

CHAPTER 4: HIV-AIDS AND THE MASCULINE, FEMININE IDENTITY AS DEPICTED IN *UNLUCKY IN LOVE* (2005) AND *THE HAUNTED TRAIL* (2006)

In the previous chapter I looked, in more detail, at some of the ways in which identities become destabilized in crisis situations leading to destabilised forms as represented in the text *The Haunted Trail* (2006) and how society deals with contagious bodies in their midst. It was established that everyone is afraid of contamination from and having HIV meant living with constant feelings of shame, fear and weakened sense of the self. This chapter seeks to establish the association between HIV infection and gender identities in the texts *Unlucky in Love* and *The Haunted Trail*. Masculine and feminine identities can be seen to be gender identities that exist as oppositional categories with the feminine identity as the subordinated and the masculine identity being the dominant of the two. Ouzgane and Morell (2005) are of the opinion that Masculinity and femininity can exist only as each other's opposites. While women's subordination to men increases their risk of HIV infection as they are unable to negotiate safer methods of protection, researchers such as Peacock et al. (2009) draw attention to the fact that men also suffer from harmful gender norms demanded by the masculine identity as manhood requires that men behave in ways that heighten their risk of HIV infection. Contrast between the worlds of masculinity and femininity, and in particular on a 'double standard' of sexual reputation behaviour that made men successfully masculine or real men, caused women to lose their reputation—to be seen as looser promiscuous. This is a reputation that can be seen being policed just as forcefully by women as by men. Men's acceptance of the masculinity of the male body is markedly different from women's distancing of their femininity from their bodies (Holland, et al, 2002).

Connell (2000) defines masculinity as patterns of social practices associated with the position of men in society's set of gender relations. Another definition by Connell (1995) defines hegemonic masculinity as the culturally exalted form of masculinity. Research has shown that there are multiple masculinities that are present in society and the hierarchies' present evidence that the most domineering form of masculinity as postulated by Connell (ibid) is what has come to be known as hegemonic masculinity. Boateng (2007) elaborates that masculinity is fluid and diverse across different times and contexts and is mediated by factors such as socio-economic position, race, religion, age and geographic location making it appropriate to refer to these as 'masculinities' because they are so many forms available in different societies. Female gender roles narrow the possibilities for women to protect themselves as it can be seen to have been constructed from positions of inferiority to the masculine identity. On the other hand the construction of masculine identity in society has been said to perpetuate the general spread of HIV through the patriarchal ideology that has invested a lot of power in men. The spreading of HIV/AIDS has a gendered dimension (Soderstrom, 2006). Soderstrom, (2006) defines gender identity as our perception of the self as psychologically female or male. Gender relations shape the world of men and women. These gender relations are important in our understanding of the actions of men and women as well as to enable us to understand why women are more seriously affected by HIV than men. The shapes that are representative of feminine and masculine identities in today's society have shown that women's social roles are set on unequal footing to men's.

Wilton (1994) commented:

... unequal relations of power between women and men are not simply of academic interest. In the context of HIV/AIDS they are literally life or death issues, for men as well as for women' Tamsin Wilton (1994).

Femininity constitutes an unsafe sexual identity in that it is a subordinate identity that is built and constructed around men's powerful position in a patriarchal system. Conventionally feminine behaviour puts women at risk because they are not supposed to initiate anything of value as well as the fact that they are supposed to be docile and subservient to men and basically a tabula rasa when issues of sexuality are mentioned. Peacock *et al.* (2009) note that to be feminine is to appear sexually unknowing, to aspire to a relationship, to let sex 'happen', to trust to love, and to make men happy. They further note that safer sex is not just a question of using protection, avoiding penetration, or being chaste, it brings questions of power, trust and female agency into sexual relationships. In essence discussions on gender and HIV bring us straight to the issue of sexuality and power and in most cases the feminine identity can be said to be powerless thus leading to more chances of women being infected with HIV.

