

YOUR PERFECT SUMMER 6-PACK! GET LEAN BUILD  
MUSCLE LOOK SHARP (Figure 7.11)

and the

Free Workout Poster! PACK ON MUSCLE! See Results in  
Just 4 Weeks (Figure 7.14)

are printed in a very big and bold condensed typeface. In the cover line

Free Workout Poster! STRONG & FIT Build Muscle & Blast  
Fat In Just 4 Weeks (Figure 7.8),

the lines "STRONG / & FIT /" are spread out to fill the space between the edge of the cover and the cover man. Spreading out a cover line may reinforce confidence, strength, and preciseness. The typeface also metaphorically reflects the symbolic significance of strong and fit. The variation of font weight and size – when cover lines are spread over five lines (Figure 7.8) or even eight lines (Figure 7.14) – convey the interpersonal attitude of irreverence, creativity, and playfulness. The evident regularity on all three covers has metaphorical potential, since it communicates conformity, restraint, and order. These strategies are reflected in *MH* and its brand tagline "The magazine men live by" to communicate fun, and spontaneity in a world where men are otherwise portrayed as brainless, unfit, and abusers of women. Saliency refers to certain cover lines on a magazine cover that are designed to stand out. This objective is achieved by particularly using the size of cover lines on a cover.

Line spacing and alignment are also used as semiotic resources of typography on the covers. The cover lines on the three covers are left aligned on the left hand side of the page and right aligned on the right hand side of the page with the purpose of framing the models that appear in the approximate middle of the covers. The most prominent cover lines appear almost just underneath the masthead on the left hand side. The cover lines on the left hand side of the cover are all left aligned. This

allows the effective use of the space between the edge of the space and the cover man, while creating a slightly more relaxed and natural looks and feel.

The cover line

THE HOT LIST + 5 Bold Sex Moves + 3 Hard-Body Tricks +  
7 Vital Health Tests + 1 Recipe for Ultimate Seduction  
(Figure 7.14),

for instance, is right aligned on the right hand side of the cover for the same reason. However, the ragged left of the cover lines on the right hand side makes reading somewhat more difficult. Owing to each line that is positioned differently, the cover lines appear less formal. Although it interferes with the ease of reading, it does display a confident attitude. It gives a sense of commentary that is essential and delivers textual consistency by using right alignment. The cover lines on the right hand side appear less formal than the left alignment on the left hand side. The cover lines appear asymmetrical, and none of the covers under investigation apply interchangeable alignment of text on either side.

In the cover line

MASSIVE 256 PAGES OF SUN, STYLE SURF & SEX,

the stencil font in 48 point is used for the "256" (Figure 7.14). Since it is the biggest line in this cover line, the number "256" is emphasised. Furthermore, one's eye is drawn to this cover line by the fact that it is printed in the stencil font instead of a normal typeface. By using the stencil font, typography is employing semiotics of flourishes (a unique font) to enhance meaning potential. The use of a unique font like stencil also represents iconographic imagery. This is the only example of the use of flourishes typeface on a cover. The usual absence of any kind of flourishes is also significant. Simple and clean letters communicate metaphorical meaning through their organised and straightforward forms (Machin 2007, Kress & Van Leeuwen 2002).

The style of connecting letters to one another are not used on either the front or back covers. Orientation refers to how tall or flat a typeface appears; there is no evidence of this style element on the covers either.

#### 7.4.6 Positioning

Machin (2007:183) argues that one acquires knowledge about styles and (in this case) the magazine genre through representational meaning. When one views images, Machin (2007) suggests that one identifies what is represented through everyday experience and one's familiarity with the styles and conventions of the representation. Therefore, one can argue that from the perspective of a contemporary Western viewer, one can only make sense of familiar conventions from one's own cultural ways of looking at representations. Kress and Van Leeuwen's (2006) modality markers may allow one to describe degrees of abstraction in images, i.e. to what extent do they represent reality. Unfortunately, it is not clear whether or not readers might consistently apply these degrees of abstraction while they are thinking about truth and reality.

From the represented participants on the cover who are men, one can say the magazine is targeted at men. It is also targeting a certain niche in the market who displays masculinity in a provocative style. Representation on the covers not only encapsulates how men view themselves, but also how other heterosexual and homosexual men and women experience these representations. However, this social construct denies individuality by subsuming men into a particular stereotype. The muscular hunk is a classic example of the adventurer, the explorer, and a man who ultimately ought to have a hard body. Muscles are an element that is frequently associated with a certain stereotypical depiction of maleness. While such distortion is achieved by representing men through particular elements or discourse and more obviously seen in *MH*, the researcher is of the opinion that it also epitomises the reality of people's lives. Just like the perfect body becomes desirable to such an extent that it leads to a bad self-image, so the image of the muscle hunk may certainly influence the way one perceives men with muscles.

In the case of *MH*, the visual images rely on the power of the icon in a society where seeing is believing. Such construction of versions of reality takes place at all levels of the technical and creative media process. Certainly, the negative representation of men in a group context can have an important impact on men's feelings about identity and self-worth. While representations in *MH* include stereotypes with their possible negative connotations, stereotypes are also an important component of all

mediated communication. As far as visual texts of men in *MH* are concerned, stereotypes are not always erroneous and negative and it is possible to hold contradictory stereotypes of the same group, including men who are questioning their male identity and masculinity.

Positioning (at times also called representations) focuses on the social actors who are present or positioned in the images. The semiotic resources that are available for positioning the viewer in relation to the participants in the image need to be interrogated, for example, how is the reader encouraged to relate to the man and how does the reader get encouraged to assess the men. On the *MH* covers, men are individually depicted. Individuation is realised linguistically by using singularity as opposed to focusing on men in a group context. The depiction of the single male figure is indeed strong in the iconographic tradition but it also invites the viewer to identify. The effect draws the viewer closer to the man on the front cover, therefore, humanising the cover man. The cover man is individualised in the context of cultural categorisation by depicting standard attributes of dress, hairstyle, and body adornment and of biological categorisation by illustrating stereotypical physical characteristics. These images mostly invoke positive connotations. The visual representation of the single man on the front covers is categorised both culturally and biologically, namely a white male. Furthermore, the cover men are stereotypically depicted: The ultimate physically strong, fit, and well-built masculine man. The photographs of the men on the covers focus on their salient attributes. It draws one's attention to the inner feelings of the men. Framing is furthermore evident in the way the elements are positioned in relation to one another, as well as in the certainty of associations that the composition of the cover contains. The connection is synergised by common qualities such as the shape, colour, and posture of the cover men.

The editor or graphic designer at *MH* has decided what cropping is required in order to show the male in a specific way on the front cover. The muscular man encompasses gender and power; he is a strong male who is a model, an actor, and also part of a family business (*MH* October 2010), an ideal strong male and model (*MH* December 2010), and model (*MH* April 2011). Most importantly, the cover man discusses, for example, his "cover-body workout" inside the magazine or the

successful man is “built for success” (*MH* October 2010:66). The appearance of double amputee blade runner, Oscar Pistorius, in advertisements for Nike (taken off after his bail hearing and as he is now standing trial) is an example of the celebration of disability while in the past it often had been shunned and hidden by SA society. However, the youth culture and popular culture represented in *MH* seek to create positive stereotypes and new representations.

The use of gender in *MH* is noteworthy, since the magazine addresses issues about men and it is also an example of the ways in which beliefs or the discursive formation is changing.

As in the instance of supply and demand, the angle from which one views the man on the front cover yields different permutations of recognition between the man represented and the viewer. These variations encompass the physical undertone of being detached from a scene, a moment in time, and our physical suggestions of height and power (Machin 2007:113). In the case of demand images, one engages directly with the man represented on the front cover. In the case of supply images, one becomes a voyeur at the scene. One's involvement in a scene can also be changed by altering the viewing positions; the cover image can either be presented horizontally in a landscape orientation or vertically in a portrait orientation. The only instance when the image of a masculine male is not used is the flip cover “*Men's Health* Tech Guide 2010” (*MH* December 2010) (Figure 7.6). Olympian athlete, Tanith Belbin, appears topless in a pair of black underpants on a white couch. The page is laid out horizontally. As in the case of supply and demand images, the effects one describes are not the meaning of the angles but are merely their meaning potential.

The images of the cover men are positioned all at the same level; it implies equality. The angle of interaction is used to change the meaning of the elements on the cover. As in real life, distance in these images, signifies social relations. Distance refers to how close to the viewer perceives him / her in relation to the image of the cover man. The distance from the cover men communicates the association of physical proximity and intimacy.

If a reader perceives colour-saturated images on these covers, the question arises whether a viewer assumes that the image is less than real or that in some ways it has moved into the sensory realm? (Machin 2007:182). As a viewer, one can assume that the cover images of *MH* are photographs of real men. Truth and reality becomes an issue when lighting, colour, and focus have been changed by a graphic artist or by digital manipulation. The highly saturated colours might add richness to the scene. Therefore, this men's lifestyle magazine uses such colours for this reason whether it subverts visual truth or not. High key lighting that produces a light-saturated effect might have the same softening and lifting outcome that signifies a kind of physical confidence. However, these techniques are more similar to codes embedded in familiarity than in an arbitrary grammar.

It is also important how the images depict the action by the men on the cover. On two of the covers (*MH* October 2010 & *MH* December 2010), the men have their hands in their pockets and are looking directly at the viewer. On the April 2011 cover of *MH* (Figure 7.10), the man is standing sideways with his arms folded over his chest, he is wearing a vest, and his left arm and shoulder are foregrounded. The men on the three covers are depicted as strong, fit, muscled, and well-build. The depictions of these cover men are accompanied by various cover lines that reinforce the message of muscular strength, fitness, as well as well-trained hard bodies of the *MH* man.

On all three covers of the qualitative analysis, the viewer is addressed by the gaze of the man as central character on the front cover. This gaze has two functions.

In this context, one can argue that the growing significance of consumerism in *MH* has given rise to new occupations, or has changed role of masculinities in South Africa that involve the need to encourage men to more frequently consume a greater number and diversity of commodities. This could mean that postmodern popular culture, in conjunction with creating, manipulating, and playing with cultural symbols and media images are encouraging and extending consumerism.

Visual change could suggest change in social opinions about men. These shifts in visual representation of masculinity started before the 1990s. An argument that may assist with explaining this trend focuses on the promising awareness that culture has

been feminised by consumerism. At the same time, it explains the frequent way in which the male body is erotically objectified in advertising (Anderson 2010; Beasley 2005; MacKinnon 2003).

The new man is changing to nurturer, since pro-feminist men encourage themselves to cultivate a consciousness for nurturing, caring, and sharing in society. These men are middle-class and well-educated. Changing patterns in family life, with men marrying later or not at all, in juxtaposition with a willingness to assume a supportive role in a woman's career, result in the emergence of the new man as a role model (Macnamara 2006:114-118; Carter & Steiner 2004:200; Haywood & Mac an Ghail 2003:85-86). Other men react differently to the social changes and become the back-to-nature man who is searching for his 'masculine' self. There is a continuing call for men to reclaim their souls and true manhood. The discussion includes the decline of the father's influence in inducting the son into the ways of the world and reflects the need of young men for older male mentors to assist them with connecting to their wild, innate masculinity (Macnamara 2006:114; Kimmel *et al.* 2005:42, 62; Carter & Steiner 2004:199-205; MacKinnon 2003:19-20).

Firstly, it creates a visual form of address that acknowledges the viewer. Secondly, it produces an image act; the image is used to do something to the viewer. The image asks something of the viewer in an imaginary relationship. On all three covers, the men are smiling; in two of these covers (*MH* October 2010 & *MH* April 2011) their spontaneous smiles expose their teeth. One understands immediately what is communicated; it is a kind of inviting smile that confirms that they are relaxed. In real life, a smiling person will be offended when the viewer does not smile back. On two of the covers (*MH* October 2010 & *MH* December 2010), the men are standing with their hands in their pockets in an open muscular body posture that invites the viewer to gaze at them. The open relaxed bodily posture of the cover men with four fingers tucked into the pockets of their jeans and the thumbs casually protruding expects the images to define their relationship with the viewer. The body posture of the cover man on the *MH* April 2011 issue (Figure 7.14) suggests power. The men on the front covers are depicted as individuals with feelings, since one cannot ignore their facial expressions. The close-up shots that noticeably expose beards and shaven chest hair, and the hair on their arms create a sense of intimacy with the cover men.

These are ultimate representations and constructions of masculinity that are also provided on the flip covers.



**Figure 7.16: Style (Flip cover *MH* October 2010)**

The October 2010 flip cover of *MH* (Figure 7.16) announces the *Men's Health Style Guide* with the image of actor and television host, Nico Panagio, dressed in a suit while sitting on a comfortable chair. The masthead of the flip cover page is *GUIDE TO STYLE*. "GUIDE TO" is printed in white on top of the brown background of the horizontal line of the letter "T" in "STYLE". "STYLE" is printed so boldly and big that it dominates the top quarter of the page. This word of the masthead is printed in dark brown and matches the colour of Panagio's tie and the leather chair he is sitting on. The main cover line bellows in capital letters "THE NEW / RULES FOR / MEN". This cover line exemplifies the issue of the intrinsic relation between realism representations.

There are also other forms of representation of reality, as well as the gender role of the new man and his inclusive [various] masculinities at play in *MH*. The description of the editorial

#### IN PRAISE OF VANITY (*MH* editorial July 2010)

the index reads

It doesn't take genes like Brad Pitt's to turn heads when entering a boardroom or restaurant. Any man can do it, including you.

The editorial provides as real an impression of the average or normal man as a lover and caring father who pays attention to his appearance. The suggestion "Are you vain enough?" replaces "man" with "vain". Not even by implication, the article suggests that good looking men are more likely to orgasm simultaneously with their women.

### 7.5 CONCLUSION

Since *MH* is consistently providing advice about issues such as fashion and style, what to wear, how to be fit, or how to get rid of a paunchy stomach; the messages are more fundamental in changing attitudes and behaviour. This exemplifies the attitude of being in touch with one's maleness or being a 'real' man by building muscle and by having a six-pack abdomen. Men's self-image and self-worth can be seriously affected by the way they identify with those counterparts who are represented as style icons: Josh Holloway (television actor of *Lost*) (*MH* August 2010), Kellan Lutz (*Twilight's* actor and Calvin Klein model) (*MH* September 2010), and Mark Wahlberg (actor) (*MH* March 2011). A frequent question remains what the new man is about. It would appear that the term new man originated from the 1980s and refers to a new and improved version of masculinity that differs from traditional patriarchal masculinity by allowing a man to connect with his inner self.

The multimodal model analysis illustrates that *MH* represents and constructs masculinities as a highly persistent continuing message. This message represents and constructs men in various forms and from all angles by attempting to be inclusive of a variety of masculinities. In general, *MH* plays a mediatory role. *MH*

mediates between individual men with the purpose of creating a sense of belonging. As a form of media, the magazine maintains, and even changes, the relationship between the readers and social institutions by offering discourses (Gillespie & Toyne 2006:35-39; Thwaites *et al.* 2002:144-146).

