

Boetie is verlore

The Reproduction of Militarized White Masculinities Through the Lens of *Boetie gaan border toe!* (1984)

by
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ABSTRACT

My father fought for the South African Defence Force (SADF) from 1983 to 1985. At that time the apartheid regime was involved in extensive military operations in what is now Namibia and Angola. This conflict was aimed at quelling the liberation movements in those countries and, as Gary Baines has noted, supported the United States of America's Cold War interests (Baines 2007:1). When I was fourteen I found a piece written by my father in which he remembers the first person that he had killed in the aforementioned conflict. This was a child soldier who he compared to me as I was a similar age at the time of his writing. The idea of my father as a killer haunted me. He has carried the trauma of his experiences on the border with him; he has told me how the dead visit him in dreams. On the one hand, these memories, not my own, have been constructed through my interpretation of the events in my father's stories. On the other hand, homologies may be drawn between his actual experiences and a fantasy representation of the conflict I have encountered, the film *Boetie gaan border toe!* or *Brother goes to the border!* (1984). This apartheid propaganda film presents an idealised representation of the conflict from the point of view of the apartheid state. The protagonist of the film, Boetie, is an example of the aspirational and dominant image of militarised masculinity the apartheid state wished young white men to emulate. The racist sexist, patriarchal and materialistic reality created within the film is one I am familiar with. The toys I grew up playing with, television shows, films, advertising and popular culture I consumed, alongside the boys' school I attended and the University I currently attend are all rooted in and continue to reproduce this reality. I have encountered many similar archetypes to the Boetie character. With this in mind I wish through my art practice to create a work which draws upon my father's writing and imagery from *Boetie gaan border toe!* (1984). I have placed these alongside windows into my contemporary context in order to emphasise the continual reproduction of these ideas. In reference to the Boetie film I have decided to create my own film entitled *Boetie is verlore* or *Brother is lost*. This is a magic realist documentary film that I have constructed through various interviews and fantasy dream sequences in order to paint a picture of the continual incubation and reproduction of realities similar to that of Boetie. Boetie is a rich white man who is characterised through his material possessions and his compulsive heterosexuality. White women are interchangeable to him whilst blackness in the film is made completely invisible. In South Africa such representations are strongly linked to the question of land and naturalising the white male coloniser's dominance and privilege

I declare that this thesis is my own work and that all the sources I have used have been acknowledged by complete references. This thesis is submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirement for the degree of Master of Fine Arts at Rhodes University. I declare that it has not been submitted for any degree or examination at another university.

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INTRODUCTION

I have grown up in a world governed by what bell hooks refers to as “imperialist white supremacist capitalist patriarchy” (1996: 105). This world has shaped the lives of my family and all those around me. It has been violent towards me and has caused me to perpetuate violence towards others. Growing up in a feminist household I have noticed the pervasiveness of this ideology through my parents, various cultural mediums and institutions. The church I attended, my school and university continue to reproduce this reality for myself and those around me. bell hooks refers to the need to talk about patriarchy as it is often absent from mainstream cultural discourse. She describes how our society and personal interactions are influenced by psychological patriarchy:

Psychological patriarchy is the dynamic between those qualities deemed masculine and feminine in which half of our human traits are exalted while the other half is devalued. Both men and women participate in this tortured value system.

Psychological patriarchy is a dance of contempt, a perverse form of connection that replaces true intimacy with complex, covert layers of dominance and submission, collusion and manipulation. It is the unacknowledged paradigm of relationships that has suffused Western civilization generation after generation, deforming both sexes, and destroying the passionate bond between them. (hooks 2013: 33)

I have grown up around my father’s post-traumatic stress disorder, a result of his military conscription and service under apartheid. He was involved in atrocities committed in support of securing resources in what is now called Namibia. This military action was directly in support of Western capital, what Raewyn Connel refers to as “organized power structures”. These are powerful institutions such as transnational corporations (TNCs), mining houses, global capital markets, multinational agencies, superpower security forces and international media (Connel 2011:87). They are profit driven, rely on gross exploitation of land and labour secured through colonialism and are also strongly gendered structures dominated by white men. These structures own the means of production of the mainstream visual material that is produced around us. In Hollywood films, representation of white supremacy through classist, racist, gendered and sexualised imagery is an industry standard. Through cultural imperialism this imperialist, white supremacist and patriarchal discourse is constantly screened on our public television stations. Those in privileged enough positions to have internet access can access a broader variety of subversive content. Yet even the social media worlds that people inhabit are owned by imperialist, white supremacist, capitalist and

patriarchal TNCs. Events in 2015, such as the recent terrorist attacks in France on the 13th of November, highlight the selectivity of mainstream media in response to the loss of human lives. Following the recent atrocities in France, there have been vigils by global leaders and the social networking site Facebook has created an option for users globally to edit their profile pictures with the colours of the French flag. Yet, there continue to be numerous tragic losses of human lives in conflict all over the world. When similar atrocities occur elsewhere, not in the so-called first world, little or no notice is taken.

Hollywood films such as Ridley Scott's *Exodus: Gods and Kings* (2014), Darren Aronofsky's *Noah* (2014) and Alex Proyas' *Gods of Egypt* (2016) have all white casts, with muscular white men as the protagonists, (see fig. 1- 3). These films are all historical narratives based in North Africa and the Middle East. These exist as contemporary examples of how imperialist, white supremacist, capitalist patriarchy continues to use narratives and visual representation to white-wash history and reproduce a reality where white men exist as dominant. In David Theo Goldberg's *Racist Culture* he writes that racist discourse can be invested in as image based industries are owned and supported by capital. These discursive technologies fabricate otherness as these social constructions infiltrate and influence the body politic of individuals and their lives (1993:60). Racial, gendered, highly sexualised and classist imagery continues to influence the day-to-day as its function is rooted in the mechanised structure of profit driven capitalism.