Women accommodate illness and men view illness of any kind as a weakness to the identities that they are immortal and stronger than any illness (Green & Pope, 1999). Peacock *et al.* (2009:120) also buttress the view that studies repeatedly show that men who adhere to rigid notions of manhood, who equate masculinity with risk-taking, dominance and sexual conquest, and who view health seeking behaviours as a sign of weakness experienced a range of poor health outcomes. In this vein it becomes difficult to protect the individual and their sexual partners because the men will be busy trying to adhere to the dictates of the masculine identity at the expense of safe behaviours. Larkin *et al.* (2006) is of the opinion that young people tend to overlook the fact that unhealthy attitudes and behaviours on the part of males, as reflected by men in society affect both them and their female partners. As a result one can note that toxic masculinity becomes a danger not only to the person practising it but to the whole community and society. The competition amongst males to demonstrate sexual

prowess exceeds their fear of HIV infection, demonstrating that risky behaviour is indeed a hallmark of masculinity and this puts the feminine identity at risk because it is an identity that is interdependent on the power of the masculine identity. Travers & Bennett (1996) are of the opinion that women become the passive receivers of male sexuality and men's sexual attention.

Soderstrom (2006), men and women are supposed to have different abilities and characteristics where the female is considered caring, nursing and sensitive while the male is connected to ambition, rationality and self-reliance. Sexually there are also identities that mark the identities of women in which a woman is placed either as a Madonna (good) or a whore (bad). In most cases men are not negatively marked by sexual identities as much as women even though their sexual behaviour warrants negativity. Soderstrom (2006) contends that sexual behaviours decides which of these roles the woman sides with and her sexual conduct is judged by men and marked negatively by men. This limits her and deprives her of power and control within sexual relationships because most women feel that they have to conform to the dictates of those identities that men have carved out for them. Historically, marriage for women meant they became defined by their relationship to their husband, their children whereas marriages for men meant they had someone to take care of the home and the children but they are not seen to be defined by it. Men's identities are not defined by marriages.

In most cases women lack the financial means to cater for the lifestyles that they desire. For most women they seek out relationships that are not conducive for self-development because of the need for financial support. They end up involved in relationships that expose them to HIV. Sexually active women who were engaged in sexual relationships because they received gifts or money expose women to danger of infection and exploitation (UNAIDS 2001:32). The situation where

women have limited economic resources puts them in the situation where they engage in relationships in order to obtain money or other gifts. In the texts *The Haunted Trail* and *Unlucky in Love* one can note that the women in the text are can be seen to be attracted by the gifts and money that their sexual partners are able to offer. These monetary attractions can be seen to be creating spaces where women's dependency on men is seen to be working against them in positioning them in spaces where they are quick to accept subordinate positions in a relationship further endangering their lives to HIV.

Femininity on the other hand is constructed in dialectical opposition to masculinity and is associated with subordination, docility and emotionality. Modern Western feminist history is split into three time periods, or 'waves', each with slightly different aims based on prior progress. First wave feminist movement of the years up to the 1960s focused on overturning legal inequalities, particularly women's suffrage. Perhaps the most cited feminist writer of the time was Mary Wollstonecraft characterized as the first feminist philosopher in her book, *A Vindication of the Rights of Women* (1792), which is one of the first works that can unambiguously be called feminist, albeit in it, she is focusing on the women of the nobility, the elite of society (coddled, fragile, and in danger of intellectual and moral sloth) ideas that can now be viewed by postmodernist as outdated but they created the platform from where women were prepared to stand up and remove the shackles and manacles that had seen them relegated to the periphery of society. Wollstonecraft (1792) identified the education and upbringing of women as creating their limited expectations based on a self-image dictated by the male gaze. Second wave feminism (1960s-1980s) broadened the debate to include cultural inequalities, gender norms, and the role of women in society. The ideas and efforts of this era continue to coexist with third wave feminism. The movement encouraged women to understand aspects of their personal lives as deeply politicized and reflective of a sexist power structure through