The multimodal model illustrates how different semiotic systems act collaboratively, for example, how the cover lines and editorials prompt male readers of *MH* to a specific meaning that might not be obvious when the images are not supported by written text. The researcher demonstrates how semiotics produces general questions about the interpretation, representation, reality, and ideology of masculinities in *MH*. The qualitative semiotic visual analysis exposes how men as readers and users of *MH* might interpret signs differently and how ambiguity is imbedded in the media texts of *MH*.

With the multimodal analysis of the visual images in *MH*, the researcher demonstrates how semiotics provides seemingly abstract concepts and ideas that are far removed from actual experiences and current public issues and that become highly useful and meaningful when applied in some larger context of interpretation. The various tools of semiotics were used to demonstrate how meaning operates in a wide variety of ways in the *MH* context, as well as how processes of signifying are closely intertwined with questions of textual power. The data analysis successfully demonstrates the paramount role of semiotics when our knowledge, values, and beliefs expose the social rather than individual nature of masculinities. Publicly, individuals share codes and arguments about the meaning of what they see in the media. Semiotics contributes to the cultural process of meaning making in the media, and in this case, *MH* triggers one to think about representations and constructions of masculinities

## CHAPTER 8 CONCLUSION

### 8.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, the conclusions of the study are summarised by focusing on the sub-problems. Certain limitations of this research are henceforth briefly highlighted. The contribution of this study is discussed by highlighting the semiotic multimodal model that was developed and used to analyse the visual images qualitatively. The theoretical and research implications derived from the research resulted in specific recommendations.

### 8.2 THE RESEARCH FINDINGS

The main question posed in this study was: **How and in what way can a multimodal semiotic analysis model be developed and used for contributing to the analysis and understanding of how *Men's Health* (South Africa) magazine – as a case study – represents and constructs masculinities in South Africa?**

In order to operationalise this broad question, three subsidiary research questions were formulated:

- What is the literature revealing with reference to the media as producers of meaning in relation to masculinity and visual texts?
- How and in which way can a semiotic visual analysis multimodal model be developed with the purpose of contributing to the analysis of visual texts?
- What is the outcome of the visual analysis multimodal model with reference to the case study on the representation and construction of masculinities in visual texts in *MH*?

### 8.3 MEANING, MASCULINITY, AND THE VISUAL TEXT

Semiotic visual analysis was used in conjunction with social semiotics to unpack culture as the site of the production of meanings and not the expression of meanings. For this purpose, a visual text was considered as socially produced and a system of signs that included various representational and conceptual meanings.

The meaning of the visual texts in *MH* could not be established without ideology in the context of relationships with its power constructs in a society and form the core of all ideologies. In this study, competing ideologies challenged the authority of the main ideology: The language used to deconstruct the visual texts in this study was, in itself, a product of the dominant ideology. This section also seeks to address the sub-problem: What is the literature revealing with reference to the media as producers of meaning in relation to masculinity and visual texts?

Communication practices are informed and produced within cultural contexts and in the past two decades, society has changed in the way masculinity is viewed (Section 2.6). For this reason, it was worthwhile to investigate visual texts of masculinity, since the analysis contributed to the understanding of cultural construction and representation of social life as portrayed in *MH*. It is important to note that visual perception played a role because insight into the connection between seeing and knowing becomes intertwined. Also, the analysis of visual communication did not only focus on images; an integration of visual elements and words that created a unit of communication took place. Since visual representations are created by social additions and omissions, both these practices and their cultural meanings were addressed. As visual texts, at times, (a) undergo a type of paraphrasing and change when they are written about and (b) knowledge is conveyed by an excess of different media, the analysis of the visual texts convey a diversity of representations. The visualisation, therefore, is not only concerned with how images look, but also how they are looked at; images operate by constructing effects every time they are looked at. For this reason, visual culture needs to be seen as a dynamic set of practices as explained in Chapter 2.

The main tenet of gender socialisation theory presupposes that gender is a process of socialisation. Masculinity and men's studies can, therefore, not be reviewed without looking at gender. In reviewing the ideological bases of superiority feminism and reactive sexism, it appears that today men have valid reasons for being afraid that feminist ideology leaves them with an unwholesome identity. Researchers and academics have emphasised the attack on men and note that the generalisations that men are violent, warlike, sexually immoral, insensitive, commitment-phobic, and even innately evil are common in gender discourse. Men have become detached

and are, at times, perceived as sexually impotent and losing their manhood owing to social class positions, feminisation of work, the visual representation of masculinity by the media, unemployment, employment equity, and black empowerment that includes articulation of racial positions in South Africa.

The media has become the main source for men of receiving their entertainment and information about the world. In this way, the media makes sense of the world. The uses and gratification model, for instance, assumes that people engage with mass media and benefit from the experience. Mass media plays a key role in discourse and constructing the relationship between reality and ideology; which supports the claim that media content is never entertaining only, and never politically or ideologically innocent. With this construction, the media reflects existing opinions and attitudes in society. From the visual semiotic multimodal analysis conducted, the researcher is convinced that *MH* reinforces the relationship between media and society. The magazine also reinforces the values, norms, and ideology of masculine identity. Identifying stereotypes is part of representation and making meaning in visual texts and reflects the ideological positions of the era in which these stereotypes of men are created. This also confirms Hall's (1990:22) point of view that representation of identity is always produced from within, i.e. one is compelled to form one's own identity congruent to the way it is represented. The communication in *MH* is further mediated and the visual texts reflect existing opinions and attitudes with reference to masculinities and identity.

#### **8.4 THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE MULTIMODAL MODEL**

The choice to develop a visual semiotic multimodal model was made to analyse existing visual texts. This model provides an opportunity for analysing a visual text comprehensively. In the multimodal model, the modalities of understanding visual texts were considered: technology was used to create these visual texts – composition, colour, content, and spatial organisation – and societal context where the political, economic, and social transactions in the visual texts took place. Most importantly, the meaning that audiences introduce in perceiving visual texts is not a passive process. Therefore, this section covers the sub-problem: How and in which way can a semiotic visual analysis multimodal be developed with the purpose of contributing to the analysis of visual texts?

While social semiotics is questioning truth, modality needs to be observed. In this instance, a multimodal analysis contains several facets. The model starts with the multimodal analysis component as the central constituent of the model, since it represents the multimodality of the analysis of a visual text. The six sides (or angles) of the hexagon in this model are equal. From the multimodal analysis, the core six sub-headings branch out from the core: visual grammar, positioning, typography, colour, modality, and iconography (Figure 6.1). The core – multimodal analysis – in conjunction with the six sub-headings contributes to the analysis of the visual texts. These sub-headings, outlined in the various concept maps (Figure 6.3 – 6.6), were used simultaneously and in an interwoven way during the semiotic multimodal analysis.

The social semiotic approach and theoretical foundation of the multimodal approach dealt with **visual grammar** (Kress & Van Leeuwen 2001) and metaphors (Machin 2007). This tool provided the methodical study of visual alignment or ‘visual syntax’, including different kinds of overlap and framing (Machin 2007: xvii). The main aim of visual grammar is to examine the way in which an individual sign can be used in combination with other signs and how meaning is created (Machin 2007:2–3; Berger 2005:8–9; Lacey 1998:5–58). Most importantly, discourse in the multimodal model was used to analyse the way in which things were being established in the social world. Even before discourse is concerned with what is said, it is concerned with where things are said, by whom, and what the relationships of power are (Thwaites, *et al.* 2002:141). This is how the signs transfer meanings that communicate wider models of discourses or how the world functions. Since metaphors are figures of speech and do not carry any literal meaning they suggested that signs connote complex ideas about the nature of the world (Figure 6.2).

**Iconography** illustrates a subject and studies the use of artistic images or symbols. In this study, a variety of meanings imbedded in the visual images of men were recognised. This sub-category of the hexagon model explores iconography, including different visual elements that have the ability to transfer meaning, especially the ‘concealed meanings’ of texts (Machin 2007: xvi). As modality, this tool reveals how real, or not, a representation claims to be by explaining how meanings could be hidden or enriched in a composition (Machin 2007: xvi). It was

important for this study to acknowledge that computer photographs – as iconic signs – could be altered and manipulated. It implied that the representations could have never been objective simply because they happened in front of the camera (Figure 6.3).

The researcher drew on a combination of Machin's (2007) and Kress and Van Leeuwen's (1996) coding orientations of visual **modality**. Modality reveals how real, or not, representations claim to be by explaining how meanings could be hidden or could enrich a composition (Machin 2007: xvi). Meaning is not only contained within an individual sign, and is never produced without a context. The following eight degrees of articulation modality scales are included: detail, background, depth (expression), light and shadow, tone, depth (intensity), colour modulation, and colour saturation. These coding orientations of visual modality are included: naturalistic modality (photographs as 'real texts'), scientific modality (scientific images probes beyond the surface and abstracts from detail), sensory coding (emotion and pleasure where the visual text becomes 'more than real' or 'surreal'), and abstract modality (the deeper essence in the visual text and abstractions) (Figure 6.4).

Individual **colours** have specific meanings; it should not only be about what one sees, but the analysis should also be systematic with the aim of enhancing potential meanings (Machin 2007: xvi – xvii). The focus was on Rose's (2001:33) use of the approach of 'compositional interpretation', also known as 'the good eye' claiming to look at visual texts for 'what they are', rather than for what they do or how they are used. The model further includes the three meta-functions of colour based on Van Leeuwen (2011:12): ideational function (colours denote specific 'things', for instance the identity of an organisation), interpersonal function (communicative interactions characterised by social purposes and relations), and the textual function (gathers communicative acts). Two aspects of colour advance the semiotic creation of meaning: association (cultural association of a colour), and features (distinctive features of colour along a continuum like from light to dark, or saturated to desaturated) (Machin 2007:69, Van Leeuwen & Jewitt 2007:167-171). The measurable extent of colour is further identified by brightness, saturation, purity, modulation, differentiation, luminosity, and hue (Figure 6.5).

**Typography** offers an account of the meaning potential of the design and layout of the printed word. *Typeface* is a collection of characters designed to complement one another in a coordinated manner, i.e. the style of the printed character (for example roman or bold), as well as the side of a printing block (historical) that has the shape of the printed character on it. Each character in a typeface is constructed by means of a glyph; a form of a pictograph or graphic symbol. In this sense, type is treated as an image. The three principal functions – ideational (constructs and represents ideas), interpersonal (typefaces that suggest informal or formal touches to a visual image), and textual (recognise social practices) – are also evident when typography is used in a visual semiotic analysis. Other typographic meaning potentials included are: weight, expansion, slope, curvature, connectivity, orientation, regularity, and flourishes. Other modes of typography are line spacing and justification (Figure 6.6).

**Positioning** entails whether actors are represented as collectives or individuals, and focuses on depiction of people and metaphorical associations such as proximity and angle of viewing (Machin 2007: xvii). Positioning for the purpose of this semiotic multimodal model also include the visual layout. The semiotic resources that are used for aligning the viewer with the experiences of the participants in the image include the gaze, the angle of interactions (horizontal, vertical, and oblique), and distance. Non-verbal communication also needs to be part of the textual analysis. The composition and positioning of what and where something is placed on a page play an important role, since it contributes to the understanding thereof. Three systems are used to classify the interactive and representational meanings of spatial composition: salience, information values, and framing. In understanding the meaning of text, form, content, codes, and frame (different angles of the camera and kinds of camera shots) (Figure 6.7) have to be included when systematically analysing any visual text.

## **8.5 THE MULTIMODAL MODEL TESTED ON VISUAL TEXTS IN *MH***

If there is one attribute that separates the case study method from all other methods, it is the support of covariation confirmed by a single unit and its simultaneous attempt to clarify features of a wider set of units. “It follows from this that the number of cases employed in this case study was small, but the data was evaluated qualitatively and quantitatively” (Gerring 2004:341). In this research, the case study

underlined the representation and construction of masculinity by using *MH* to shed light on how masculinity is visually displayed for promoting the representation and construction via consumption of masculinity and the new man. This section seeks to explore the feedback on the sub-problem: What is the outcome of the visual analysis multimodal model with reference to the case study on the representation and construction of masculinities in visual texts in *MH*?

The core – multimodal analysis – together with the six sub-headings contributed to the analysis of the visual texts. These sub-headings, outlined in the various concept maps (Figure 6.3 – 6.6) were used collaboratively and in an interwoven way in the semiotic multimodal analysis. From the analysis and the purposive sample, the qualitative semiotic multimodal model analysis revealed that in relation to visual grammar, cover lines such as “more sex – less begging” and “run longer and faster” in conjunction with repetitive visual images of muscularly toned men on all the front covers, *MH* is constructing a deceptive view of a truth or reality. The discourse on front covers illustrates muscular strength and fitness. Viewing these texts includes power relationships as a key issue in discourse. Verbs are used metaphorically and masculinities are confirmed and celebrated by conveying heroism, bravery, and emotional toughness as underlined by Haywood and Mac an Ghail (2003:95). In editorials, *MH* uses noun phrases and portrays the male ideal as ‘real men’ and by doing so; it provides mediated versions of reality. In the editorial of the October 2010 copy of *MH* (Figure 7.12.), the editor asks the question: “Which qualities define the ultimate *Men’s Health* man?” The editor answers this question himself by using visual grammar, such as ‘dynamic’, ‘strong’, ‘balanced’ and ‘stylish’. Some editorials also use visual syntax to reinforce what men want to be and what such visual syntax wishes to define as male aspirations (Table 7.8). It appears that *MH* appeals to those men who can identify with the represented ideas about being a man that the magazine conveys; those who do not identify are not its target market.

With reference to the **visual grammar** of composition and page layout, the researcher analysed the various relationships of the variety of elements as they were arranged on a cover. This is what Kress and Van Leeuwen (1996), and Jewitt and Oyama (2000) refer to as visual grammar. With reference to language syntax, the researcher focused on word order, since words are read in sequence. The visual

compositions, on the other hand, are based on spatial relationships. The visual compositions determine how the different elements are related to one another in all sorts of different ways. *MH* uses the same colour to create synergy between the mastheads, cover lines, and photograph on a cover (Figure 7.4). This is one example of visual grammar that employs connectivity to create cohesion between the cover lines and the world they present. At the same time, this produces a continuous link between real-world issues and consumerism. The cover image is another design element that needs much more than creating a good photograph; it requires the most eye-catching composition that photographer and camera permit. The camera facilitates and is associated with a more intimate kind of fun and friendship; it forms part of all the various relationships that create the visual syntax on *MH* covers and editorials (Section 7.3.1).