With this research I wish to highlight the constant reproduction of such violence by making a magic realist documentary film entitled *Boetie is Verlore (Brother is lost)*. The film is made up of a montage of narratives. I have constructed these narratives from my contemporary experience of white supremacist, heteronormative, capitalist and patriarchal ideologies and the 1984 apartheid propaganda film *Boetie gaan border toe! (Brother goes to the border!)*. This film was made in collaboration with the South African Defence Force and presents an idealistic representation of the military conflict my father took part in. It presents a narrative about a rich South African white man played by Arnold Vosloo. Boetie is incentivised to join the army and fight on the border. He is resistant at first but proves to be a good soldier and is depicted as having come of age as a man. The film comes out of the context of an image-based industry which the apartheid government supported and which sought to do the same thing as *Gods of Egypt* (2016), that is, to reproduce the white supremacist, patriarchal, heteronormative and capitalist status quo. Both instances serve as examples of hooks' analysis of ways in which black people and white women are continually

made invisible, either through absence or “grotesque caricatures”, in mainstream image discourse (1996:292).

In *Boetie is verlore* I wish to provide a mirror to the white militaristic patriarchal discourse which I see continually perpetuated around me. I have chosen to contrast images from the *Boetie* film alongside dream-like imagery and interviews I have curated and constructed. I stitched these together with extracts my father has written about his time on the border and narratives I have written. The aim of this film is to contextualise identity construction in relation to whiteness and make this invisible norm visible in the context of its violence. In this thesis I will use a contextual analysis of the *Boetie* film alongside my own personal experience growing up white and male in this culture. I will draw upon my experience of my father’s PTSD and the cultural discourse I absorbed, learning my race and gender through the institutions I have attended: the Catholic Church, Graeme College and Rhodes University. These institutions have foundations in imperialist, white supremacist patriarchal capitalism through the history of colonialism. They continue to teach broadly from the vantage point of Eurocentric thought and have been spaces where I have learned and begun to unlearn my white supremacist, patriarchal programming. It is as part of the broader project of decolonisation that I wish to engage in this self-reflexive research in order to cast a critical eye on the status quo around us. Our context continues to manufacture violent ideas of masculine dominance and feminine submission. As hooks (2000: 11) states, the “personal is political” and I see great urgency in making links between the micro and macro ways in which our world is organised. *Boetie* is an idealistic caricature of aspirational white masculinity constructed within the apartheid South African context. I wish to use this extreme caricature in order to highlight how similar constructions are continually reproduced as a norm in contemporary discourse and have shaped me as a person. In this paper I will draw upon a combination of texts I have read, interviews I have conducted for *Boetie is verlore* and personal narratives I have written. In the following chapter I will provide a context of the border war informed in part by relevant literature and an interview with an ex SADF combatant.

CHAPTER ONE: THE BORDER

As early as I can remember my father had forbidden toy guns. Instead I was always aware of his use of other weapons. He has swords, knives and sticks of many different shapes and sizes. My father suffers from Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). This is a result of his actions whilst conscripted and serving in the South African Defense Force. He served on the Angolan and Namibian border between 1983 and 1985. The war my father fought in is regarded today with a culture of silence. Gary Baines (2008:2) explains that recruits themselves were forced to sign secrecy clauses of non-disclosure when their service was concluded and notes that until 2008 there had been relative scholarly silence on the subject. He observes that veterans themselves have found methods such as forming virtual communities on the internet to share and make sense of their experiences (Baines 2011). Many of these men are caught between feeling betrayed by the previous regime for whom they served and their attitudes towards the new government from which they feel alienated. In her study based on research conducted with a focus group of SADF veterans, Diana Gibson found that the men expressed misgivings about the propaganda and misinformation through which the apartheid regime co-opted them into forced conscription, the brutal realities they faced in conflict situations and the subsequent negation of any acknowledgement of their personal sacrifices in the new South Africa (2009:74).

The military action that South African men such as my father were engaged in was referred to as the Angolan/border/bush war (Baines & Vale 2008). During the period of real conflict which lasted between the years 1968 and 1993, more than 600 000 white males were conscripted by the apartheid regime (Baines 2008: 5). According to a filmed interview that I conducted with an SADF veteran of the border war in 2014, the military action was initially a police action which the SADF was subsequently drawn into to provide support (Anon 2014). After serving on the border between 1984 and 1986 the interviewee stated that he tried to join the Memorable Order of Tin Hats (MOTHS), a military veteran's organization. He was denied entry because the "border war" was not regarded as a war but a police action. The army was there in support of the police (Anon 2014). The police action was initiated to quell a resistance movement started by chiefs in Ovamboland. These chiefs were resisting colonial labour taxes which amounted to a situation of virtual slavery for young men from their areas. This involved a system whereby labourers were offered up by communities in Ovamboland as tax. The South African government wanted to stop any resistance, as they were both in

favour of the white-owned farming, mining and fishing resources in the area and also wary of allowing liberation movements to claim further land as they were afraid of a knock-on effect. In order to combat this, special police units known as Koevoet were mobilized on the Caprivi Strip, an area of land running between Namibia and Angola (Anon 2014).