what came to be known as hegemonic masculinity. Third-wave feminism began in the early (1990s–2000s) in response to what young women perceived as failures of the second-wave. It also responds to the backlash against the second-wave's initiatives and movements. It sought to challenge or avoid second-wave "essentialist" definitions of femininity, which over-emphasized the experiences of white, upper middle class women. Freedman (1992) argues it is noted that a post-structuralist interpretation of gender and sexuality, or an understanding of gender as outside binary maleness and femaleness, is central too much of the third wave's ideology. Feminist leaders of colour who are mostly black women, called for a new subjectivity in feminist voice. They wanted prominent feminist thought to consider race-related subjectivities. Cleonora Hudson-Weems' *Africana womanism* arose from a nationalist *Africana* studies concept. In *Africana Womanism: Reclaiming ourselves* (1995), Hudson-Weems explores the limitations of feminist theory and explains the ideas and activism of different African women who have contributed to womanist theory. At its core, *Africana womanism* rejects feminism because it is set up in a way as to promote the issues of white women over the issues of Black women. Hudson-Weems argues that feminism will never be right for black women due to the implications of slavery and prejudice. She further asserts that the relationship between a Black man and a Black woman is significantly different from the relationship between a White man and a White woman, because the white woman battles the white man who is subjugating her, but the black women battles all oppressive forces that subjugate her including the white woman, culture and the black man. She further asserts that racism forced African-American men and African-American women to assume unconventional gender roles. In the African perspective the colonial experience introduced new methods of disempowering women from the western concepts. In this context, the desire of mainstream feminism to dismantle traditional gender roles becomes inapplicable to the black experience. Unlike womanism, *Africana*

womanism is an ideology designed specifically with women of African descent in mind. It is grounded in African culture and focuses on the unique struggles, needs, and desires of African women. Based on this reasoning, Africana Womanism posits race and class based oppression as far more significant as gender- based oppression. Weems refutes Africana womanism as an addendum to feminism, and asserts that her ideology differs from Black feminism, Walker's womanism, and African womanism.

Lerner (1986) is of the view that men and women are biologically different, but that the values and implications based on that difference are the result of different cultures. Lerner (1986) goes on to note that differences that are discernible between men-as-a-group and women-as-a-group are the result of the particular history of women, which she notes to be essentially different from the history of men and can be attributable to the subordination of women to men. The most influential work was Ortner's 1974 essay, in which she persuasively argued that in every known society women are identified as being closer to nature than to culture. Ortner (1974) posits that women took their current gender identities due to the fact that their bodies' functions place them closer to social roles that are considered of a lower status compared to men's.

Chodorow (1978) postulates that in order to find their identity, boys develop themselves as other-than the- mother; they identify with the father and turn away from emotional expression toward action in the world. She further notes, 'Boys come to define themselves as more separate and distinct' Chodorow (1978). Freud saw the origin of male aggressiveness and competitiveness in the oedipal rivalry of father and son for the love of the mother. Lerner (1986) notes that women themselves became a resource, acquired by men much as the land was acquired by men. Women were exchanged or bought and the first gender-defined social role for women was to be 'those' who were

exchanged in marriage transactions and men defined the terms of exchange. Lerner (ibid) goes on to note that the gender-defined role of warrior led men to acquire power over men and women of conquered tribes. In the texts *Unlucky in Love* and *The Haunted Trail* one can note that marriage for the women becomes an act of loss of power and independence. Marriages comes in to destabilise feminine identities and in most cases one can note that option for women are closed whist for men they can chose to terminate of continue with their relationships once their HIV status have confirmed them to be positive or not.

Whitehead and Barrett (2001) in their definition of masculinity, state that masculinities are those behaviours, languages and practices existing in specific cultural and organizational locations, which are commonly associated with males. It should be noted that masculine identities reflect social and cultural expectations of male behaviour rather than biology. Connell (2005) deals with the relation between the male body and masculinity. She goes on to describes how true masculinity is always perceived as something which stems from men's bodies and that true masculinity is engraved in the male body or expresses something in regards to that body. Connell is of the opinion that the sociological task of understanding masculinity starts with understanding the male body and its relation to masculinity and gender. In most cases the male body is abused so as to make it conform to the dictates of the masculine ideals that society has endowed on men. There are different forms of masculinities and Connell (1995) identified a hierarchy of masculinities in which the dominant forms comprises of dominance, authoritativeness, aggression, male honour, competitive behaviour, bravery, and rationality are more prevalent and dominant in most societies. Connell (ibid) argues that the ideology of patriarchy legitimizes violence towards women and subordinated forms of masculinity as a result of the hegemonic masculinity's superiority over them. Furthermore,

violence is a male institute which usually functions between men and in recent times has become directed at women. Violence of minority men is the rebellion of masculinities which were marginalized by hegemonic masculinity. Violence is, according to Connell (2005), a part of the system of domination, but it is also a sign of the system's weakness, for it would not have to resort to intimidation if its legitimacy was not questionable. In most cases violence against women has resulted in rape and physical torture and these can be seen to be represented by the characters in the texts.