**Iconography** is used where the men on the covers are iconic signs, but in an ideological sense, the covers represent ideas that are often a reconstruction of reality. The iconic images of the cover men connote ideals and visuals that provide readers with a script: the paradigm of masculinity. The iconography, furthermore, structures the text and visual image in *MH* and uses these structures to illustrate how male culture has embodied mythical archetypes; with specific reference to the myth of status (including prestige, prominence, standing, and reputation) and the favourable myth of the dominant ideology (Section 7.3.2).

**Modality** is used to assess how true or real the visual representations are. Kress and Van Leeuwen (1996) claim that in Western aesthetics, the primary default of modality is 'naturalistic representation; what can be seen by one's naked eye. Degrees of tone articulation were found within visual texts, including the saturation of colours that contributes to a sensory process of modality as confirmed by Kress and Van Leeuwen (1996:170).

**Colour** is a supplementary key semiotic source that is used on all the covers with the purpose of creating anticipated meaning potential with specific reference to masculinities. The colour coding and font sizes of the cover lines draw the eye to the most pertinent topic and play a role in the visual interpretation; the ways of seeing. Colour assumes an interpersonal function and is used as a semiotic element and as a way of establishing realism on the covers. Intense, bold, and engaging saturated

colours are used which increase the sensory visual experience in the analysis of the covers.

**Typography** is used to assign meaning. The positioning, colour, and font sizes (height, thickness or thinness) all contribute to typographical meaning. At times, typography is used in an interpersonal meta-function to emphasise confidence or to communicate urgency; textual-meta-functions, stretched typefaces, spread cover lines and salience, line spacing and alignment, stencil fonts, and connected letters are also present to form a coherent unit in the context of how signs are produced.

**Positioning** for the purpose of this semiotic multimodal model includes the positioning and representation of social actors on the covers and also the overall positioning of the various elements with reference to the visual layout. The represented participants are men, and the magazine targets a certain niche market that displays masculinity in a challenging style. The representation summarises how heterosexual and homosexual men view themselves and how women experience these representations. It is important to note that social construct denies individuality by subsuming men into particular stereotypes: 'muscular hunk', 'explorer', 'adventurer', etc. These stereotypical physical characteristics are individualised and presented in the context of cultural categorisation. The cover lines on the cover emphasise what the main interest is

On these covers, the men convey iconographical meaning. The covers outline the content of the magazine and signposts the main interest. To this end, the semiotics salience is applied; i.e. colour, size, tone, focus, and foregrounding when creating the covers. The iconographic men on the front covers are the major design element. The ranking according to salience is evident: (1) a magazine for men, (2) the kind of men that viewers should strive to be, and (3) the core values of *MH* as a consumer item that captures viewers' attention before they look at anything else. Men who do not identify with the iconographic cover men get excluded since they dissociate from the meaning *MH* wishes to convey. The positioning further entices a particular viewer by adding cover lines that address men as a social group next to the image of a strong, fit, and confident man. The physical characteristics of patterns of men's behaviour are not as important as the represented ideas about being a man. The ideas are ideological while the representations give substance to ideology.

It would appear that *MH* succeeds in negotiating the once binary opposites of masculinity and femininity, albeit to a limited extent. Although gender has become much more fluid with more open boundaries, *MH* remains cautious in its approach to inclusive masculinities. As far as gender representation on covers is concerned, it seems part of *MH*'s assignment to liberate products, such as hair spray and cologne, from an earlier exclusively feminine domain.

## **8.6 THE RESULT OF TESTING THE MULTIMODAL MODEL ON VISUAL TEXTS IN *MH***

The approach of triangulation occurs as a planned strategy in this study and is achieved by the combination of two data collection methods, and reference to multiple sources of obtaining data. The two data collection methods are a quantitative content analysis and a qualitative multimodal semiotic analysis. Triangulation took place, since the results of the quantitative content analysis supported, enhanced, and were cross-checked against the results of the visual semiotic analysis. That approach provided more robust research outcomes that more comprehensively answered to the research questions.

Instrument development was another mixed methods approach that contributed to this study. A range of sources were used to develop a multimodal semiotic visual analysis model. The main purpose was to combine a hexagon model with six components that could be used to analyse any visual text. That was done in conjunction with the quantitative content analysis to have greater credibility. Quantitative content analysis in conjunction with the qualitative visual semiotic analysis – where the model (instrument) was tested – also enhanced the credibility of the research. The researcher found it useful to employ specific examples from the front covers, editorials, and flip covers from the qualitative visual semiotic multimodal model analysis to illustrate the quantitative findings from the content analysis. The latter contributed to utility, since the qualitative data collected for the visual semiotic analysis revealed a more complex set of findings with regard to visual analysis and making meaning in texts.

New types of men are constantly being invented by the media. The new-man-as-nurturer is a response to feminism. The stereotypical image of the caring, sharing,

and anti-sexist man, nevertheless, gains credibility and strength (Carter & Steiner 2004:214-5). The question is, how deep or widespread is the initiated change of the new man? York and Jennings (1995) are of the opinion that the new man is nothing less than the advertising industry's representation driven by commercial greed. Meanwhile, Nixon (1996:17) claims the new man is not real by describing him as nothing less than a 'regime of representation'.

While there is widespread acknowledgement that masculinities have changed considerably during the 1980s and 1990s, the researcher would like to believe there is no longer any clear consensus about what the new man actually represents. The only defining feature that one can point out with any degree of certainty is that he is not the 'old man', his father. The present-day men have all been affected by this new man-ism in one form or another.

The most successful critique of misandry in popular culture and in legislative decisions has come from the two well examined books by Nathanson and Young (2001, 2006). Some blame men, some blame women, some attach the old sexism, some the new, some snub feminists, and others scorn masculinists of unpredictable political outcomes. It should be a free for all out there and the struggles represent a wide range of issues. The first solution to the misandry issue as a new problem is to recognise and admit that misandry exists, rather than to miss it or to dismiss it as trivial. With reference of the positioning of men as discussed above, and while men are still portrayed in terms of stereotypical visual texts in *MH*, the magazine endeavours to put men in touch with a variety of issues; for example helping the women in their lives with domestic chores, the art of fashion and styling for men, encouraging men to be better lovers, educating men about issues such as breast cancer for women and prostate cancer for men, as well as other issues that focus on living a healthy lifestyle such as cooking and encouraging men to try out recipes. It seems that *MH* is making a concerted effort to reflect on these changing discourses and, as a result, new issues about gender representation have arisen. Men are more overtly represented and the image of the new man supports traditional female roles, such as looking after children. Some of the topics that are addressed in *MH* may be viewed as a trend of establishing a new ideology that creates a significant

domestic role for men. This process heralds the departure from the traditional and hegemonic masculine role of the provider to more integrated masculinities.

## 8.7 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Since this research focused on *MH* magazine, the researcher acknowledges that the media is not a homogenous subject, though there are overlaps between currents of critical thinking. Besides a semiotic analysis, there are other ways of studying the media. Some of these different academic approaches (psychoanalytic criticism) add weight to semiotics, while others (ethnographic research) are opposed to it (Kress & van Leeuwen 2006, Burton 2005, Bignell 2002).

There are advantages and disadvantages to every research design and other research designs could complement the research path followed. It is also important to note that, since this study is based on 27 visual texts, of which nine were analysed qualitatively, this is a small study. A limitation for this study for the social researcher who is interested in visuality – the social construction and the use of vision – lies in the irony that the social sciences, like most other branches of academic study, are profoundly logo centric, preferring the word over the image to present their findings (Banks 2007:15). Another limitation of this study is that the researcher has not interviewed the editorial team of *MH* about their choice of images on the covers. Meanings are mainly assigned based on one's own reading, without asking the intended readers what they think the images are meaning (Banks 2007:38).

## 8.8 RECOMMENDATIONS

The researcher believes that the multimodal model on visual texts in *MH* provides a firm foundation for further research on various related topics:

- To support and give more substance to the qualitative semiotic visual analysis, a researcher can also undertake other research methods, such as in-depth interviews with the editorial team (especially the creative team) of *MH*;
- Research that focuses on men who read *MH* to include in-depth individual interviews with a representative sample, as well as with focus-group interviews;
- The multimodal model can be applied to an analysis of the content (articles and advertisements) of *MH* or any other visual text;

- By using the visual semiotics multimodal model, a researcher can also apply other research methods, such as the keeping of diaries and providing camera to respondents for taking photographs of certain aspects of masculinity and health, or masculinity and home life;
- The findings of this study can be applied to investigate the use of typography and visual design as two separate topics with reference to visual communication; and
- On-line design and the use of various typographical elements used to communicate and facilitate understanding of 'reading and seeing' is another possible research field that can benefit from the development of this multimodal model.

## 8.9 CONCLUDING REMARKS

The developed multimodal visual semiotics model can be used to analyse any visual text. In the case of this study, the model does not replace all the characteristics of the real world, but denotes a summary of how a scientific model provides a representation. The hexagon model with the six sides (tools / angles) represents the multimodality of the analysis of visual texts.

By reviewing and considering editorials and covers in relation to consumerism, it seems that the attempt of new men's glossy magazines to express their views about work and sexuality remains influenced. These magazines focus on a revised version of masculinity: lifestyle concerns, objectives for rewarding careers, a focus on male fashion, and underlining issues of self-esteem.

In the South African *MH*, there is a variety of celebrities who continue to appear on the covers; modelling *MH* fashion, health, and lean hard bodies. The men (models and celebrities) who are selected to appear on the *MH* front cover have not denounced physical and social power as a crucial component of hegemonic masculinity. Some men need to be less dependent on physical supremacy at work to demonstrate male power. At the same time, men also have to burn fat, be lean, and have defined abdominal muscles. Men are also permitted to touch one another, to smile on magazine covers, and to show an interest in fashion without any preconceived ideas about sexual orientation. Instead, the new man as portrayed in

*MH* is in touch with himself while conquering the promotion of products such as moisturisers, fragrances, and face cream in the context of an entirely female consumer base over the past few decades (Synnott 2009:49-51; MacKinnon 2003:96-97).

By discussing the fluidity of the variations of masculinities and male identities, giving a brief overview of the role of the media in constructing masculinities; and focusing on the discourses that could take place in *MH*, this research study creates awareness that, while the inherited patriarchal concept of masculinities may be part of the problem, revisioning masculinities to be inclusive can be part of the solution.

It is the researchers' wish that this research project will contribute to the emergence of awareness and respect for inclusive masculinities and identities within a culturally diverse society.

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**ADDENDA: COVER AND CONTENT ANALYSES – MEN’S HEALTH MAGAZINE  
(JULY 2010 – JUNE 2011)**

**ADDENDUM A: MEN’S HEALTH CONTENT CATEGORY (JULY 2010)**

Content category	Front cover
Adventure	
Body	
Brain	
Career	
Fat	

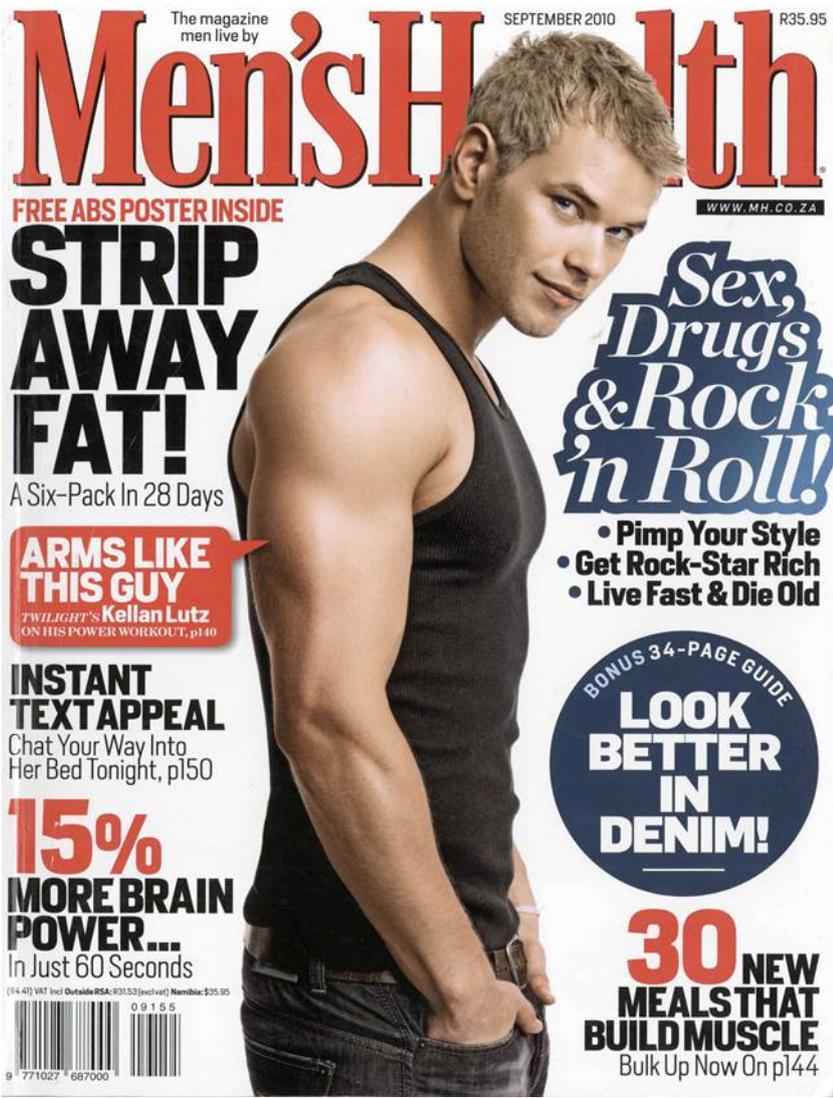
<b>Content category</b>	<b>Front cover</b>
<b>Fashion</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SEDUCE HER WITH STYLE EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO GET LUCKY TONIGHT</li> </ul>
<b>Fitness</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SOLDIERS OF GOOD FORTUNE Get Special Forces Fit</li> </ul>
<b>Food</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• LEAN WALLET, FULL STOMACH Best (Cheap) Foods for Men</li> </ul>
<b>Gym</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• EASY ABS! A Six-Pack In Just Four Weeks</li> </ul>
<b>Health</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• FIGHT FLU WITH SEX! Seriously, It Works...</li> </ul>
<b>Money</b>	
<b>Muscles</b>	
<b>Sex</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• THE RED-HOT SEX ISSUE</li> <li>• 69 WAYS TO TURN A GOOD GIRL BAD</li> </ul>

**ADDENDUM B: MEN'S HEALTH CONTENT CATEGORY (AUGUST 2010)**

Content category	Front cover
	
Adventure	
Body	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• FREE POSTER! The Best Home Workout Ever</li> </ul>
Brain	
Career	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CHEAT AT WORK (AND WIN!) YOUR CAREER SKYROCKETS</li> </ul>
Fat	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• BURN FAT FAST! YOUR GYM-FREE TRAINING PLAN</li> </ul>
Fashion	
Fitness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 56 MUSCLES IN JUST 6 MOVES</li> </ul>
Food	