Baines reveals that the apartheid regime took note of the manner in which media coverage of the Vietnam War in the United States of America worked detrimentally for the military in terms of public support and opinion of the conflict (2008:2). In order to combat this tendency a strategy of disinformation was undertaken by the apartheid government through utilizing media platforms to create an idealized representation of the conflict and encourage public support. This process involved the use of film, television, radio, popular music and comic books, according to Michael Drewett (2003:84). Daniel Conway highlights the fact that the mobilization process of forced conscription also involved the utilization of existing ideological mechanisms such as the Anglo-European boys' schooling structures and various community and church organizations (2008:77). Structures such as the British schooling model were already founded upon a militaristic model and designed to reproduce Imperial masculinities. I will explore the construction produced by this model further on in this chapter as it continues to constitute the foundation of some of what are considered the country's top learning institutions and schools in 2015. Personally, I am a product of such an education as I attended an all-boys former model C school.

As a mediated conflict, the 'border war' was viewed through the apartheid media industry which characterized it as a metaphoric conflict. This metaphor depicted South Africa as maintaining a defensive position both at home within the country and on its borders, whilst in reality South Africa was engaged in antagonistic military and police operations to fight liberation movements within the country and within Namibia. Namibia was known at that time as South West Africa and still under (South African) colonial authority. The implied defense of suburban areas in South Africa, was a metaphor for patrolling the economic divide. Conway (2008:77) argues that this process mythologized the "border" as a last line of defense for white South Africa against the implied threat of communism and the African liberation struggles. These presented a threat to white South Africa's way of life. In the interview I conducted, the veteran stated in reference to the 'border' cultural industry that

this resulted in a total ambient thing, you don't really know what it is (the border), but it's there in the background. At school you learned about the C mandate. The threat of Communism. South Africa had to 'control' it. You were taught of the potential domino effect if Angola falls, South Africa and Botswana would fall. In reality it had a

lot to do with maintaining control and monopolies over diamond mines, fishing and farming. (Anon 2014)

Baines comments that the men who served on the border's experiences of the South African Defence Force provided themselves with a unifying identity both as service men and veterans today (2008:5). These men were taught that their military service was in order to protect the domestic home environment. This implied the defence of the defenceless within the "capitalist patriarchal white supremacist society" (hooks 1996: 105) of South Africa, those to be defended being white women and children. Through the use of domestic community institutions such as churches and boys' school cadet structures; military service was framed as a necessary step towards manhood, as Diana Gibson argues (2009:77). For many veterans the combination of training in order to execute violence and the guilt of experienced realities of carrying out violent atrocities result in a paranoia about impending acts of violence. Sasha Gear states that a by-product of this is that the narrative of protecting helpless loved ones can justify further violence (Gear 2002:53).

The following is my own recollection:

On the night of my Matric dance, my father had fetched me in order to make a stop at home to change for the after party. Upon leaving the house, five men appeared jogging, burdened by an assortment of electronics. They had appeared out of the 'driffie' that runs alongside the back of the neighborhood fences. My father called to them, but they continued at their pace down the road. Immediately he instructed that I should call the police and set off down the road in pursuit. I jogged after my father, whilst dialing the police. My father ran in a zigzag behind them, calling to them. At the end of the street the men disappeared up a path into the bush. My father followed. I stood awkwardly at the beginning of the path, fearing violence; I had never been much of a fighter. I deepened my voice as much as possible and called out "Dad?" A minute later my father re-appeared, backing away slowly. One of the men had fallen back and was facing off against him with a blade in hand. My father drew his own blade and the men stood still poised, calculating each other intensely. After a minute of this the man turned and disappeared back into the bush. My father walked down towards me, "why didn't you back me?"

"I was" I replied with insecurity, "I just thought you wanted me to wait for the police."

In this narrative, my father, assessing a situation where men had allegedly broken into a neighbouring home, immediately characterized them as an enemy and made aggressive moves to engage them. He showed in that moment no hesitation or reluctance at facing violence and instead willfully sought out such a situation. Through the contextual lens of acknowledging the psychological implications of my father's PTSD, I see the collecting of

weapons such as swords, knives and sticks by my father as a symptom of this paranoia which Gear describes (2002:53).

In relation to the lived experience of the lasting effects of my father's PTSD, my focus in this research is to understand how my own whiteness and masculinity within South Africa has been shaped. I aim to do this through understanding mechanisms such as the British model schooling structures in relation to the continued influence of media representations of masculinity. What do these mechanisms teach about masculinity and what do they teach about race? If they were utilized during the border war as feeding mechanisms into structures like the SADF, what are the implications of continued use of these structures which so clearly provide foundations that produce militarized masculinities? To begin to understand this, one must look to the broader context of western colonial expansion and the subsequent adoption of capitalism as an economic system. To explore the history of masculine socialization within such a context, I will begin by looking at the history of image-based industries.

According to John Beynon (2002:14) the rise in consumerism and celebrity culture had its roots in post-Second World War reconstruction. This manifested itself through the growth of image based industries starting in the 1950s. The result of this within contemporary western society, Beynon argues, is a consumption culture where desires replace needs (2002:14). In such a society goods become important indicators of success. Possessions such as houses, clothes, and cars are important to constructing a self image. The process of self construction through the ownership of certain objects results in a commodified self-image. Beynon's analysis helps one understand how commodified masculinities are represented and marketed in different ways which men can buy into.