Toxic masculinity is one of the ways in which patriarchy is harmful to men. It is the socially-gender roles constructed attitudes that describe the masculine as violent, unemotional, and sexually aggressive that has led to more harm than good in masculine identities in the context of HIV. There is the perception that a man is born to be in charge (Silberschmidt, 2004). These perceptions have hindered women's efforts at negotiating for safer methods to protect themselves in cases where they fear that their spouses philandering tendencies might be harmful to their persons. Women are actually more likely to suffer from depression looking at their gender identities which have been constructed from subordinate positions and have rendered them powerless and more male defined in most cases. Women are more likely to seek help when in crisis situation and when they encounter trouble or problems. Connell (2005) blames the stereotypical forms of masculinity: men in control, men the invincible and men the immortal which lead to men not seeking help leading to them taking their own lives instead of facing problems head-on and seeking help first. We do operate in a culture where men, by and large, talk about their feelings less. They are self-conscious about talking about weakness or expressing their feelings and this has come to be accepted as the standard measure of masculine identity in most societies. The rules of masculinity prevent men from asking for help or talking about feelings and one can note that the male characters in the two texts either do not

discuss their feelings about being diagnosed with HIV or just plain refusal to accept that they are responsible for spreading this virus to those that they claim to love. As a coping strategy one can see a high prevalence in men who abuse alcohol or drugs in order to block feelings or hide feelings and it becomes a cycle where we note identities of men who have these lifestyles where drinking beer and being drunk all the time becomes an identity that in recent times women have also copied as a coping strategy. The man is always out all hours and one can note that their masculine identity has had an incremental value in how they formulate coping strategies in dealing with crisis situations in a context where HIV has become a reality to most families.

In most cases, the masculine identity has been constructed on the basis of men the provider and it can be seen that both male and female characters in the text *Unlucky in Love* and *The Haunted Trail* experience poverty at some point but it is men who are more likely to kill themselves if they are poor. Male characters can be seen to be more afraid of poverty than HIV in *Unlucky in Love* and in *The Haunted Trail* one can note that fear of losing financial properties led to the decision by the character, Michael Denga, to end his life. For men the act of acquisition has been a historical phenomenon of male power and virility and the act of losing those acquisitions becomes unbearable because it threatens to unsettle their sense of self based on material goods.

A true man should be able to handle more than one partner. This fact has been accepted by a lot of people in society. In our African society polygamy is an accepted thing and a man can own up to twenty women who live together and they all belong to him as their wives. It is something that does not raise eyebrows in society when a man engages in sexual philandering with a lot of women and calls them small houses. Society is quick to mark women who are seen as sexually

amoral but for men society tends to think that those are the true masculine identities that men should display. Society tends to believe that a man cannot stick to only one woman and he has a constant need for sex (which women do not have). Because of this, men tend to have more partners and these identities become problematic in situations where HIV has become the bane of societal pain. Men's attitudes, behaviours and needs tends to be excused and tolerated in society but this can be seen to have created spaces where men become vectors to their innocent partners.

The feminine identity can be seen to be an identity that is riddled by definitions that men have ascribed to the female members of their society because men have been instrumental in recording the history of humans. According to Brittan (1998), gender will reflect the material interests of those who have power and those who do not and in most cases what can be noted from the configurations of gender identities in society is the fact that women are the powerless, the subaltern and the subordinate of the two genders. In the text *Unlucky in love* the story centres on Rumbi the main protagonist's struggle in her marriage to a white man when both of them are confirmed to be positive with HIV. One can note that it was Rumbi's greatest wish that a man should want to put a ring on her finger. One gets the constant feeling that she feels that she has to belong to a man in order for her to be of substance. She even had a dream when she was young in which she saw herself in a white dress marrying a white man and takes it as a conformation from the above that her marriage to Horst was meant to be. This was supposed to be a dream come true for her after two failed relationships in which she had been used and discarded and left with a 'soiled goods' label. The advent of the news that they are both infected with HIV disrupts everything. One can note that Rumbi has been socialised into believing that a marriage is necessity for a woman. The men in her life are only seen coming in to disrupt her sense of self once and leaving her to pick up the broken pieces. After her escapades with