Content category	Front cover
<b>Gym</b>	
<b>Health</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 5-Minute Lifesavers</li> <li>• Boost Your Health With Biltong &amp; Cheese</li> </ul>
<b>Money</b>	
<b>Muscles</b>	
<b>Sex</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Seduce Her In 60 Seconds</li> </ul>

ADDENDUM C: MEN'S HEALTH CONTENT CATEGORY (SEPTEMBER 2010)

Content category	Front cover
	
Adventure	
Body	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ARMS LIKE THIS GUY Twilight's Kellan Lutz ON HIS POWER WORKOUT. P140</li> </ul>
Brain	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 15% MORE BRAIN POWER... In Just 60 Seconds</li> </ul>
Career	
Fat	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• FREE ABS POSTER INSIDE STRIP AWAY FAT! A Six Pack In 28 Days</li> </ul>
Fashion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bonus 34-page guide LOOK BETTER IN DENIM!</li> </ul>
Fitness	

Content category	Front cover
<b>Food</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 30 NEW MEALS THAT BUILD MUSCLE Bulk UP Now On p144</li> </ul>
<b>Gym</b>	
<b>Health</b>	
<b>Money</b>	
<b>Muscles</b>	
<b>Sex</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• INSTANT TEXT APPEAL Chat Your Way Into Her Bed Tonight, p150</li> </ul>

ADDENDUM D: MEN'S HEALTH CONTENT CATEGORY (OCTOBER 2010)

Content category	Front cover
	
Adventure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ADVENTURE SPECIAL 30 TRIPS EVERY GUY MUST TAKE!</li> </ul>
Body	
Brain	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Boost your Brain Power With Sausage &amp; Eggs</li> </ul>
Career	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ACE THAT INTERVIEW Say this, Not That</li> </ul>
Fat	
Fashion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• BONUS 48pg Style Guide! The New Rules For Men</li> </ul>
Fitness	
Food	

Content category	Front cover
<b>Gym</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Free Workout Poster! STRONG &amp; FIT Build Muscle &amp; Blast Fat In Just 4 Weeks</li> <li>• MORE TIME, MORE MUSCLE YOUR COMPLETE HOME GYM FOR ONLY R15 000</li> </ul>
<b>Health</b>	
<b>Money</b>	
<b>Muscles</b>	
<b>Sex</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A SUMMER OF SMOKING HOT SEX! Light Her Fire On p77</li> </ul>

ADDENDUM E: MEN'S HEALTH CONTENT CATEGORY (NOVEMBER 2010)

Content category	Front cover
<p><b>Adventure</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>YOUR BEST SUMMER EVER! Switch off Relax Instantly p106 EAT OUT 13 Ultimate Food Adventures p146 GET IT ON New Rules of Flirting p133</li> </ul>
<p><b>Body</b></p>	
<p><b>Brain</b></p>	
<p><b>Career</b></p>	
<p><b>Fat</b></p>	
<p><b>Fashion</b></p>	
<p><b>Fitness</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>8 Summer Style Essentials</li> </ul>

<b>Content category</b>	<b>Front cover</b>
<b>Food</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MELT AWAY KILOS! 95 Best Foods for Men</li> </ul>
<b>Gym</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• YOUR ULTIMATE CHEST WORKOUT (NO BENCH? NO PROBLEM!)</li> </ul>
<b>Health</b>	
<b>Money</b>	
<b>Muscles</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• BEACH MUSCLE NOW! The Last-Minute Plan: See Results in 4 Weeks!</li> </ul>
<b>Sex</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pull Her Sex Trigger!</li> </ul>

ADDENDUM F: MEN'S HEALTH CONTENT CATEGORY (DECEMBER 2010)

Content category	Front cover
Adventure	
Body	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• BIG ARMS GUARANTEED! In 5 Simple Moves</li> </ul>
Brain/Mind	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• RELAX &amp; RECHARGE 17 Best Local Hide-Aways</li> </ul>
Career	
Fat	
Fashion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• LOOK GREAT ALL SUMMER</li> <li>• MASSIVE 256 PAGES OF SUN, STYLE, SURF AND SEX</li> </ul>
Fitness	
Food	
Gym	

Content category	Front cover
<b>Health</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lower Your Blood Pressure, <i>Naturally</i></li> </ul>
<b>Money</b>	
<b>Muscles</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• YOUR PERFECT SUMMER 6-PACK! GET LEAN BUILD MUSCLE LOOK SHARP</li> </ul>
<b>Sex</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SEX ON FIRE! Touch her here, here and... here p164</li> </ul>

**ADDENDUM G: MEN'S HEALTH CONTENT CATEGORY (JANUARY 2011)**

Content category	Front cover
	
<b>Adventure</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>7 GUY SKILLS YOU SHOULD KNOW</b></li> </ul>
<b>Body</b>	
<b>Brain</b>	
<b>Career</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• YOUR NEXT BIG CAREER MOVE p110</li> </ul>
<b>Fat</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>LOSE YOUR GUT! THE COMPLETE PLAN</b></li> </ul>
<b>Fashion</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• LOOK GREAT AT ANY AGE</li> </ul>
<b>Fitness</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• THE COMEBACK ISSUE JUMPSTART YOUR LIFE IN 2011!</li> </ul>
<b>Food</b>	

Content category	Front cover
<b>Gym</b>	
<b>Health</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 365 COOL HEALTH, FITNESS, SEX &amp; NUTRITION TIPS</li> </ul>
<b>Money</b>	
<b>Muscles</b>	
<b>Sex</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• THE <b><i>NEW</i></b> RULES OF SEX</li> </ul>

ADDENDUM H: MEN'S HEALTH CONTENT CATEGORY (FEBRUARY 2011)

Content category	Front cover
	
Adventure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Ultimate Guy Trip p1309</li> </ul>
Body	
Brain	
Career	
Fat	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SPECIAL LOSE-YOUR-GUT ISSUE!</li> </ul>
Fashion	
Fitness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• GET BACK IN SHAPE! Blast Away Fat Gain Lean Muscle Power Up Your Diet</li> </ul>
Food	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SIX-PACK ON A PLATE! THE Best Flat-Belly Food</li> </ul>

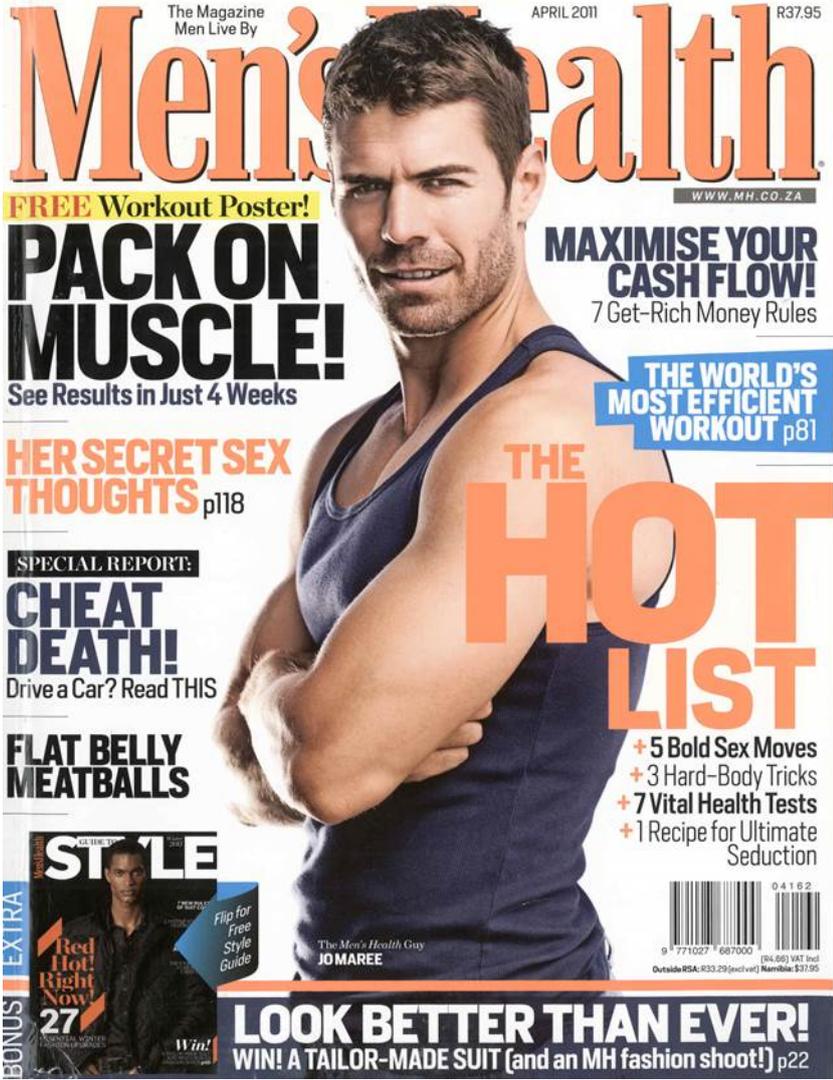
<b>Content category</b>	<b>Front cover</b>
<b>Gym</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• FREE POSTER BIG ARMS FAST!</li> </ul>
<b>Health</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• BEAT BACK PAIN</li> </ul>
<b>Money</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MONEY! Style! Success! GIVE YOURSELF A (BIG) RAISE 7 CLASSY BUSINESS STYLE UPGRADES THE BEST INVESTMENTS YOU CAN MAKE</li> </ul>
<b>Muscles</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Build the Muscles Women Love</li> </ul>
<b>Sex</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 30 RED-HOT SEX SECRETS Decode Her Signals</li> </ul>

**ADDENDUM I: MEN'S HEALTH CONTENT CATEGORY (MARCH 2011)**

Content category	Front cover
	
<b>Adventure</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CAR SPECIAL Speed! Power! Control! 6 Essential Driving Skills 15 Best Cars of 2011 = Why Men Love Cars</li> </ul>
<b>Body</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• FREE Pull-Out Workout Poster!</li> </ul>
<b>Brain</b>	
<b>Career</b>	
<b>Fat</b>	
<b>Fashion</b>	
<b>Fitness</b>	
<b>Food</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• EAT THIS NOT THAT! 47 Best Snacks for Men</li> </ul>

Content category	Front cover
<b>Gym</b>	
<b>Health</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ENOUGH WITH THE *&amp;%@ STRESS! Take Control on p132</li> <li>• SPECIAL REPORT Is Alzheimer's Contagious?</li> </ul>
<b>Money</b>	
<b>Muscles</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• LEAN MUSCLE FAST! ONE MONTH TO A COVER MODEL BODY</li> </ul>
<b>Sex</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• READ HER DIRTY MIND! P154</li> <li>• SEXPLOSION! Push Her Lust Buttons</li> </ul>

**ADDENDUM J: MEN'S HEALTH CONTENT CATEGORY (APRIL 2011)**

Content category	Front cover
	
Adventure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SPECIAL REPORT: CHEAT DEATH! Drive a Car? Read THIS</li> </ul>
Body	
Brain	
Career	
Fat	
Fashion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• GUIDE TO STYLE Flip for Free Style Guide</li> <li>• LOOK BETTER THAN EVER! WIN! A TAILOR-MADE SUIT (and an MH fashion shoot!) p22</li> </ul>

<b>Content category</b>	<b>Front cover</b>
<b>Fitness</b>	
<b>Food</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• FLAT BELLY MEATBALLS</li> </ul>
<b>Gym</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• THE WORLD'S MOST EFFICIENT WORKOUT p81</li> </ul>
<b>Health</b>	
<b>Money</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MAXIMISE YOUR CASH FLOW! 7 Get-Rich Money Rules</li> </ul>
<b>Muscles</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• FREE Workout Poster! PACK ON MUSCLE! See Results in Just 4 Weeks</li> </ul>
<b>Sex</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Her Secret Sex Thoughts p118</li> </ul>

**ADDENDUM K: MEN'S HEALTH CONTENT CATEGORY (MAY 2011)**

<b>Content category</b>	<b>Front cover</b>
<b>Adventure</b>	
<b>Body</b>	
<b>Brain</b>	
<b>Career</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 6 EXECUTIVE CAREER BOOSTERS</li> </ul>
<b>Fat</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Free poster fight fat &amp; win! Ditch 4kg by June</li> </ul>
<b>Fashion</b>	
<b>Fitness</b>	
<b>Food</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CHOW TIME! 20-Minute Power Meals</li> </ul>
<b>Gym</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• HI-DEF ABS! 3 Moves That Make Them Pop!</li> </ul>
<b>Health</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• YOUR GREATEST HEALTH THREAT p124</li> <li>• STRESS TIPS FROM SA's DANGER MEN</li> </ul>
<b>Money</b>	
<b>Muscles</b>	
<b>Sex</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MORE SEX BETTER SEX</li> </ul>

ADDENDUM L: MEN'S HEALTH CONTENT CATEGORY (JUNE 2011)

Content category	Front cover
	
Adventure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Disaster... the Condom Broke!” And 21 Other Epic Fails Fixed</li> </ul>
Body	
Brain	
Career	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 6 EXECUTIVE CAREER BOOSTERS</li> </ul>
Fat	
Fashion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• LOOK GREAT THIS WINTER Wear This and Score!</li> </ul>
Fitness	
Food	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• You, Master CHEF! 5 Gourmet Guy Meals p164</li> </ul>

<b>Content category</b>	<b>Front cover</b>
<b>Gym</b>	
<b>Health</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The 60-Second Health Check</li> </ul>
<b>Money</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 5 Money Secrets Rich Men Know</li> </ul>
<b>Muscles</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Free Workout Poster POWER! MUSCLE! SPEED! Blast FAT With the Blitz Rugby Workout</li> <li>• STRENGTH &amp; CALM More Muscle, No Gym!</li> </ul>
<b>Sex</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SEX MAGIC! Hey Presto ... She's Naked</li> </ul>

ADDENDUM M: MEN'S HEALTH EDITORIAL (JULY 2010)

Editorial July 2010	Sexy Time
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**FROM THE EDITOR**

BY RIDWAAN BAWA

# Sexy Time

**S**EX. MEN THINK ABOUT IT A LOT, WHEN WE last had it. When we will have it again. Do we have enough? (And no, that's not a trick question.) We may not have sex on the brain as often as every seven seconds (that, apparently, is a myth), but our minds definitely do tend to wander when it comes to matters of the flesh and uh... Olivia Wilde... er... um... sorry... where was I?

Oh yes. Sex. Yep, it's important to us men. You only have to be a fan of facebook.com/MensHealthSA to know this. When we asked for feedback on a sex-related topic recently, the comments poured in. (Check out the best of them on the right.)