According to Robyn Ryle (2011:173), the United States of America's popular culture industry focuses on adolescent boys' obsession with sex. Moreover, according to Beynon, the dominant construction of masculinity in contemporary western society is premised on the masculine as a result of the suppression of tenderness, emotion and vulnerability (2002:15). In this society, terms used to label perceived lack of masculinity in men are also used for homosexuals, revealing the strong connection between sexuality and gender. This is evidence of how compulsive heterosexuality is enforced. Pascoe defines compulsive heterosexuality as the way in which heterosexuality becomes institutionalized into the practices of daily life as a form of control in order to regulate power and privileges (2007). Adrienne Rich (1986/1993) uses compulsive heterosexuality to explain the way heterosexuality as an institution serves to

ensure male physical, emotional and economic access to women. In her essay, Rich identifies the important role sexuality plays in reinforcing gender inequality.

According to Michael Drewett (2007:95) the apartheid government's propaganda campaigns in support of the border war were focused primarily on the ideal of the military man as the ultimate form of South African masculinity. This ideal focused on a gender dichotomy between the home front and the frontline. The home front was gendered as a feminine space where women and children were to be protected by men on the frontline (Drewett 2008:95). Only men were conscripted into the SADF. During training the young recruit's bodies and minds would be worked on in order to construct a militarized masculinity.

To explore this militarized identity I will first unpack the root ideas associated with boys' schooling mechanisms in South Africa. These structures originated from the British imperial schooling model and produced an idea of masculinity which complemented that of the SADF. The Imperial man was an ideal which emerged out of the context of the British Empire's colonial expansion. Imperial Masculinity emerged as a result of this process. British boys' schools were designed to produce masculinity through physical exercise in sports such as rugby. Beynon argues that these schooling structures emphasized the concepts of action, authority, celebration of will and British racial superiority (2002:33). The feminine was regarded as threatening and damaging and so was kept at a distance. The British boys' boarding school model was designed to produce men to serve the Empire. Imperial masculinity exists as a product of time, place, power, class, racial and national superiority. According to Beynon, it has been influential in shaping British male subjectivity up until the present (2002:28). He defines Imperial masculinity as the domination of 'others': people of other races and nationalities, women and homosexuals, thus incubating and reproducing a white supremacist capitalist patriarchal world view (Beynon 2002:32). The main agent for shaping Imperial masculinity was the preparatory and public school system. At these institutions boys are separated from what is perceived as feminine and provided with literature inspiring loyalty to school, regiment, college, nation and empire. This model of school was set up in South Africa through British imperialism. The Imperial masculinity model provided a perfect foundation upon which the SADF could prepare boys to anticipate serving their country.

The border war propaganda industry depicted the border as a sexualized space through the use of women's bodies. Drewett notes how the covers of pro-military music compilations such as *Forces Favourites* (see fig.4.) and *Hit Power* always depicted scantily

clad white women in military attire holding automatic weapons (2008:99). Similarly the photo comic series *Grensvegter* (*Border fighter*) tells the stories of Rocco DeWet, a soldier who always defeats his enemies and undertakes romantic liaisons with different white women (see fig.5.) (Drewett 2008:105). In both of these examples we see women displayed in a different role to that of the domestic home front. Instead of featuring in domesticated environments, here we see women used as objects to sexualize military service and make it appealing to conscripts. Such depictions would create associations for young men that military service was necessary in order to be considered a South African heterosexual man.

In Joane Nagel's chapter "Military Sexual Complex" (2003), she argues that sex itself is militarized. Providing sex for soldiers is an essential part of how armies motivate men to fight. Ryle argues that rape committed during war is a way of creating solidarity amongst troops through mutual guilt (Ryle 2011: 174). Men are seen as powerful sexual subjects, meaning they have a sense of power and agency in their own bodies that allows them to act in their bodies rather than being acted upon. Therefore in contemporary western society it is assumed that men will have strong sexual desires, whether they are soldiers in a foreign country or boys in middle and high school (Ryle 2012: 175). Women are also seen as sexual beings but they are more likely to be sexualized as passive and made into sexual objects. The apartheid regime intentionally utilized the construction of compulsive heterosexual masculinity in order to reproduce militarization and control over gender and race groups.

John Beynon (2002: 56) states that capitalism places men in a network of social relations that encourages sets of behavior recognized as masculine. Masculinity is thus viewed as a set of practices into which individual men are inserted with reference to upbringing, family, area, work and sub-cultural influences. According to him, socio-economic positioning profoundly impacts upon the masculine sense of self, so much so that men's identities are constructed through social structures which exist over and above any actions of the individual (Beynon 2002:56). Through feminist influence, academic discourse today recognizes the continuing historical production and reproduction of men's power over women and other men. However, a view of masculinity and femininity as being fixed by archetypal character traits still predominate among members of the public at large. This persisting attitude towards gender shows the continuing influence of image-based media in constructing and maintaining an western system of power relations which is male dominated and white supremacist.

There is a history of social theorists such as Kenneth Chatterbaugh describing the existence of many different types of masculinities such as Black, Jewish, Chicano, Gay and

middle class (Chatterbaugh 1998:25). What this process of sub-categorization informs us is that the author writes from a white heteronormative perspective within a western social context. The invisibility of white masculinity as one of these sub genres implies that it is the norm. Such a perspective is symptomatic of the white Anglo Eurocentric frame through which much of western discourse is still approached.