four men all of whom she was not so 'lucky' with she still cherishes the dream that one day her, 'knight in shining armour' will come and bestow respectability to her life by marrying her. In this case what comes out of her dreams and wishes is that her identity has to be tied together with a man in order for her to feel acceptable in society. At the end of the day she accepts Horst without raising questions because she is desperate to be married. Horst's thumb card can be seen to be his threat that he will cancel the wedding and he knows she cannot afford that because she needs the assurance of being Mrs. Somebody. Her desperation leads her into acceptance of a shoddy deal in which he can go on abusing her by continuing to live like a bachelor and carrying on with her friends, maids and receptionists which puts her life at risk from HIV infection. What comes out of her narrative is the fact that the feminine identity is constructed around the presence of a man and women's desperation to keep unhealthy relationships often expose them to risks of infection from their unfaithful partner.

In our African society, a woman is 'bought' through the paying of bride price and Lerner (1986) is of the opinion that this was the first gender-defined social role for women. Lerner posits that this role was to be 'those' who were exchanged in marriage transactions and men defined the terms of exchange. Women became a commodity that could be negotiated through monetary or exchange between the woman's parents and the husband-to-be. Even in wars women became goods that the victor could claim as spoils of the war. As such one can note that Lerner's historical perspective on the subordination of women (1986) is insightful when she notes that women themselves became a resource, acquired by men much as the land was acquired by men. Horst can be seen marrying Rumbi because she came to represent to him a resource that he can parade around with in terms of her being a former model. She was beautiful and in this case Horst wanted a trophy wife, much like Chief Nanga wanted Edna as a parlour wife in *A Man of The People*. Rumbi notes:

He always wanted me to be dressed in the best designer clothes. To be beautiful and well groomed. That is the only thing I was allowed to spend money on without him complaining' (15)

In essence she was just a prize, something he had won so that he could parade it and make other man envious. We have to note that the masculine identity is competitive and possessive and only claims to possess the best in society. The real man as defined by hegemonic masculinity always has to have the best ladies in the society. At most Rumbi could have been married by Horst so that he could claim citizenship through marriage. In most cases it is apparent that women look for love and eternal bondage in marriages but for men it quite different.

Rumbi lacks the financial means to be in a position to take up an independent identity. This has been the case with most women, marriages for them means that they have got someone to take care of the bills. One can note that Joe, Emmanuel and Horst are what society terms sugar daddies for Rumbi when we compare their ages to hers at the point when they had their relationships. She says she never thought about the fact that Emmanuel was twice her age. As a result one can note that it has been a common trend for Zimbabwean women to try and marry someone who represent a father- figure by being the provider of all their daily needs. A father –figure as a husband meant that one will lose control of the relationship and it can noted when Rumbi notes that Emmanuel never allowed her to use contraceptives because he feared it would encourage her to go out with other men. There is a belief that if a man wants to tame a woman he has to make sure that she is always pregnant. In so doing women create a dependency syndrome where a woman's daily life is controlled by her spouse in every aspect. In most cases women lack the financial means to cater for the lifestyle that they desire. Rumbi can be seen to be someone who was attracted to the high lifestyle but could not afford it

without a man. Thus Horst, Emmanuel and Joe all represented individuals who,

..Will have to be able to keep me in the lifestyle that I've become used to.'
(p.1)

The question being at what costs? She ends up contracting HIV all in the name of aiming for that lifestyle she reveres. Shefer (2003) talks about the fact that a woman being involved in relationships for economic gain creates barriers for negotiating safer methods of protection. For most women they seek out relationships that are not conducive for self-development because of the need for financial support they end up involved in relationships that expose them to HIV. A woman's place is marked far below that of the husband and this creates a system whereby the woman and the children are all powerless against the father. In this case she never questions Horst's past sexual life and just plunges into marriage with him without first making sure that it is safe. Sexually active women who engaged in sexual relationships it was because they received gifts or money (UNAIDS 2001). Thus women's roles as the dependant, the ones who must be taken care of have opened up avenues where it becomes easier to be infected in the name of looking for a benefactor because one is coming from a position of powerlessness and one will do anything to safeguard unsafe marriages as women are encouraged to do all they can to safeguard their marriages.