The other thing about men is that we can be lazy bastards. Not always, mind you, but sometimes, for sure. No doubt you want to be a record-breaking Olympian in the bedroom every night, but sometimes you're content with simply crossing the finish line first, so to speak. But here at *Men's Health* we're committed to helping improve every aspect of your life (and hers in the process). Which is why this month we've dedicated many of the pages of your favourite magazine to the noble art of sex. It's all in here, from our red-hot couples cover to what women really want in bed, according to our very own *MH* Girl Next Door (p120); from health advice that tells you how sex can help you beat the flu and protect your heart (seriously, turn to p85 and check it out!) to the first-ever *Men's Health/Women's Health* sex survey (p116). We also



**hooked up with *Women's Health* to produce a fashion shoot that fried the sizzle dial (p162).**

Oh, and for good measure we've thrown in the best sex tips ever, starting on this very page, to heat up your bedroom (or lounge or kitchen or even car for that matter), and spice up your... uh... Olivia Wilde... er... um... sorry... where was I? Oh yes, sex. We think about it a lot.

Yep, this issue is packed with everything you need to know to become better at your favourite pastime. You, and her, can thank us later.

Cheers.

RIDWAAN **MH**

**WHAT YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT...**

**AT THE MEN'S HEALTH FACEBOOK PAGE**

**Outside of actual sex, what's the hottest thing a woman can do to turn you on?**

*Look after her body, gym regularly and live a healthy lifestyle.*  
- Hennie van der Merwe

**Be assured**  
- nothing turns me off like an insecure and paranoid woman constantly seeking affirmation.  
- Jabutani Debeda

*If she lets me know that she wants me but doesn't need me... Every man needs a challenge!*  
- Sethu Nontume

*Cooking me dinner followed by dessert. I really appreciate women who do that out of the blue for their men. It's very special and a major turn-on for me.*  
- Georgios Sparis

*Telling me what I could be in for. That has always been a turn-on.*  
- Quinn van Wyk

For more wisdom (yours and ours), check out [www.facebook.com/MensHealthSA](http://www.facebook.com/MensHealthSA)



**Wilde At Heart**  
House star Olivia Wilde not only rocks the cover of this month's *Women's Health*, but also gets our Malegrams section off to a steamy start in this issue. Get under her skin on p34.

**"That muscle around the pelvis that only men have is so sexy"**

- Olivia Wilde

THE TWEET LIFE OF A POWER COUPLE

Follow **Ridwaan Bawa** on Twitter @ridwaanbawa for insights into all things that matter to men, and for the low-down on what goes on in the corridors of *Men's Health*

+

Follow *Women's Health* editor **Kate Wilson** on Twitter @katwilson to find out what really makes women tick.

18 JULY 2010
WWW.MH.CO.ZA
**MH**

This edition of *MH* is largely attributed to sex – therefore the headline of this editorial. The introduction to the editorial is about sex and reads “SEX. MEN THINK ABOUT IT A LOT. WHEN WE last had it. When we will have it again ...”

The word sex is repeated eight (8) times in the editorial.

- “SEX. MEN THINK ABOUT IT A LOT ...”
- “We may not have sex on the brain as often as every seven seconds ...”
- “Oh yes. Sex. It’s important to us men ...”
- “... we asked for feedback on a sex-related topic recently ...”
- “... noble art of sex ...”

Editorial July 2010	Sexy Time
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “... first-ever MH / WH sex survey ...”</li> <li>• “... how, sex can help you beat the flu ...”</li> <li>• “... best sex tips ever ...”</li> </ul> <p>Together with the above quotes emphasising sex in this editorial the following also refers to sex:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “... matters of the flesh ...”</li> <li>• “... record-breaking Olympian in the bedroom ...”</li> <li>• “... red-hot couples cover ...”</li> <li>• “... heat up your bedroom ...”</li> </ul> <p>A quote from Olivia Wilde (on the July 2010 cover of <i>Women’s Health</i>) “That muscle around the pelvis that only men have is so sexy” quoted at the bottom of the editorial.</p>

FROM THE EDITOR
BY RIDWAAN BAWA

# Power To the People

I'M STANDING IN FRONT OF SOCCER CITY ON a freezing winter's night, my heart warmed by the prospect of seeing Lionel Messi live. Out comes my cellphone – I've got to take a picture of this amazing stadium. I focus, steady my hand and... bam! I'm thrown forwards and my phone goes flying. The cause of my ruined photograph: a Gauteng medical services ambulance has reversed into me. Yep, it would have been funny if it hadn't been so sore. Well, to me, anyway. You can still laugh if you like.

To his credit, the driver did indicate that he'd driven "slowly" into me. Gee, thanks. Oh, and did I mention that they couldn't give me anything for the pain because they don't carry any medication on the vehicle? Yep, let the laughter continue.

But ultimately, once I stopped repeating "but you just knocked me over", I pulled myself together and hauled ass into the stadium – stiff body and all. Luckily, I had a good seat and didn't have to stretch my neck to see the action. And, yes, Messi was worth the pain.

Thing is, you can never quite predict what life's going to throw at you – it could be annoying colleagues, rain on the weekend when the forecast clearly said clear skies or a president who's better at dancing than debating. Or, for that matter, an ambulance that crashes into you when you're at a soccer match. So much for sport being good for your health.



More important than the challenges, though, is how you deal with them. Do you duck when you get a curve ball or do you stand tall and swing with as much power as possible? The residents of Mitchells Plain in Cape Town had to make this choice when drugs spread through their community, shattering lives and destroying families. They chose to fight back. About 40 000 people in the area have joined street committees and another 2 500 are members of neighbourhood watches. They are proud to be playing an active role in reclaiming their community from the drug lords. At the same time, they are said it has come to this.

"A Crack Den Next Door" is a tale of courage and hope. Read it on p110 and, when you're done, you'll be ready to take charge of your own life. If a rogue ambulance doesn't get you first, of course...

RIDWAAN BAWA



What do Zapiro, Mark Shuttleworth, Bryan Habana, Johnny Clegg and Professor Tim Noakes have in common? They're all former winners of the annual **Men's Health Best Men Awards**. To see the results of this year's first round of voting turn to p104, and for more information on our 2010 candidates – including DJ Black Coffee and athlete Ryan Sandes – visit [www.mhbestmen.co.za](http://www.mhbestmen.co.za)

...SOMETHING TO TWEET ABOUT

Men's Health editor Ridwaan Bawa doesn't spend all his time working on his abs and autographing the personal items of countless sexy women (ah, and bringing out South Africa's biggest men's magazine, of course). He's also on Twitter, and wants to chat to you. Follow him [@ridwaanbawa](https://twitter.com/ridwaanbawa) for insights into all things that matter to men, as well as for the low-down on what really goes on in the corridors of *Men's Health*.

**What is the biggest challenge you face on a daily basis, and how do you overcome it?**

*Staying focused and positive in a world where negativity and pressure are the everyday norm. My own solutions are a healthy lifestyle, physical fitness and positive thinking.*  
– Francois le Grange

*I have to get up very early each morning – and it gets worse in winter with the cold. So I bought myself a heater to warm the room 15 minutes before I have to get up.*  
– Sibabawwe Dlokweni

*I maintain my smile; encourage myself knowing that I'm going to overcome whatever challenge I face; persevere and remind myself that I am resilient and that tough times don't last.*  
– Ayrton GoodFeller

For more wisdom (yours and ours), check out [www.facebook.com/MensHealthSA](http://www.facebook.com/MensHealthSA)



WHAT YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT...  
AT THE MEN'S HEALTH FACEBOOK PAGE

18 AUGUST 2010
WWW.MH.CO.ZA


This editorial is about the editor, Ridwaan Bawa, standing in front of Soccer City – on his way to see Lionel Messi - wanting to take a photograph with his cell phone, when an ambulance reversed into him.

The editorial is further about the challenges of life; and how one (as a man) deals with these challenges.

The editorial also entails references to the residents of Mitchells Plain in Cape Town – fighting drugs – 40 000 people

- “Thing is, you can never quite predict what life is going to through at you ...”
- “Do you duck when you get a curve ball or do you stand tall and swing with as much power as possible ...”
- “... fight back ...”
- “... playing an active role ...”
- “... reclaiming ...”
- “... a tale of courage and hope ...”
- “... take charge of your own life ...”

<b>Editorial August 2010</b>	<b>Power To the People</b>
joined and there is a neighbourhood watch of 2 500 people.	

ADDENDUM O: **MEN'S HEALTH EDITORIAL (SEPTEMBER 2010)**

<b>Editorial September 2010</b>	<b>The Stage is Yours</b>
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FROM THE EDITOR

BY RIDWAAN BAWA

# The Stage Is Yours

**D**EVOTED FANS. CRAZY money. Sex-obsessed groupies. These are just a few of the reasons guys would give their right arm to be a rock star. Granted, that would make your drum solo slightly more difficult, but not impossible. Just ask Rick Allen, Def Leppard's one-armed drummer.

There is something about the life musicians lead that is so exciting and attractive that even movie stars have grabbed a mic and started singing. In some cases (think Bruce Willis and Eddie Murphy), rather unfortunately.

At *Men's Health*, we understand that the closest you'll come to sharing the stage with the Stones is watching them on DVD while smashing your air guitar into the couch, which is why this issue has a special rock-star theme.

Always wanted to tap into the amazing recuperative powers of hedonists like Keith Richards and Snoop Dogg, who have managed to live fast and, well, not keel over from the sheer amount of illegal substances in their blood stream? Keen to stand alongside legendary Lotharios like Lenny Kravitz and Seal in the sex appeal stakes? Hungry to rocket your career to rock-god status? Now's your chance to amp up your performance. And, since the right tunes can improve your physical game too, we've put together the best music-based workout plans to build strength and stamina.

If this isn't enough, we're also bringing you a bonus 34-page guide that will help you choose the right jeans to up your rock-star appeal. After all, rock stars and denim are a natural fit.

All sweet music to your ears, I know. In the words of the grunge master Kurt Cobain, "If it's illegal to rock 'n roll, throw my ass in jail".

Now, if you'll excuse me, I need to find my air guitar. Rock on.



**...SOMETHING TO TWEET ABOUT**

The *Men's Health* ed doesn't spend all his time working on his abs and autographing the personal items of countless sexy women (oh, and bringing out South Africa's biggest men's magazine, of course). He's also on Twitter. Follow him @ridwaanbawa for insights into all things that matter to men.



## BECOME A MEN'S HEALTH AMBASSADOR!

We want to know what you think. Join our Reader Panel



**Exclusive Reader Panel privileges:**

- Share your views on magazine content before it hits the shelves.
- Get access to exclusive tips and information from our experts.
- Receive and test samples from our advertising partners.
- Stand a chance to win great prizes (exclusive to the panel).
- Early notification of exclusive *Men's Health* events.

All you have to do is sign up and we'll be in touch. Visit [www.mh.co.za](http://www.mh.co.za) and click on the Reader Panel button.

18 SEPTEMBER 2010
WWW.MH.CO.ZA
MH

The September 2010 editorial is about men who aspire to be rock stars – the whole edition has a rock star theme.

“At *Men's Health*, we understand that the closest you'll come to sharing the stage with the Stones is watching them on DVD while smashing your air guitar into the couch, which is why this issue has a special rock-star theme.”

- “DEVOTED FANS. CRAZY money. Sex-obsessed groupies.”
- “Hungry to rocket your career to rock-god status?”
- “Now's your chance to amp up your performance.”
- “... right tunes can improve your physical game ...”
- “... the best music-based workout plans to build strength and stamina

Editorial September 2010	The Stage is Yours
<p>The musicians that are referred to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “ ... that would make your drum solos slightly more difficult ... just as Rick Allen, Def Leppard’s one-armed drummer ...”</li> <li>• “ ... hedonists like Keith Richards and Snoop Dogg who have managed to live fast and ...”</li> <li>• “ ... legendary Lotharios like Lenny Kravitz and ...”</li> <li>• “... Seal in the sex appeal stakes? ...”</li> </ul> <p>The quote is by Kurt Cobain who said “If it’s illegal to rock ‘n roll, throw my ass in jail”</p>	<p>...”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “... choose the right jeans to up your rock-star appeal ...”</li> <li>• “ ... rock stars and denim are a natural fit ...”</li> <li>• “All sweet music to your ears ...”</li> </ul>

**ADDENDUM P: MEN'S HEALTH EDITORIAL (OCTOBER 2010)**

Editorial October 2010	What Makes a Real Man
<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div style="width: 45%;"> <p><b>FROM THE EDITOR</b></p> <p style="text-align: right; font-size: small;">BY RIDWAAN BAWA</p> <h2 style="margin-top: 20px;">What Makes a Real Man</h2> <p><b>O</b>NE OF THE QUESTIONS I HAVE BEEN MOST frequently asked during my time as editor has been: "Which qualities define the ultimate <i>Men's Health</i> man?" My answer has always mentioned words like "dynamic", "strong", "balanced" and "stylish".</p> <p>Now, as I sit here writing what is my final editorial, I realise I've learnt that there's much more to it than that. The truth is, when I think of a true <i>Men's Health</i> man, I think of my dad. He is 71, has probably seen the inside of a gym only a couple of times in his life, if that, and very reluctantly gave up smoking after a double bypass (although I'd bet my house he still sneaks a puff or three).</p> <p>He is also a father of five, a grandfather to a further five and a devoted husband to a loving wife for 50 years. He is a man who has made many sacrifices for his family, a man who people trust, a man who has that very thing we all wish to die with – a good name. And this he has achieved without a title, without riches, without any sense of expectation.</p> <p>He is a man whose character can be summed up in four words: integrity, responsibility, dignity and courage. And, when you lift the T-shirt off <i>Men's Health</i> and peel away the six-pack, these are the pillars that define this amazing, all-encompassing, multi-layered brand. It's embedded in the DNA, imprinted on every page of the magazine. No subject is too hard for us to tackle, too difficult for us to confront. Drug addiction, circumcision, fertility, adoption across racial barriers, retrenchment, forced emigration – and how to have smoking hot summer sex, of course (turn to p77 for more on that essential lesson). These are just a few of the subjects that have been put through the <i>Men's Health</i> filter. And we've done it with writing that has inspired, informed and entertained you.</p> <p>It's why you're so loyal to <i>Men's Health</i> – you know it's a force for good. And you want to be good. In fact, you want to be the best. In a South Africa with enough talent and goes to stage an incredibly successful World Cup, but still riddled with corruption and poverty, every guy should aspire to be a <i>Men's Health</i> man. It can only make this amazing country an even better place to live in. Not only for our generation, but the generation of our children.</p> <p>Integrity. Responsibility. Dignity. Courage. These are the pillars that my dad and <i>Men's Health</i> stand for and which I will be taking with me on my next great adventure, and which I will try to pass on to my children.</p> <p>Okay, I was hoping to leave with a six-pack, too. But hey, what's life without a challenge?</p> <p style="text-align: right; font-size: x-small;">RIDWAAN </p> </div> <div style="width: 50%; text-align: center;">  <p style="font-size: small; margin-top: 10px;"><b>"You know that <i>Men's Health</i> is a force for good. And you want to be good. In fact, you want to be the best"</b></p> </div> </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; margin-top: 10px;"> <span style="font-size: x-small;">18 OCTOBER 2010</span> <span style="font-size: x-small;">WWW.MN.CO.ZA </span> </div>	
<p>The October 2010 Editorial is what the headline says – what makes a real man.</p> <p>The Editorial also outline <i>MH's</i> writing as to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inspire</li> <li>• Inform and to</li> <li>• Entertain</li> </ul>	<p>"Which qualities define the ultimate <i>Men's Health</i> man?"</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "dynamic"</li> <li>• "strong"</li> <li>• "balanced"</li> <li>• "stylish"</li> </ul> <p>"... when I think of a true <i>MH</i> man, I think of my dad..."</p>