According to John Beynon (2002:64) cinematic masculinity comes in visually crafted, carefully packaged and frequently idealized forms. These forms often have greater impact on young men than the real men in their communities. Masculinity is still represented in the media as rational, practical and naturally aggressive and women in contrast are seen as expressive, nurturing and emotional. These representations provide highly accessible role models for boys and young men (Beynon 2002:64).

During the border war cinematic masculinity formed part of a propaganda strategy as a series of war movies romanticizing the border and military service were produced. *Boetie gaan border toe!* (1984) (see fig.6.) followed a number of other such films, including *Kaptein Caprivi* (1972), *Aanslag op Kariba* (1973) and *Ses Soldate* (1975) (Tomaselli 1986: 2). These films all reduce the border conflict to a simple good versus bad binary of Capitalism versus Communism. The films all have masculine white heroes who were intended to inspire audiences. Beynon remarks that screen images are likely to be more seductive than real-life examples from fathers, brothers and teachers (2002: 64). Masculinity as it is enacted is a mixture of the situation and previous experiences and always has an imagined element because how one would like to be has obvious implications for how one would act in everyday life. In this way filmic realities are powerful as they provide ideals which influence people's imagined selves. Beynon's analysis highlights ways in which filmic masculinity asserts power through erasure of or dominance over femininity. In film, he shows, war is often depicted as a performance leading to fame, fortune and success. Moreover, masculinity in war movies is defined through absence of women and the suppression of the feminine in men. According to him, women tend to play either one of two roles: the wife, mother, lover, daughter or sister waiting at home in the domestic environment or that of a less-than-human object to be abused, raped or killed (Beynon 2002:67). Masculinity in war movies is strictly heterosexual. Homophobia rules and sets the sexual boundaries, though there is an allowance for affection to be shown when cradling fellow fallen soldiers. In order to further unpack the manner in which filmic realities can be intentionally utilized to influence social identity construction; in my next chapter I will conduct an in-depth analysis of the film *Boetie gaan border toe!* (1984).

CHAPTER TWO: BOETIE

Boetie gaan border toe! (1984) provides an insight into the apartheid regime's mainstream representation of gender, sexuality and racial power dynamics in the 1980s. It tells the story of Boetie van Tonder, played by a young Arnold Vosloo. Boetie is a rich white blonde Afrikaans South African man. He is introduced in the opening sequence framed by his material possessions. The film begins with a shot of a number plate stating "Boetie". From this the camera zooms out to reveal a red Porsche convertible with its roof down, driven by Boetie with a young female passenger. They are revealed to be on a highway through empty South African landscape. They are driving behind a truck full of white SADF troops who as the title suggests can be assumed to be on their way to the border (see fig.7-9.). The troops smile and wave, as do Boetie and the passenger. Boetie takes both hands off the steering wheel in order to clap. The troops lift a message painted on a rucksack stating "waar is die jol?" (Where is the party?). Boetie replies by inserting a cassette tape into his car's stereo and the theme music begins, the lyrics of which are "We've got the world on our side and we just don't give a damn". The viewer is presented with a montage of images: Boetie's smile reflected in the speedometer, the rolex on his wrist, the porsche, the female passenger uncorks champagne and begins pouring into a glass, whilst the troops smile and clap along to the beat. The female passenger stands and toasts the troops raising the glass in the air while her scarf blows behind her and the troops in turn raise a hip flask. The front of the Army vehicle is shown and it is revealed that the driver, a white man in aviator sunglasses is himself tapping on the steering wheel to the beat. From all of this the viewer is presented with a visual metaphor where the white troops are on their way to protect the lifestyle of white South Africa, symbolized by Boetie and his passenger enjoying their material possessions in an empty landscape. The army men are depicted as joyfully on their way to war, having a party. The driver of the army vehicle's participation in the "jol" implies the army as an institution's endorsement of such behavior (see fig.7-15.).

Boetie and his female companion overtake the truck and disappear into the sunset and the scene transitions to Boetie lying asleep on his arms in a lecture theatre at university. He is listening to headphones still playing the theme music. There is a female lecturer busy conducting a lecture and all the other students appear to be paying attention. Boetie lifts his head from his arms still listening to the theme music through head phones and clears his throat interrupting the lecturer; she pauses but carries on the lecture ignoring Boetie. He clears his throat again and motions with his hands as if to tell her to hurry along (See Fig. 15).

She abruptly ends the lecture and the scene changes to her packing up her notes after the students have left. Boetie enters the scene and they immediately start a passionate kiss. The scene then abruptly transitions to a dimly lit conference room where what are presumably South African government officials are discussing how to encourage young men to join the army. The suggestion is made to incentivize someone “cool” to join the army. Boetie’s father, one of the officials, suggests Boetie. The scene then changes to the female passenger from the opening sequence of the movie waiting in Boetie’s Porche. Boetie approaches wearing dark sunglasses and coolly states “luister Bokkie” (listen baby buck) to which she responds, “my name is Charmaine”. Boetie acknowledges this and proceeds to explain to Charmaine how his mother is in hospital and he needs to go visit her. Charmaine gets out the car and dejectedly takes a few steps away while Boetie gets in and revs the engine. He then drives forward a few metres to where the female lecturer is waiting; she climbs in the car and kisses Boetie, while Charmaine watches.