In most cases women's conduct is classified as either Madonna (good) or whore (bad) Soderstrom (2006) notes that one's sexual behaviours decides which of these roles the woman sides with and her sexual conduct is judged by men and marked by men and other women also take part in labelling other women. Rumbi is marked promiscuous because she has had sexual experiences with more than one man. Rumbi responds to these social attacks on her sexuality by making a vehement attempt to rescue her tattered sexual identity by making the

claims: 'I can count the number of sexual partners I have had on the fingers of one hand.' Somehow what comes out of this defensive stance is the fact that since she can still count her sexual partner one hand it is still okay because she has not crossed over to the other hand. Somehow she is saying that she has not had that much experience and is trying to fit into those spaces where she can still claim the Madonna identity that society is trying to take away from her. A woman will try by all means to down play her sexual experience but men will try by all means to advertise their sexual prowess and adventures including cases where they were sick with an STI from those sexual escapades. It is common practise that a man has to have sampled everything before he settles down to marry and even in marriage Horst is still the proverbial 'bull' around the house who takes every woman as his for asking. Rumbi cannot even trust him with her friends. She says that she lost all her friends because she feared Horst would have affairs with them. Shefer (2003) points to the pervasiveness and ambivalent nature of the traditional double standard where men are encouraged to actively pursue sexuality and take multiple partners, while women may be punished for being sexually active and are constructed as loose and promiscuous.

Women are blamed for the spread of HIV. Sathiparsad and Taylor (2006) are of the opinion that females were considered by males to be the carriers of HIV&AIDS.

Just as there are different masculinities, there are also different femininities that are displayed in the text through the characters Chiedza, Stella and Jackie. Stella and Jackie are much strong-willed and agentive than Chiedza whose can be seen to be guided by Christian morals in most of her conduct. Again the image of the Madonna is recurrent in Chiedza and can be seen to be reinforced by her stance remain a virgin until after she and Michael have wedded. She remains a tabula rasa in terms of exploring her sexuality. Peacock

et al. (2009) note that to be feminine is to appear sexually unknowing, to aspire to a relationship, to let sex 'happen', to trust to love, and to make men happy. They further note that safer sex is not just a question of using protection, avoiding penetration, or being chaste, it brings questions of power, trust and female agency into sexual relationships. Jackie is afraid of commitment and one can note that her feminine identity is depicted in a positive light because she knows how to get what she wants without strings attached. In this case Chiedza is juxtaposed to her friend Jackie who is in charge of her sexuality and sense of self and she testifies that even though she has numerous sexual partners she uses protection all the time. The feminine identity in *The Haunted Trail* the Chiedza's virginity is not empowering tool for women. It becomes a stumbling block that actually leads to Michael eventually getting his way and infecting her on the first day of their sexual encounter. What comes out of Chiedza's narrative is that the feminine identity is a passive and vulnerable identity. It seems such a waste of good intentions when she had remained chaste for a long time only to get defiled and infected at the same time. Young women are being educated to guard their reputations and protect themselves from danger (men). Young men on the contrary are learning that real men are knowing agents in pursuit of sexual pleasure. Whilst Chiedza is saving herself for Michael he is being promiscuous with other women. Sex is an empowering moment through which agency and identity are confirmed. The moment a boy engages in his first sexual encounter he crosses over and becomes a man. A man gains something and a woman loses and this fact is apparent in Chiedza's first and only sexual encounter in which she is left infected and pregnant. Frustrations and inner disturbances may even result in men raping children and women (Masenja and Urassa 1993). Thus Michael's life can be seen to slipping away from him economically his businesses are folding and the only way that he can assert his manhood is by raping Chiedza even though she is not sure that it was rape.

In the text *The Haunted Trail* one can note that marriage for the women becomes an act of loss of power and independence. Jackie is in control she does not live for the day when a man puts a ring on her finger. In fact she seems to enjoy her lack of commitment to any man. She even initiates her sexual encounter with Michael overturning the belief that women are supposed to wait until a man has courted them. She is ready and protected and in this day of HIV this attitude may win the fight against spreading it to unknowing partners. Men find it difficult to refuse sex because of the expectation of the male gender role is that men are always ready and willing to have sex. Michael in this case could not afford to refuse Jackie's sexual innuendo for fear of losing his masculine identity as a person who is ready for anything. Babatunde (2014) contends that the extent of the sexual risks facing young women began to make more sense when we could see that both accepting conventional femininity of being passive receivers of male attention. Women need to be ready, confident but at the same time they need to stop valorising men and think that men should initiate efforts to protect them sexually. Wollstonecraft (1792) identified the education and upbringing of women as creating their limited expectations based on a self-image dictated by the male gaze.