Editorial October 2010	What Makes a Real Man
<p>The pillars of a true <i>Men's Health</i> man:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Integrity</li> <li>• Responsibility</li> <li>• Dignity</li> <li>• Courage</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "father"</li> <li>• "grandfather"</li> <li>• "devoted husband"</li> <li>• "sacrifices for family"</li> <li>• "trust"</li> <li>• "wish to be with"</li> <li>• "a good name"</li> </ul> <p>The men of <i>MH</i>:</p> <p>"... no subject is too hard for us to tackle ..."</p> <p>"... too difficult for us to confront..."</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "Drug addiction"</li> <li>• "Circumcision"</li> <li>• "Fertility"</li> <li>• "Adoption across racial barriers"</li> <li>• "Retrenchment"</li> <li>• "Forced emigration"</li> </ul> <p>"You know that <i>Men's Health</i> is a force for good. And you want to be good. In fact, you want to be the best."</p>

ADDENDUM Q: MEN'S HEALTH EDITORIAL (NOVEMBER 2010)

Editorial November 2010	Anything We Can Do
<div style="text-align: center; background-color: black; color: white; padding: 5px;">FROM THE EDITORS</div> <h2 style="text-align: center;">Anything We Can Do...</h2> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div style="width: 45%;"> <p><b>S</b>UMMER'S HERE, AT LAST. IT'S almost time to break out the baggies and slip into holiday mode. Almost. We can feel we're on the downhill towards some deserved time off and time away. But rather than let the year slide on by, we agreed to one more challenge...</p> <p>Every month <i>Men's Health</i> challenges you to improve your diet, ramp up your fitness and perform better at everything you do, whether you're at home, in the office or out for the weekend. This month we're showing you how to eat well (p144) and get into shape (p194) for the best summer of your life. But you're not alone. We're in it with you – and to prove it, we're running the <i>Men's Health</i> Staff Six-pack Challenge.</p> <p>For eight weeks, eight <i>MH</i> staffers will bare their chests (and their souls) and walk the walk by subjecting themselves to an intensive training programme and diet plan devised by the Sports Science Institute of South Africa.</p> </div> <div style="width: 45%;"> <p>We'll hit the gym, watch what we eat... basically, we'll do all the things we usually ask you to do.</p> <p>See, we're a lot like you: we've got a fashion guru who wants to lose weight and a night-owl creative director who wants to bulk up; a time-starved dad who wants to get the body he promised himself 10 years ago; a guy who's never set foot in a gym before (clearly he lied at his job interview); a school sports hero who used to be active (but isn't any more) and one weekend warrior who is active, but wants to stay injury-free.</p> <p>Sound familiar?</p> <p>And like you, we have families, demanding social lives and full-time day jobs producing South Africa's biggest men's magazine, so we'll be fitting in our gym sessions around our schedules. Don't be surprised if you bump into one of us while you're out getting fit for the summer...</p> <p>See you out there. THE MEN'S HEALTH TEAM</p> </div> </div> <div style="text-align: center; margin: 20px 0;">  <p><small>The challengers: Andre Valentine, Clinton Jurgens, Alistair Fester, Tudor Caradoc-Davies, Hishaam Solomon, Robert Olliers, Mark van Oijk, Neil Doveton and project manager Althur Jones.</small></p> </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: center;"> <div style="width: 45%;"> <p>24 NOVEMBER 2010</p> </div> <div style="width: 45%; text-align: right;"> <p>WWW.MH.CO.ZA <b>MH</b></p> </div> </div> <div style="position: absolute; top: 20px; right: 20px; width: 25%; border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"> <div style="text-align: center; background-color: red; color: white; border-radius: 50%; width: 30px; height: 30px; margin: 0 auto; display: flex; align-items: center; justify-content: center;"> <span style="font-size: 8px; color: white;">The Men's Health Reader Panel</span> </div> <h3 style="text-align: center;">BECOME PART OF THE CLUB</h3> <p style="font-size: 8px;">We're looking for Men's readers to join our exclusive <i>MH</i> Reader Panel. If selected, you'll get the chance to tell us what you rate and what you hate – from our cover to the women on our mind, the features covered inside – so that you can get more of what you really want in your favourite mag. And on top of getting a better <i>Men's Health</i> each month, you'll also be eligible for prizes and invitations to exclusive <i>MH</i> events. Visit <a href="http://www.mh.co.za">www.mh.co.za</a> and click on the Reader Panel button to sign up.</p> </div> <div style="position: absolute; top: 50px; right: 20px; width: 25%; border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"> <h4 style="text-align: center; background-color: blue; color: white; padding: 2px;">JOIN THE CONVERSATION...</h4> <p style="font-size: 8px;">Want to follow the Six-pack Challenge as it unfolds? Become part of the <i>Men's Health</i> community for insights, updates, downloads and more. Follow us on Twitter @Men'sHealthZA or on our Facebook page at <a href="http://www.facebook.com/MensHealthSA">www.facebook.com/MensHealthSA</a>.</p> </div>	

The Editorial is about summer that is approaching. This Editorial is not written by a specific editor, it is by the *MH* team.

“... This month we’re showing you how to eat well (p144) and get into shape (p194) for the summer of your life ... We’re in it with you – and to prove it, we’re running the *Men’s Health* Staff Six-pack Challenge.”

- “... hit the gym ...”
- “... watch what we eat ...”
- “... we’ll do all the things we usually ask you to do ...”

Who will participate?

- ... “ fashion guru who wants to lose weight ...”

Editorial November 2010	Anything We Can Do
<p>The editorial is comparing <i>MH</i> staff (eight men) “like you” that read <i>MH</i>. Men with</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Families</li> <li>• Demanding social life</li> <li>• Full-time day jobs</li> </ul> <p>“For eight weeks, eight <i>MH</i> staffers will bare their chests (and their souls) by subjecting themselves to an intensive training programme and diet plan devised by the sports Science Institute of South Africa.”</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “... a night-owl creative director who wants to bulk up; ...”</li> <li>• “... a time starved dad who wants to get the body himself 10 years ago; ...”</li> <li>• “...a guy who’s never set foot in a gym before ...”</li> <li>• “... a school sports hero who used to be active ...”</li> <li>• “... one warrior who is active ...”</li> </ul>

ADDENDUM R: MEN'S HEALTH EDITORIAL (DECEMBER 2010)

Editorial December 2010	Just Press Play
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**FROM THE EDITOR**

BY JASON BROWN

## Just Press Play

**T**HE IPAD MADE ME DO IT. SEDUCED by the bright yellow button in the middle of the screen, the decision was pretty much made for me. With just a few taps of the finger a large sum of money had disappeared from my account. The app had sucked it up. Or so it seemed.

A couple of months prior, I had – without hesitation – become an early adopter of the new tablet. I wasn't sure exactly how this newfangled piece of gear would benefit my life, I just knew it would. At first I reasoned it would be perfect for work. Then, when I unwrapped it, I realised it was way too much fun. Once I got past the admin of setting up my credit card for buying books, it was a slippery slope. More apps, and transactions, followed.

With summer holidays coming up, of course I consulted the genie. Research, reviews and shopping across time zones on my couch was all a game. Booking the hotels was the final step. I'd app'd, padded and swallowed the tablet, whole. To this day, I'm proud to say I haven't done a stitch of work on the iPad, it's all been play. I might even take it on holiday.

Understandably, our annual *Tech Guide* is one of what's out there to give you the essential guide, whether you're looking to upgrade or "just browsing". Flip the mag and dive right in. And if you see something you like, it's the perfect time to drop a hint and leave it open at the appropriate page. Or you could enter the compo to win all the top picks of the featured gear. That's right, we're giving away all the best stuff – over R70 000 worth of top tech toys! All you have to do is follow the links at [www.mhtechguide.co.za](http://www.mhtechguide.co.za) and send us your details.

And the rest of the issue isn't too shabby either. Consider it your manual for the beach, whether it's finding the best boardies (p76), beer (p144), summer sex (p98) or the perfect escape (p136) – we've got you covered.

You may remember me from my previous stint as editor of *Men's Health*. Well, it's a pleasure to be back. It's not often you get a second opportunity to be the frontman of such an amazing magazine. I feel like I'm going back to the future to do all the things I didn't get a chance to do the first time. What's exciting me? There's a lot to look forward to...



Firstly, we've got a range of cool, free reader events coming up which will allow you to try out new stuff (cars, food, wine and gear) while mixing with the *MH* team and our experts – look out for the invites from the January issue.

Secondly, we're rolling out our new website with a range of nifty tools and tricks that takes *Men's Health* to a whole new level. We'll keep you posted.

And, of course, we'll be teaming up with the girls at *Women's Health* for double the fun – expect hot parties, exclusive giveaways and unique insight into the minds of women.

We're bringing you the works in 2011 and hope you enjoy the ride. For the moment, sit back, relax and let the water run over your feet – you deserve the break. See you in the new year. Cheers,



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**ON THE MINDS OF MEN**

**WHAT'S THE BEST THING ABOUT SUMMER FOR YOU?**

Pool parties, bikini parties, beach parties, foam parties, Hawaiian parties, basically anywhere the ladies are wearing bikinis. PS: having the smell of freshly-cut grass, turning your gardening duties into a workout and then late afternoon having your well-deserved laps in the pool.  
**Shaun**

Definitely playing club cricket and watching the Proteas.  
**Minoten**

Being able to get at least three hours of surf after work.  
**Leo**

The best thing about summer for me is to have more working out hours.  
**Ikageng**

Beaches, bodies out in the open and loads of great fun! What's not to like?  
**Pieter**

It has to be the morning breeze. There's no pollution and you don't wake up late.  
**Innocent**

Waking up at 5am and jogging for an hour... it just feels good.  
**Bontshi**

Longer days at the beach.  
**Wayne**

Courtesy of the Men's Health facebook page

22 DECEMBER 2010

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This Editorial is about summer and the multi uses of an I Pad. Also about the (new) editor Jason Brown who replaces Ridwaan Bawa.

This issue entails:

- “manual for the beach”
- “best boardies”
- “beer”
- “summer sex”
- “perfect escape”

- “THE IPAD MADE ME DO IT ...”
- “... This new fangled piece of gear would benefit my life ...”
- “... summer holidays” [use the I Pad] for research, reviews and shopping.
- “I haven’t done a stitch of work on the I Pad, it’s all been play”
- “... annual Tech Guide ...”
- “... the best what is out there ...”
- “That’s right; we’re giving away all the best stuff over R7000 worth of top

Editorial December 2010	Just Press Play
	tech toys!” <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• “... rolling out our new website with a range of nifty tools and tricks that takes <i>MH</i> to a whole new level ...”</li></ul>

ADDENDUM S: **MEN'S HEALTH EDITORIAL (JANUARY 2011)**

<b>Editorial January 2011</b>	<b>Fitter. Faster. Better. More!</b>
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FROM THE EDITOR

BY JASON BROWN

## Fitter. Faster. Better. More!

**P**REPARING FOR A RACE ISN'T EASY. First there's finding the right training plan, then getting motivated to get out the door a couple of times a week and sticking to it. Never mind finding the time. Then, pacing is important – knowing when to push, when to rest and finally taper so you're ready... it's almost easier to let it slide. Almost.

In late November I joined the team in Gauteng for the first ever *Men's Health* Urbanathlon. The "urban-athlon" – part fun run, part obstacle course – is a hybrid running event that makes use of the best of what a city has to offer early on a Sunday morning: quiet roads, challenging obstacles, unused buildings and more than a thousand energetic readers. Over 1 300 of you signed up, trained and came down early that day. Some wore superhero outfits, a few ran in cow suits for a good cause, but most lined up at the start with a smile and sense of adventure.

Milling around at the start line 15 minutes before the gun is when it hit me: it's our job to motivate you, but I was the one being inspired.

Every month your letters, Facebook comments and tweets give us a sense of how you're putting the magazine into action, yet here I was *experiencing* it. I came along as part of the support crew, but found that the group energy had the effect of flicking the switch on my own goals. The buzz of the event and looking and feeling that good was infectious.

I made a promise to myself to be at the front of the pack next year, no excuses.

Too often the start of a new year is about total overhaul. For the year ahead, rather than making big, unrealistic promises, how about setting the bar just within reach and each month taking steps towards your goal? It's not about changing everything, but more about getting motivated to push the needle a little further.



In this issue you'll find thousands of small upgrades. Small changes you can make that'll kick-start your plan, whatever your goal. Our 2011 Ver. 1.1 Upgrade Special starts on p114. For those of you who weren't at the Urbanathlon, but are looking for a comeback plan, we interviewed four successful, busy guys in their twenties, thirties, forties, fifties and beyond for their secrets – turn to p130 for your workout plan. We've also introduced a new section in the magazine called "How To Do Everything Better" (p80) with fun and useful tips on everything from playing beach volleyball to growing your own herbs, the rules of tipping to pouring champagne, and then making a perfect toast, of course.

Cheers, here's to you, better than ever.



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18 JANUARY 2011

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M+1

THE BEST ADVICE

**ON FITNESS**  
"Considered the single best builder of strength and explosive speed, if I could do only one exercise, it would be the wide-grip dead lift."  
**Dr Andrew McKune, p116**

**ON HEALTH**  
"If you don't do something about your health and lifestyle, today will be the best day of the rest of your life."  
**Dr Craig Roberts, p118**

**ON NUTRITION**  
"Consume one gram of protein per kilogram of your desired body weight."  
**Megan Pentz-Kluyts, dietician, p121**

**ON MONEY**  
"It's possible the best move to make right now is no move at all. Down markets always come back – eventually."  
**Gregg Swadlow, financial planner, p119**

**ON SEX**  
"If there's one thing you should do for more sex: stop being predictable. Women want spontaneity and playfulness... Oh, and to have sex on the beach!"  
**Amelia Frenkel, The MH Girl Next Door, p42**

**ON RELAXING**  
"Don't commit sparkicide. "Opening champagne with a bang should be reserved for the Formula One podium."  
**Jörg Pfützer, sommelier, p80**

The January Editorial is about the Urbanathlon® (a part fun run and part obstacle course) that took place in Gauteng – over 1 300 readers trained themselves and participated.

The editor, Jason Brown, thanked readers for their participation, enthusiasm and inspiration.

The Editorial is also about the start of a new year.