Boetie is clearly a masculine womanizer. The apartheid state’s intended message about university is clear, that it is a waste of time, where one need not focus and women, no matter who they are or in what power position, are merely objects for white male satisfaction, to be used and discarded. This is further emphasised by the following scene where Boetie arrives in his Porche at a fancy cocktail party at his parents’ mansion. He gets out the car with a new female companion, whom he also refers to as “Bokkie”. She protests and he proceeds to call her Charmaine. This implies the interchangeability of these female characters in his life. The pair is greeted at the door by the only black character in the whole film, James. James is a coloured man and is Boetie’s family’s butler. He and Boetie appear to be friends as they have a warm conversation where Boetie enquires about the party to which James forewarns Boetie that his father will offer him R100 000 to join the military and go to the border. He does this while faithfully pouring them champagne.

The next scene introduces the other male character who will join the army with Boetie, Kevin John Ball. Kevin John Ball is English and a working class mechanic with a pregnant wife. He is constantly smoking Camel cigarettes in almost every scene of the film. Kevin is a “rebel” character with long hair and a beard. His introductory scene is of his boss at the garage he works at firing him. He contends this by telling his boss that he will be joining the army and so he will have to continue paying his salary for the next two years. The scene then transitions back to Boetie. This time we are alone with him in his bed room. He has a double bed and at the window a large telescope and a globe. These symbolic objects, if read within the context of the Cold War, can be seen as signifiers of progress, space travel and

placing the white South African male Boetie at the centre of the universe as the ultimate human being. This idea is further amplified as Boetie has just gotten out of the shower and is busy drying himself, he has his back to the viewer and his naked sculpted torso and buttocks are contrasted against the globe and telescope. At this point Boetie's father walks in and Boetie in response to something he asks drops his towel and reveals his penis to his father whilst stating "what do I look like to you". This brief action can be read as an assertion of his manhood and virility, accompanied by all the implied sexual liaisons Boetie has had since the start of the film. An implied emphasis is placed on the phallus as the centre of male power through domination.

Boetie and Kevin Ball are both portrayed as rebellious against the institution of the army. Both decide not to join the other conscripts at the train station and individually make their own ways to the army base. It is on these separate journeys that the two meet up. Boetie and James are driving when they are hailed over by Ball as the Volkswagen Beetle him and his pregnant wife and her attractive friend are driving has broken down. Boetie and James agree to help. Ball is overtly racist to James, only addressing Boetie and drinking from a wine bottle. This continues the image of him as a rebellious ignorant and working class Englishman. James is dressed in a black tuxedo and humbly effectively sorts out the situation. While this is going on, the train passes by full of conscripts. Again the army men on their way to the border are portrayed as jovial and in high spirits as the men can be heard clapping and chanting "let's go!". The conscripts are then shown arriving and a correlation is drawn between those arriving in civilian clothes and those marching around in uniform in synchronized patterns. At this point the character Corporal Bothes is introduced through a scene of him being called into his superior's office and being briefed on his mandate to train a new group of troops, to which he ensures he is ready. Corporal Bothes is a white Afrikaans man with red hair and a mustache. This scene transitions to Boetie and Balls' arrival at the base. Ball and his wife have a passionate kiss and embrace good bye and the wife's friend says to Boetie: "Bye bye soldier boy", to which he replies "bye Bokkie!". Ball then proceeds to offer Boetie a cigarette to which Boetie replies that he does not smoke. Boetie is portrayed as a well groomed sophisticated, fit, fashionable and muscular man whilst Ball presents a more rugged cowboy representation of masculinity. The two are greeted at the gate by Corporal Bothes who immediately begins his role as the unreasonable, rough and abrasive authoritarian figure who is constantly shouting orders and dishing out punishments. This archetype is very similar to those found in Hollywood representations of military institutions. Typically Boetie and Ball's unit is a group of misfits who do not appear to make good

soldiers. Some of these include a joker character who is consistently sneaking off to smoke weed and wears a Bob Marley shirt. There are also a fat character and a small nerdy character. The unit is constantly shown to be under performing at inspections and exercises. Korporal Bothes is shown to continuously get more stressed and worked up throughout this training period of the film. Ball and Boetie are shown becoming close friends. Both are portrayed as trouble makers who are supposedly anti the military institution.

Boetie begins to reveal himself to Ball. When asked about his life he explains that he has been given everything and feels that the military is the first time he can properly prove himself and make something of his own. This suggests that the military is a site of self-actualization. Boetie helps Ball to run away from the army when his wife gives birth by calling upon the trusted James who organizes both to take Ball's wife to the hospital and then fetch Ball from the base. When Ball arrives at the hospital and gets to see the baby he, after kissing his wife and finding out that it's a boy, begins a Tarzan-like call, beating on his chest. The theme of Boetie doubting his material life is continued in the next scene. Their training is over and they have a break before they are going to the border. Boetie is on a date with Ball's wife's friend and they are parked on a hill top in the Porche. Boetie has just received the cheque for R100 000 from his father. He attempts to kiss her to which she responds by pulling away and asking Boetie who he is beyond his material possessions. She states that he has everything in the world and that she means nothing to him, that she is just another girl in his life. Boetie's response to this is to tear up the cheque and then attempt to crash the Porche after which she stops him and they kiss. This scene shows that Boetie no longer wishes to be defined by his material objects, instead he has found fulfillment in his role in the military and the potential love interest of this woman. The implications of this are that conscription in the South African military has helped him become more of a responsible complete person, potentially helping him outgrow his womanizing ways.