This analysis shall focus on the masculine identity as displayed by the character Horst who is Rumbi's white husband in *Unlucky in Love*. Horst's masculinity is constructed around dominance, authoritativeness, aggression, male honour, bravery, and rationality. This can be noted through the ways he treated Rumbi according to her accounts she was violently pushed from a vehicle and left in the deserted streets in the middle of the night when they had had an argument coming from a function. In this case his actions can be seen to be an exercise of male authority and power over subordinate groups. One can note that Rumbi had to walk in her high fashion to a friend's place to get help so that she could get home but Horst never

returned to check to see if she was fine. Connell (2005) argues that the ideology of patriarchy legitimizes violence towards women and subordinated forms of masculinity as a result of the hegemonic masculinity's superiority over them. Such cruelty can be seen as a sign of male power in which men are socialised into believing that a woman is an object and not a real human being that can be kicked around when it gets out of place. Connell (2005) has made reference to how the masculine identity is strongly connected to the male body. Being masculine means having physical power and this physical power can be seen working for men in asserting their authority over subordinate groups. When a man is not happy about something they have been socialised into believing that talking over something is a woman's thing a man just acts and in most cases this usually leads to violence towards children, women and other men. Violence is, according to Connell (2005), a part of the system of domination, but it is also a sign of the system's weakness. She further argues that masculinity's legitimacy has been put in question through its use of violence.

Mutekwa (2009) notes that we do operate in a culture where men, by and large, talk about their feelings less. This trend can also be noted through Horst who never wanted people to know that he was HIV positive. He says, 'I don't want this thing getting out there in the public.' Thus the issue of their HIV status was to be a secret that was never to get out. At one point Rumbi notes that he said he felt like a criminal by carrying the HIV virus; this analogy to feeling like a criminal brings to the fore that Horst thought that his status should never be disclosed to anyone and in the meantime he will just carry on like there was nothing wrong with him whilst this he was suffering inside. Ouzgane and Morell (2005) argues that Masculinity and femininity can exist only as each other's opposites but Female and male are symbolic opposites, which implies mutuality, but they also

note that the autonomy of the phallus negates the feminine. A real man is economically and emotionally self-reliant. Thus Horst is the opposite of Rumbi whereas she would want to discuss their status and stay together as both of them are infected he would want to be alone and run away as far from her as is possible. In the ends these oppositional categories have been imposed by society but can be seen to be fuelling cases where men refuse to accept their status and go on infecting acting irresponsibly.

Men do not believe that they should be emotional and share their pain with others. It is a manly trait to grind it through and never to whine about the pain inside because being diagnosed with HIV can be a devastating thing and in most cases can lead to other side effects like depression. Pattman's (2005) found that male drinking is construed as being a defining part of male culture. Men drink a lot when in crisis because they do not want to face bare facts. Horst is said to have taken to staying out late with friends and drinking a lot. Rumbi had noted that Horst and his friends indulged in drinking and spending all their time in nightclubs and beer halls, picking up girls. Thus it can be noted that male identity was never constructed to show any sign of weakness and in most cases drinking a lot is a sign that all is not well as it is used as a coping strategy. Horst blames Rumbi for infecting him but he does not sit down to look deep into what he has constructed as the image as the man who is free to sleep with anyone in the house being the problem to their infection with HIV.