"In this issue you'll find thousands of

- "... Too often the start of a new year is about total overhaul ..."
- "...small changes ..."
- "... kick-start your plan... "
- "... turn to p130 for your workout plan ..."
- "... a new section in the magazine called 'How To Do Everything Better' (p80) ..."
- "... useful tips ..."
- "... playing beach volleyball ..."
- "... growing your own herbs ..."

Editorial January 2011	Fitter. Faster. Better. More!
<p>small upgrades. Small changes you can make that'll kick start your plan, whatever your goal ... we interviewed four successful busy guys in their twenties, thirties, forties, fifties and beyond their secrets – turn to p 130 for your workout plan ...”</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “... the rules of tipping to pouring champagne ...”</li> <li>• “... making a perfect toast ...”</li> </ul>

ADDENDUM T: MEN'S HEALTH EDITORIAL (FEBRUARY 2011)

Editorial February 2011	Wanna Take a Bet?
<div style="background-color: black; color: white; padding: 5px;"> <p style="margin: 0;"><b>FROM THE EDITOR</b> <span style="float: right; font-size: small;">BY JASON BROWN</span></p> </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: flex-start; padding: 20px;"> <div style="width: 30%;"> <h1 style="margin: 0;">Wanna Take a Bet?</h1> <p style="margin: 0; color: #0070C0;">If 2011 has taken you by surprise, don't panic – here's how to reshape your body, and your bank balance</p> </div> <div style="width: 30%; text-align: center;">  </div> <div style="width: 30%; text-align: center;"> <div style="background-color: black; color: white; padding: 10px; font-size: 2em; margin: 0 auto;">“</div> </div> </div> <div style="margin-top: 20px;"> <p><b>I</b>F YOU'VE EVER TAKEN A BET YOU'LL ENJOY this story.</p> <p>Within the first year of joining <i>Men's Health</i>, way back at the turn of the century, two colleagues challenged me to compile and feature in a workout story. It was about building muscle fast for a gym newbie – something I thought a lot of guys (and the editor) would appreciate. The catch was that I was also expected to model my newfound moves for the accompanying photo spread. A rookie error, I know, but it seemed like a good idea at the time. Thankfully, it's now buried deep in the archives, but it took years to live down. I have since avoided any challenges, dares or bets that involve workouts, abs or anything in front of the camera.</p> <p>So when eight guys on the team signed up for the staff challenge, involving a gruelling eight-week weight-loss programme to appear in the magazine, I smiled like a veteran and wished them luck. "Go for it, fellas, you can do it," I cheered.</p> <p>After their first physical at the hands of the pros at the Sports Science Institute of South Africa, the bravado of the challenge began to fade and I recognised a familiar sense of reality setting in among the troops. No going back – now the hard work begins. No pressure.</p> <p>But a funny thing happened about a month into the programme. The banter increased, the group became focused and outsiders – me included – began to notice their stature change and their confidence grow. They gathered in the kitchen and compared power breakfasts, nodded knowingly at each other around lunchtime and headed out for their middy workout like a hit squad. This wasn't just some office dare: these guys were looking great. It went way beyond any cover lines or promotional copywriting.</p> <p>By week seven, with their bodies on the line, the routines tightened and diets were refined. The last week saw a frenzy of activity and anticipation before the final weigh-in and shoot. But by then, it didn't matter. The results were plain to see.</p> <p>More than just shutting me up, the staff challenge showed just how easy it is to achieve your goals, no matter what your situation or your excuse. In total, they lost more than 36kg between them, but gained something a whole lot more valuable. For the full report back, photographic proof included, turn to page 100 and then go to <a href="http://www.mh.co.za">www.mh.co.za</a> for a full range of easily downloadable workouts and personalised eating plans.</p> <p>For another kind of power, in this issue you'll also find our annual Men's Wealth guide, starting on page 108. From seven key financial milestones to how to buy anything, we show you the best ways to save and spend your money wisely. Now that's a challenge.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Have a great month.</p> <div style="text-align: right; margin-top: 10px;">  </div> </div> <div style="margin-top: 20px; font-size: small;"> <p><b>THE BEST ADVICE...</b> HEALTH Keep your telomeres – tiny caps of DNA that protect your chromosomes from decline – healthy and "the difference corresponds to nine years of ageing." <b>Lynn Cherkas, p86</b></p> <p><b>MIND</b> "You can add 10 or more years to your brain's useful life just by paying some attention to it." <b>Dr Murali Doraiswamy, p97</b></p> <p><b>FINANCE</b> "Knowledge is just the beginning; once you have it, you need to be able to act, to 'do'." <b>Raymond Ackerman, p124</b></p> <p><b>SEX</b> "It's very powerful to admit you did something wrong. Women love that." <b>Diana Kirschner, psychologist, p146</b></p> <p><b>FITNESS</b> "I felt like I wasn't seeing the results I wanted. But I pushed on and suddenly I could see changes were happening, which provides the best kind of motivation!" <b>Clinton Jurgens, six-pack challenger, p100</b></p> <p><b>NUTRITION</b> The secret to cooking the world's most powerful protein? "The simplest method that lets fish taste its best is cooking it whole." <b>Paul Bartolotta, chef, p138</b></p> </div> <div style="margin-top: 10px; font-size: x-small;"> <p>Email: <a href="mailto:telmb@touchline.co.za">telmb@touchline.co.za</a>    Twitter: <a href="https://twitter.com/MensHealthZA">@MensHealthZA</a>    Facebook: <a href="https://www.facebook.com/MensHealthSA">MensHealthSA</a></p> <p>14 FEBRUARY 2011 <span style="float: right;">WWW.MH.CO.ZA </span></p> </div>	<p style="font-size: 1.2em; margin: 0;">If 2011 has taken you by surprise, don't panic – here's how to reshape your body, and your bank balance.</p>
<p>The Editorial is about eight staff members (guys) that took part in a staff challenge over eight (8) weeks (weight-loss programme).</p>	<p>“...But a funny thing happened about a month into the programme ...”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “... the banter increased ...”</li> <li>• “... the group became focused ... and outsiders began to notice their stature</li> </ul>

Editorial February 2011	Wanna Take a Bet?
	<p>change and their confidence grow ...”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “... power breakfasts ...”</li> <li>• “... headed out for their midday workout like a hit squad ...”</li> <li>• “... these guys were looking great ...”</li> <li>• “... It went way beyond any cover lines or promotional copy writing ...”</li> <li>• “... By week seven ... routines tightened ... diets were refined ...”</li> <li>• “... how easy it is to achieve your goals ...”</li> <li>• ... For another kind of power ... find our annual Men’s Wealth guide ...”</li> <li>• “... key financial milestones ...”</li> <li>• “... best ways to save ...”</li> <li>• “... spend your money wisely ...”</li> </ul>

FROM THE EDITOR

BY JASON BROWN

# I Can Do That!

The ability to confidently take on anything is one of the immutable laws of being a man. You really can pull it all off



**THE BEST ADVICE...**

**SEX**  
 What a woman wants? "That feeling that he can't control himself, he's so hot for you."  
 – couples counsellor, Tammy Neilson p154

**HEALTH**  
 "A lot of men go through life totally unconscious of time. If you can identify the gaps in your time, you can invest your time better so you achieve higher returns on it."  
 – financial and time-efficiency columnist, Robert Pagliarini p132

**MOTORING**  
 "In rainy weather, both grip and visibility are reduced, so slow down. If water is pooling on the road, look for tracks of previous cars and follow them as the standing water will have been reduced."  
 – pro-racer and driving instructor, Deon Joubert p120

**MUSCLE**  
 "Initially the body resists [gym training]. But with enough practice the body caves in – in a good way, of course – and you get results that you never thought possible."  
 – personal trainer, Kevin Musikanth p85

**CAREER**  
 In charge at work and need to get in sync with your staff? Bring the muffins. "You'd be surprised how much morale improves with simple gestures like this."  
 – management expert, Robert Sutton p84

**W**HILE I'VE NEVER SEEN THE actual research that states that having lots of friends is healthy for you, I have to believe it's true. One thing I can rely on with my group of mates is blunt honesty, as in "Geez, experimenting with a new hairstyle, fella?" which, while irritating, is refreshing.

But why I really think our regular get-togethers are healthy is because of how positive and confident I feel by the time we say goodbye. It's not surprising: we solve most of the world's problems, share music, recommend restaurants, motivate each other, talk through what's bugging us at work and – let me choose my words carefully here – resolve any pressing relationship issues.

However comfortably deluded about the reality of a situation, we walk away feeling we can overcome anything. I don't think this is limited to my merry band – it's probably a derivative of the same stubborn optimism that's allowed men to conquer mountains and fly to the moon. To achieve greatness on a daily basis, men must be hard-wired to believe that nothing is impossible. Here's what I'm talking about, with some suggestions if needed...

• **We can get abs any time we like.** Whatever shape we're in, we truly believe we're only six weeks away from cover-model, six-pack abs. Of course it's possible (see last month's Staff Six-pack Challenge), but you need a solid plan. Pull out the free metabolism-boosting workout poster on p99 and you'll start shredding fat, fast.

• **We're all naturally gifted drivers.** I've never met a man who didn't consider his driving skills on the verge of semi-pro. In fact, operating anything with an engine, from a motor boat to a chainsaw, falls within our innate expert abilities. Thanks to *Top Gear*, any one of us can drift a super car. To justify your status, brush up on your skills or browse our selection of the best cars for 2011, go directly to p120.

• **All the best chefs are men.** No reason that can't be me, I've watched every Jamie Oliver, I hear you say. Besides, given half a chance most of us would throw everything on the grill, which always works. For something a little more impressive, we've got 47 of the best half-time snacks you can pull together chop-chop, p146.

• **Don Juan, that's me.** We're going to assume that most sex stories can be divided by 10, but that's okay because sexual prowess is not something that's going to be challenged – that goes against the guy code. Because you probably have a black belt in horizontal fitness, you might want to skip right past p154, with detailed instructions on what she really wants. Nothing to see there.

There you have it: proof you don't need to read anything else. If I've left something out, I'm sure I'll hear about it at our next meeting.

Have a great month.

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16 MARCH 2011

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	<p>The ability to confidently take on anything is one of the immutable laws of being a man. You can really pull it all of.</p>
<p>The Editorial is about having friends and the importance of friendship.</p> <p>“...To achieve greatness on a daily basis, men must be hard-wired to believe that nothing is impossible ...”</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “... We can get abs any time we like ...”</li> <li>• “... Of course it's possible ...”</li> <li>• “... but you need a solid plan ...”</li> <li>• “... I've never met a man who didn't consider his driving skills on the verge of a semi-pro ...”</li> </ul>

Editorial March 2011	I Can Do That!
<p>The editorial is written by having four bullet discussions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We can get abs any time we like.</li> <li>• We're all naturally gifted drivers.</li> <li>• All the best chefs are men.</li> <li>• Don Juan, that's me.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "In fact operating anything with an engine, from a motor boat to a chainsaw, falls within our innate expert abilities ..."</li> <li>• "... Besides given half a chance most of us would throw everything on the grill, which always works ..."</li> <li>• "... sexual prowess is not something that is something that is being challenged – that goes against the guy code ..."</li> <li>• "... you probably have a black belt in horizontal fitness ..."</li> <li>• "... with detailed instructions on what she really wants ..."</li> </ul>

**ADDENDUM V: MEN'S HEALTH EDITORIAL (APRIL 2011)**

<b>Editorial April 2011</b>	<b>You, and Improved</b>
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**FROM THE EDITOR**
BY JASON BROWN

# You, and Improved

As summer slowly winds down, why not use this time to recharge your comeback plan. Looking for an excuse to get started? Here's how.



**“W**HAT, APRIL ALREADY?” I hear you say. It's okay, don't stress – we've declared April the new January. We get it, the year started too quickly and ever since you got back to the office it's been go-go-go. You literally haven't had a moment to consider the goals you set yourself by the end of Jan. No worries, we've got your back.

In golf it's called a "mulligan" – a free hit, a chance to have another go. Here's why April offers the perfect opportunity to take another swing: it's an in-between month. Summer's on the way out and things are beginning to slow down. Which makes it a great time to recharge and reset the clock before winter gets its grip. The plan:

- **STEP 1** Commit: Go directly to the Belly Off Club on page 56. It's one of the most successful sections in the magazine because it makes your goals seem achievable. There's nothing like reading a real-life success story for inspiration. At some point each one of these guys decided enough was enough and got going. It's a brave statement of intent: I'm not at my best, it's a problem and today is the last day doing nothing. No more putting it off, start today and you'll begin to see results in two weeks.

Let me know how you get along and we'll check in same time next month. Enjoy!



**THE BEST ADVICE... FITNESS**  
*"No matter who you are or how fit you are, you're an athlete – and the sooner you think of yourself that way, the better."*  
 – Sharks biokineticist Jimmy Wright, p126

**SEX**  
 Want to try something new in bed? "Don't just spring a new position on her. Women need time to process. She wants to feel included." That means planting the idea before you two hit the sheets.  
 – Author Jeffrey Bernstein, p118

**FOOD**  
*"There isn't anything hotter than a guy who cooks. And if you cook together, even better. There's teamwork. There's chemistry. And that's where things heat up."*  
 – Extreme chef and passionate foodie Jenna May Viney, p104

**HEALTH**  
 Prevent accidents with music. "If you choose the right music when you're driving, it can stimulate you enough to hold your interest, and keep you conscious, aware and awake."  
 – Psychology professor Daniel Levitin, p90

**WEALTH**  
 A quick way to save cash: ditch the plastic! "Studies show that buying something with a credit card doesn't register with your brain the way it does when you pay cash."  
 – Professor of organisational behaviour Chip Heath, p86

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**Win a Tailor-Made Suit!**  
 Always wanted a bespoke suit? Four lucky readers will not only win a suit from Frank Bespoke, but also be featured in a Men's Health fashion shoot! Enter at [www.mh.co.za/stylechallenge](http://www.mh.co.za/stylechallenge)



22 APRIL 2011
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	<p>As summer slowly winds down, why not use this time to recharge your comeback plan. Looking for an excuse to get started? Here's how.</p>
<p>This Editorial is about April when:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “summer’s on the way out and things are beginning to slow down ...”</li> <li>• “... we’ve declared April the new</li> </ul>	<p><b>Step 1 Commit</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “... Go directly to the Belly Off Club on page 56 ...”</li> <li>• “... reading a real-life success story</li> </ul>

Editorial April 2011	You, and Improved
<p>January ...”</p> <p>If as a man you had no time to consider the goals you set for yourself in January, one does not have to worry – <i>MH</i> is covering “your back”.</p> <p>Getting back to your goals is compared with a ‘mulligan’ in golf:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “... a free hit ...”</li> <li>• “... a chance to have another go ...”</li> <li>• “... to take another swing ...”</li> </ul> <p>The month of April is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “... great time to recharge ...”</li> <li>• “... reset the clock ...”</li> </ul> <p>The Editorial is divided into three steps as paragraphs.</p>	<p>for inspiration ...”</p> <p><b>Step 2 Meet your Trainer</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “... Sharks rugby legend Stefan Terblanche ... his workout and pep talk start on page 126 ...”</li> </ul> <p><b>Step 3 Reward Yourself</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “... look your best with the Guide to Style ...”</li> <li>• “... winter wardrobe essentials, to dress slimmer and sharper ...”</li> <li>• “... best products for your skin, hair and body ...”</li> </ul>

**ADDENDUM W: MEN'S HEALTH EDITORIAL (MAY 2011)**

<b>Editorial May 2011</b>	<b>A Test of Manhood</b>
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**FROM THE EDITOR** BY JASON BROWN

# A Test of Manhood

How much of a challenge do you really need to balance your daily routine?