On the border their unit continues to be a disappointment to Corporal Bothes who has the final straw when they knock down a tent by mistake and breaks down in tears. Later that night he and Boetie have their first moment of compassion towards each other. Up until this point Bothes has played the Corporal function as an authoritarian figure who barks orders. The two men are keeping watch together and Boetie's love of astronomy is brought up. One is immediately reminded of the telescope in his bedroom. Boetie explains to Corporal Bothes how the stars can be used to tell direction and identifies some stars and planets that are visible. In this scene the supposed student becomes the teacher as Boetie is more knowledgeable about this subject than Bothes. The following day their unit is in an armoured

vehicle when they are ambushed. The source of the ambush is never explicitly revealed as the enemy is only represented through gunfire and explosions coming from the anonymous bush. In this situation the Corporal and soldiers are now suddenly a well-drilled machine: they are all taking cover together and following the Corporal's exact instructions. Corporal Bothes urges them to stay close and that if they make any wrong moves they could be killed. He instructs one of the troops to reestablish radio contact with the base. He then urges them to move. At this point he is shot, and dramatically falls in slow motion. Boetie's voice can be heard calling out in anguish "Korporaal!" Boetie then urges the troops to follow him and they go storming into the bush. At this point the viewer is left only hearing gunshots and explosions. One of the troops has been left behind, and he manages to call the base. He then crawls over to tell the Corporal and realizes he is alone. He lies in fear flinching at the gunshots and explosions. The sounds clear out and heroic music announces the emergence of Boetie and other troops out of the smoke walking tall. Boetie kicks the ground making dust as he walks out at the front of the troops holding his gun. The implication of this scene is that they have just killed all the anonymous enemies in the bushes. The tough music is interrupted as Boetie kneels down next to the Corporal's body. He stutters between tears saying "Korporaal?" "Korporaal?" Boetie places his hand on the Corporal's shoulder at which point Bothes moves his head and smiles at Boetie. Boetie smiles through his tears and says "We are all right". He then repeats this, shouting, and the theme music begins as helicopters arrive through the smoke, playing the title song: "We've got the world on our side and we just don't give a damn."

In this film we see a narrative where whiteness is normalised to the extent that it is almost made invisible. The film was created for the intended audience of South Africans during apartheid, who lived in a context where they were aware of the institutionalized racial divisions and oppression of the apartheid government's policies. Blackness is excluded from this filmic representation except for three cases: the character of James the butler, the conscript's Bob Marley shirt, and the invisible implied threat of the enemy in the bushes at the border. The character of Boetie sets up the white male as the ultimate example of masculinity and humanity. bell hooks identifies how in the white supremacist capitalist patriarchal society that we live in black men and white women are positioned to equally compete with one another for the favours that white "daddies" (men) in power can afford to them (1996:105). If either of these groups forget this they are bombarded with images in the mainstream media which remind them to submit to white patriarchy in order to succeed in society (1996: 105). We can read the female characters and the character of James as

illustrating this. All the female characters are there in relation to the needs of their male counterparts. Ball's wife is bearing his child and all the women Boetie interacts with he sleeps with and moves on. They are interchangeable to him: he even goes as far as using the name "Bokkie" to refer to each of them. The only woman he ends up showing any love interest with is the woman who does not mind being referred to as "Bokkie", thus illustrating that for a woman to succeed she must mould herself around the needs and desires of the powerful white man. Similarly, James is portrayed as Boetie's close ally, someone to confide in, yet he only holds this position as he is a dutiful and diligent servant to Boetie. The fact that he is coloured re-enforces the imposed hierarchies of race which the apartheid government engineered. The character of James conforms to hooks' analysis of portrayals of black males through advertising and films in solitary roles away from their families and communities and always in support of the white supremacist capitalist patriarchal system (1996:111). These portrayals reaffirm the power of white males to viewers with the intention of making black males insecure and feeling that they need to pay allegiance to the system. hooks describes this as an ongoing process of neo-colonialism (1996:11). The invisible enemies in the bushes take on the face of all black South Africa whilst also allowing for other characteristics such as the implied threat of Communism. In the film, when Kevin John Ball's son is born he calls out imitating the signature sound made popular by representations of the character Tarzan. hooks makes an example of the "Tarzan" television show she grew up watching as an example of colonial representation. The show centred on the portrayal of a white man who is orphaned in Africa and who becomes the master of his environment. This implies white men are powerful on alien soil whilst the antagonists were always African kings and queens corrupt with greed from whom the character Tarzan would save the helpless natives (hooks 1996:110). Ball represents himself as Tarzan, imposing the white male as the master of Africa.

In Richard Dyer's book *White* (1997) he talks about the invisibility of whiteness. He traces this in Western culture to its roots in the material culture of eighteenth century Europe and its imposition on other countries through western imperialism. This invisibility stems from the concept that the human being is not of the body and the planet but an individual spirit created by an external force (1997: 15). He explains this by looking at how the ideas of Christianity framed and influenced ways of thinking. Dyer explains how the body forms the basis of Christian imagery: birth and death, the Nativity and crucifixion. These images have been endlessly remade in western culture. Painting, sculpture, theatre (school nativity plays) cinema and television (1997: 15). Over past half century Christianity itself has been on the

decline in Europe but its discourse is still constitutive of European consciousness in colonies and ex-colonies, like South Africa and notably the United States of America. This is constituted by many of the fundamentals of all levels of Western culture, parenting, especially motherhood, sex, the value of suffering, guilt, and the shock of post enlightenment materialism (Dyer 1997:15). bell hooks identifies how the colonizing culture's manipulation of representation is essential to the maintenance of white supremacist capitalist patriarchy (hooks 1996: 105). In this way the introduction of the ideas of western Christianity to South Africa through colonialism formed part of the initial process of ensuring an ongoing reproduction of the ideas of capitalism and materialism. To explain the relationship between materialism and Western Christianity, Dyer points out how Islam and Judaism come from similar origins yet neither share Christianity's bodily sacramental focus. Islam for example forbids representation of the Prophet whilst Christianity is obsessed with representations of Christ's body (1997:16).