In the text *The Haunted Trail* analysis will centre on Michael who embodies the masculine identity. Michael's path is haunted by his past. The text contains elements that speaks of a troubled past in that the same things that Michael seeks to run away from are the same things that he gets to confront later on in his life. When his mother gets sick Michael is horrified at the devastating effects HIV has on her

body. In turn he packs his bag and runs away from her eerie presence. He is haunted by the fact that in his mother's times of need he is not man enough to be there to offer her his support and help even when what had killed her had been a source of their livelihood. Stella's notorious reputation in Mbare and Michael testifies that he had seen several men in his mother's bedroom but had a feeling that none of them were his father. Thus, one notes that even his reaction to Lina's pregnancy showed points to a disturbed past that had the effect of a bad shadow hanging over his neatly arranged life. Lina hangs herself after Michael rejects her pregnancy. Marco tells him that he did the 'macho thing' by sending her away but Micheal knows that he had to own up and take responsibility for Lina's pregnancy. At the end, Lina commits suicide. Responsibility scares Michael into running even when he is an older man and Chiedza tells him that she is pregnant and HIV positive he is quick to deny responsibility and chase her away from him

Chodorow (1978) postulates that in order to find their identity, boys develop themselves as other-than the- mother. Connell (1995) asserts that masculinity and femininity are identities that exist as oppositional. Thus it becomes imperative that Michael should want to develop his identity away from his mother's which he sees as weak in the fact that she dies suffering from a virus that he sees only to be attacking the weak. Michael's father runs away from the responsibility of taking care of him. It has been noted that when boys are growing up they need a father-figure that they can learn masculinity from. In this case Michael ends up taking ideas from the streets and in the ends his sense of what a man ought to do in times of crisis have been warped out of shape by all the bad advice he accumulates from his fatherless status.

Micheal is gifted with a fighting spirit only when he is winning but in times of crisis one can note that his masculine identity tends to fold. Thus he always makes sure that his body exudes confidence and it can

be noted that nothing stood in the way of his insatiable yearning for wealth. The way he dresses and walks emphasizes on the masculine identity. It is said, 'There was something compelling about his brisk, sure -footed step as he walked...' Connell (2005) deals with the relation between the male body and masculinity. In most cases, one can note that the masculine identity emphasised that a man should always be in control. He is able to use women as his objects in the form of Fiona Kanda who he manages to persuade to sleep with him at a lodge as payment for helping water down her disciplinary actions. With other women he corners them into carpet interviews for jobs and generally one can note that he tends to treat women as objects of his desire. He manages to lure Chiedza on like an experienced hunter but one can note that Chiedza held the thrills of an undefeated conquest for Michael and in the end she fails to see through his shattered images of the troubled self who is who not powerful enough to resist casual sex with strangers and Farrell (2012) redefines what power means by stating that power is the ability to control one's own life. He goes on to note that if we have the ability to control our own life, we have power. In this case Michael can be seen to be a powerless individual who has lost control his own destiny through the acquisition of material things and conquest of women's bodies. His definitions of his identity can be seen to have destabilised his identity to the extent that suicide is the only way he can accept his lack of power to drive his life after being pronounced HIV positive. Larkin et al. (2006) are of the opinion that young people tend to overlook the fact that unhealthy attitudes and behaviours on the part of males, as reflected by men in society affect both them and their female partners. It can be noted that Michael never changed his casual approach to life even when he was now an influential wealthy man. He continues to indulge in casual sexton the detriment of his future. In the end he ruins both of their future by unhealthy attitudes that sees him think that he is impervious to HIV and when it is confirmed he sees no way out because he does not want

to end up like his mother who died dependant on others because HIV had demobilised her body and taken way her power to drive her life.

True masculinity is always perceived as something which stems from men's bodies and that true masculinity is engraved in the male body or expresses something in regards to that body. This chapter has highlighted that society's formations of masculine and feminine identities has fuelled cases where women are at the receiving end and men have adopted toxic forms that have made them unable to deal with crisis situations. Men's fighting and winning spirit seems to desert then in times of crisis like HIV and one can note that formations of gender identities have been instrumental in creating these men whose ideas of what a man ought to be have been warped out of shape by HIV which demands that conceptions of how a man is supposed to behave should change accordingly. Men should map new forms of masculine identities that recognize the need to look before the leap, to be ever mindful and take all measures to protect themselves as well as their future. Women's identities, on the other hand, have been constructed from a subaltern position where men speak for them and label them. In the end women lack the voices that articulate stronger images of themselves. She is forever dancing to other people tune in this case she exposes herself to HIV because she lacks the drive and capacity to take control and revolt from her subordinate position creating spaces where it becomes easy for them to be infected with HIV through their partners.