**A** COUPLE OF YEARS AGO I MET A WRITER who was convinced that modern men were turning soft. He argued that we were losing touch with the basic skills men need to navigate their way through the world. He looked to his two sons growing up in front of screens and worried that they were becoming more equipped to deal with cyber life than real life. So he decided to test his theory by going to the extreme and living like Hemingway – taking on big game fishing, running with the bulls and seeking adventure. This, he thought, would settle whether he should be passing on more basic life skills to his sons and fellow men, or just bite his tongue and learn about Twitter.

After growing a beard, travelling across three continents, reeling in a very big fish, living rough and shooting an antelope, he realised that while we may need a few rites of passage, not everyone was cut out to be the famous adventurer.

This story fascinated me though. On some level, I think we do need to challenge ourselves beyond the daily grind, both physically and mentally. Not in the cliched, macho sense, but in a more basic way that balances the desk/couch-driven routine to which most people succumb (not you, of course).

These thoughts gave rise to the Hardcore Issue – maybe an overstatement, but you'll forgive us for trying to make a point. This month we bring together some pretty tough stories, profiles, skills and advice to show you exactly what we mean.

Dive straight into the issue with "Fight Night" (p108), a gritty report on the state of Mixed Martial Arts (MMA) and its emergence as a recognised sport. Think you're tough enough to make it through a

minute of fighting in the octagon? Meet the average guys who step into the cage every week to test themselves. We attended the fights, spoke to the experts and this month's poster will get you fighting fit without the full contact.

If paper cuts, blown tyres and a brush with the law are a more likely scenario, then switch channels to "How To Survive Anything" (p118), a classic A-Z manual for sidestepping life's more pedestrian potholes.

Ask any man which health test he fears most and he will mostly likely point downwards. Prostate cancer remains one of the biggest (yet preventable) health threats for men. "I Want My Prostate Back" (p124) is one man's journey that should be required reading for all.

As the disaster in Japan unfolded, the final draft of "A Dangerous Way To Make a Living" (p136) was submitted by intrepid writer Alex Eliseev. We commissioned Alex to profile some of the country's bravest men as they go about their stressful jobs, not knowing that he could be counted among them. Committed, calm and utterly fearless, these men put their lives on the line in the service of others. Now that's hard. Read the fascinating profiles and re-examine your own stress levels.

Then, as a mid-year treat, we've included a 10-page winter Gear Guide (p96) with the most useful stuff for your next great adventure.

The rest is up to you. Have a great month.



**THE BEST ADVICE...**  
**SEX**  
*"Becoming sexual too early overwhelms good decision making and keeps couples in a relationship that might not be the best for them in the long run."*  
 – Sex researcher Dr Dean M Busby, p32

**FITNESS**  
*"Eighty percent of the fight lies in the conditioning."*  
 – Mixed Martial Arts coach Morne Swanepeel, p108

**HEALTH**  
*"Patients live a long time after treatment and many die with, rather than from, prostate cancer. It's critical that they participate in shared decision making with their physicians so they don't come out of the process with regret."*  
 – Professor of urology Dr John Gore, p124

**RELATIONSHIPS**  
*"Even if you're just scheduling a night in a nearby hotel, you need to find someplace to reconnect where there are no BlackBerries."*  
 – Actress Katheryn Winnick, p154

**TRAINING**  
*"Blood pressure and cholesterol are used as predictors of potential disease, whereas fitness is a predictor of health. Utilising the information from the VO<sub>2</sub> max test you can identify the most appropriate training intensity and type of training for you specifically."*  
 – Biokineticist Andries Lodder, p75

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<p>How much of a challenge do you really need to balance your daily routine?</p>	<p>How much of a challenge do you really need to balance your daily routine?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "... Dive straight into the issue ..."</li> <li>• "... Fight Night (p108), a gritty report on the state of Mixed Martial arts (MMA) ..."</li> <li>• "... Meet the average guys, who step into the cage ..."</li> <li>• "... this month's poster will get you fighting fit without the full contact ..."</li> <li>• "...How to Survive Anything (p118), a</li> </ul>
<p>This Editorial is about the question if "... modern men were turning soft" and that not all men are adventurers.</p> <p>"...This month we bring together some pretty tough stories, profiles, skills and advice to show you exactly what we mean..."</p>	<p>This Editorial is about the question if "... modern men were turning soft" and that not all men are adventurers.</p> <p>"...This month we bring together some pretty tough stories, profiles, skills and advice to show you exactly what we mean..."</p>

Editorial May 2011	A Test of Manhood
	<p>classic A-Z manual for sidestepping life's more pedestrian potholes ...”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “... Prostate cancer remains one of the biggest (yet preventable) health threats for men. ‘I want my Prostate Back’ (p124) is one man’s journey that should be required reading for all ... “</li> <li>• “... As the disaster in Japan unfolded, the final draft of ‘A dangerous Way To Make a Living’ (p136) ... some of the country’s bravest men as they go about their stressful jobs, ... Committed, calm and utterly fearless, these men put their lives on the line in the service of others ...”</li> </ul>

ADDENDUM X: **MEN'S HEALTH EDITORIAL (JUNE 2011)**

Editorial, June 2011	Food for Thought
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FROM THE EDITOR

BY JASON BROWN

# Food for Thought

Learn the secrets of living well, and create a space that you – and your mates – can enjoy

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HERE'S A FOOD REVOLUTION GOING ON. It's been said that for a lot of men the kitchen is the new garage. While the garage was where our fathers went to vent their frustrations or get creative, our generation is happier making the kitchen a place of experimentation.

Food is no longer just fuel and we're no longer content to just consume. Thanks to all those cocky TV chefs, we're now all kitchen cowboys with an appetite for chopping, roasting and tasting our way through Jamie's favourites. The fact that taking over the kitchen also gives us an opportunity to invest in expensive, shiny knives and large coffee machines is just a bonus.

Take my efforts at making Beef Bourguignon for a casual Saturday dinner with friends. There's a movie about it, hundreds of recipes on the Internet and I even caught a rerun of Floyd cooking it on TV. How difficult could it be? After all, it's only beef cubes and red wine, right?

Well, we ended up eating at 11pm around the kitchen counter, but I marked it down as a success. Which is, according to my girlfriend, more than can be said for my entertaining skills. One thing at time.

Still, we're breaking ground here. So now that the stereotype of bachelors heating baked beans on toast is fading, what are your options? We turned to our experts.

In this issue you get an extra dollop of food and entertainment to ensure you really are master of your domain. In "Stop Looking, Start Cooking" on p164 we asked five of the country's top chefs to reinvent classic guy food guaranteed to make you an instant expert, complete instructions included.



Then, in our annual *Men's Health* Living bonus section we give you the tools to "Seduce Her With Your Style" (p110), introduce you to a few guys who share their tips on upgrading your place ("My Space" p122) and even "How Your House Can Make You a Better Man" (p117).

For those of you who're just looking to have a few people over, go straight to "House Party" (p128), the modern man's guide to throwing the perfect party. It's your no-fuss manual for entertaining like a pro – right down to the DJ mix.

Finally, to keep you ahead of your fitness goals this winter, we've got two amazing workouts. Take your pick from either the no-weights, body-weight training plan on p136, which will take your training outdoors (as used by our cover model Mike Fitch); or train your inner athlete with our exclusive Rugby Sevens routine (on p163). As demonstrated by Springbok Sevens captain Kyle Brown, it's guaranteed to make you faster and stronger – just in time for the final leg of the IRB World Sevens Series. Go Blitzbokke!

Have a great month.



PS. Go digital with *Men's Health*, now available on iPad, Mac or PC! Go to [www.mh.co.za/zinio](http://www.mh.co.za/zinio)

**“**

**THE BEST ADVICE... HEALTH**  
*"Exercise, over time, will decrease snoring. It also increases sleep quality and produces deeper sleep."*  
– Sleep expert Dr W Christopher Winter, p92

**WEALTH**  
*"Research shows that the more often you look at your investments, the less likely you are to stick to your long-term plan as it becomes too easy to focus on the short-term volatility."*  
– Financial coach Gregg Sneddon, p154

**FITNESS**  
*"The longer you train, the more kilojoules you burn. The first set of an exercise turns on the hormones that control your metabolism, and additional sets don't seem to increase that process."*  
– Assistant professor of exercise physiology Dr Erik Kirk, p42

**GUY WISDOM**  
*"It's a matter of having the dream and the goal in mind, and then doing all the smaller, practical steps to make sure it happens. You need to combine long-term innovation and vision with detailed, focused short-term steps."*  
– Springbok Sevens coach Paul Treu, p158

**TRAINING**  
*"The success of a workout programme may be dependent simply upon how much you enjoy your workouts, and the monotony of going to the gym can kill your motivation."*  
– *Men's Health* cover guy Mike Fitch, p136

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24 JUNE 2011

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Learn the secrets of living well, and create a space that you – and your mates – can enjoy

- This Editorial elaborates on how for a lot of men the kitchen is the new garage.
- This editorial covers:
- Food
  - Style "Seduce Her With Your Style" (p110)
  - "Still, we're breaking ground here. So now that the stereotype of bachelors heating baked beans on toast is fading, what are your options?"
  - "In 'Stop Looking, Start Cooking' on p164 we asked five of the country's top chefs to reinvent classic guy food

Editorial, June 2011	Food for Thought
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Place you stay “How Your House Can Make You a Better Man” (p117)</li> <li>• Party “House Party” p128</li> <li>• Fitness/Workouts “ ... no-weights, body weight training plan on p136 ...”</li> </ul>	<p>to make you an instant expert, complete instructions included”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Food is no longer just fuel and we’re no longer content to just consume ...”</li> <li>• “... annual <i>Men’s Health</i> Living bonus section we give you the tools to ‘Seduce Her With Your Style ‘ (p110)</li> </ul>

ADDENDUM Y: MEN'S HEALTH FLIP COVER PAGE (OCTOBER 2010)

Flip cover page	October 2010
	
<p>The flip cover page is <i>Men's Health</i> Style guide with Nico Panagio, actor and television host, dressed in a suit sitting on a leather chair.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The mast head of the flip cover page is GUIDE TO STYLE. 'GUIDE TO' is printed in white on brown on the top line of the letter T. 'STYLE' itself is done so big it contains the top quarter of the page. This is done in a dark brown and matches the colour of Panagio's tie and the leather chair he is sitting on.</li><li>• The main headline on the front page 'screams' in capital letters – 'THE NEW RULES FOR MEN'</li></ul>

<b>Flip cover page</b>	<b>October 2010</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Nico Panagio's 5 Tips for looking great every day centred in the left corner of the cover page</li><li>• Wear This, Not That 50 Instant Style Upgrades</li><li>• The Perfect Suit – To fit you – And your budget</li></ul>

ADDENDUM Z: MEN'S HEALTH FLIP COVER PAGE (DECEMBER 2010)

Flip cover page	December 2010
<p>The flip cover page is <i>Men's Health</i> Tech Guide 2010 with Olympian athlete, Tanith Belbin, topless (nothing to see) on a white couch in black underwear. The page is laid out horizontally.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The masthead of the flip cover page is <i>Men's Health</i> (in read) and on the left side of the page it says 'TECH guide 2010'</li> <li>• On the right hand side of the mast head in black on yellow (boy) is a yellow block 'WIN R70 000 OF TECH1 CAMERA CAMCORDER, HI-FI SMARTPHONE, 3D TV ROBO-CLEANER!'</li> <li>• Under the Tanith Belbin' s name "one of the hottest Olympic athletes test-drives this year's hottest tech'</li> <li>• Tanith Belbin looks at the viewer and holds a set of ear phones in her right hand –which drops to the floor</li> <li>• "TESTED, TALLIED, RIDDEN,</li> </ul>

Flip cover page	December 2010
	<p>REDLINED, AND RANKED ... THE 75 BEST NEW PRODUCTS FOR MEN” (in red capital letters)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ‘UPGRADE YOUR HOME THEATRE – in Five Minutes Flat!”</li> <li>• Underneath the couch across the page is four teasers:</li> <li>• ESSENTIAL BUSINESS COMBO</li> <li>• THE CELL PHONE OF THE FUTURE</li> <li>• 9 IDIOT PROOF CAMERAS</li> <li>• YOUR HOLIDAY SHOPPING – DONE! See page 32</li> <li>• At the bottom of the page (under the couch) “SMART SPLURGES TO MAKE RIGHT NOW” and separated with a short thick black vertical line ‘EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO DIRECT YOUR OWN HIGH-DEF MOVIE*”</li> <li>• In the right hand corner of the vertical page “*Naked girl not included”</li> </ul>

ADDENDUM AA: MEN'S HEALTH FLIP COVER PAGE (APRIL 2011)

Flip Cover page	April 2011
	
<p>The flip cover page is <i>Men's Health</i> guide to 'STYLE' Winter 2011. The background of the page is black. The mast head of the flip cover is in big bold white letters 'STYLE' on a black background. The model (nameless) is dressed in a black buttoned shirt and black (unbuttoned) jacket, wearing a jean with a black belt. The model's face is groomed with make-up on his face, and lips. His eyebrows are styled neatly. His hair is short, but not framed in lines. The</p>	<p>On the left hand side of the page it is white on black teasers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 7 NEW RULES OF SUIT COOL (bold white on black)</li><li>• LAYER UP WITH THE PERFECT JACKET (normal white on black)</li><li>• 21 CASUAL COMBOS FOR ANY OCCASION (bold white on black)</li><li>• THE RIGHT SHOES TO WEAR WITH EVERYTHING (normal white on black)</li></ul>

Flip Cover page	April 2011
<p>picture is framed over the page and cut off just underneath the belt.</p>	<p>In the left hand corner of the page:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Win! A TAILOR-MADE SUIT AND MEN'S HEALTH FASHION SHOOT p40 (Win! And p40 is bold white)</li> </ul> <p>On the right hand of the page (between thick orange lines almost framed as inverted commas) in thick bold orange letters:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "Red / Hot! / Right / Now!</li> <li>• ESSENTIAL WINTER / FASHION UPGRADES (in 48 point to the right hand bottom of the page; 27 in bold white and 72 point).</li> </ul>