European Christianity portrays Christ as a racially white body. All emphasis is placed on the body, yet Christianity as a philosophy is actually about spirit, something in the body, not of the body but of God, spirit, mind or soul. Dyer explains that this is the basis for Western dualistic philosophy and underlies many of the grand narratives of European Christianity. An example is the apostolic succession (the notion of an unbroken chain of laying on of hands in ordination of priests that constitutes typically a bodily act, the passing on of the spirit that came upon the apostles after Christ's death) that then premised ideas such as the divine right of kings, the doctrine that kings ruled from a direct line from God (Dyer 1997:16). The European Enlightenment brought a re-emphasis on placing the white man as centre of human endeavour. It appeared as a supposed break from Christianity but in reality maintained the idea of spirit or soul as something within the body but not of the body. In this way Christianity maintains a split between mind and body, with the body regarded as inferior or evil (Dyer 1997:17). Christ is fully god and fully human. Signs of humanity are his appetites, temptations and suffering. Mary is provided with Christ the child through the idea of her purity which is premised on her virginity. Both Mary and Christ provide models of behaviour and being to which humans may aspire and emulate. The manner in which European Christianity has raced representations of these archetypes as white is an example of establishing white supremacy through the institution of the church.

Boetie gaan border toe! (1984) was made with the intention of influencing identity amongst white and black South Africans. It was made in an attempt to ensure the interests of white supremacist capitalist patriarchal power in South Africa. I have grown up after

apartheid ended yet I have still interacted with similar archetypes and images which have affirmed my whiteness and masculinity, framing the way that I view the world around me.

In bell hook's book *Reel to Real* (1996) she identifies how few films that are produced in the United States address issues of race, sex and class in an inclusive manner from a critical location. hooks makes examples of Spike Lee's "progressive cinematic messages of race but reactionary visions of gender" and Oliver Stone's focus on "national identity and imperialism whilst ignoring race". She explains these as examples of how "artists in this culture have difficulty imaginatively seeing the whole picture because we all have been socialised to work in parts – to see only fragments"(1996:35). How do we continue to be socialised to see in this way? In Stuart Hall's essay "Cultural Identity and Diaspora" he explains identity as "a matter of becoming as well as being" (1990: 222). He states that identity belongs to the future as much as to the past. Cultural identity has a history but is in a state of constant transformation. As human beings we exist within an increasingly global and connected world, interacting on the internet through social media platforms. One's cultural identity helps one associate with other human beings. Within our context of global communication we live in a world governed by organized power structures.

In Raewyn Connel's essay "Organized Powers" (2011) she focusses on the effects of a group of men, first world financiers and managers, and how their actions shaped the effects of the HIV epidemic through their control of the distribution of medication. She identifies how their profit-driven incentive allowed for the prices of antiretroviral medication to exclude vast majorities of patients around the world allowing millions of people to die. She contextualises how we live in a world where powerful institutions such as transnational corporations (TNCs), global capital markets, multinational agencies, superpower security forces and international media are key features (2011:87). Connel identifies how these are strongly gendered power structures dominated by white men. As evidence she lists examples of gender segregation in TNC labour forces in workplaces such as export processing zones; the almost total dominance of men at the top levels of TNC management; military control; the arms trade; international organizations such as the World Bank; the masculinization of capital market trading floors and business media; the sexualisation of women in global mass media; the internationalization of the sex trade; and gender segregation of the international sports industries (2011: 87). Image based industries are utilised by power structures in attempts to control and influence public consumer perceptions and inadvertently influence aspects of identity construction. Arjun Appadurai investigates this process through the concepts of mediascapes and ideoscapes. He describes these as closely related landscapes of

information such as newspapers, magazines, television stations and film production studios. They also refer to the images of the world created by these media (1990: 590). Appadurai states that mediascapes are created through a relationship between the intended audience, the format – advertising, documentary, news or fiction – and the interests of those who own and control them. He states that what is important to observe about mediascapes is that they provide their viewers with a constant repertoire of images, narratives and cultural ideals in which the boundaries between commodity, entertainment, fiction, world news and politics are mixed (1990:590). This means that viewers' perceptions of reality and fiction are blurred and so they become removed from reality through a process of constructing their own imagined worlds. Mediascapes in other words are image based representations of constructed realities which people interact with when they experience them. These realities are created in order to be relatable to an audience with a specific intention of disseminating ideas. The viewer through a process of viewing experiences their own reality which is a combination of one's own subjective process of interpretation and the signs and symbols provided by the mediascape.

In this way *Boetie* is part of a mediascape created for white men to measure themselves against and emulate. White women are supposed to fit themselves into a subordinate role in relation to this male archetype. Black men and women are left to see themselves as an invisible threat, whose only option is to willfully be subordinate to Boetie and the white supremacist capitalism and patriarchy of the apartheid state or else be killed. In the following chapter I will provide a prologue for my practice work *Boetie is verlore*. Drawing upon my own experiences I will relate how I have been shaped by realities similar to that represented through Boetie.

CHAPTER THREE: PROLOGUE

The school I went to is named after Colonel John Graham's original Scottish clan, Graeme (Graeme College 2015). Colonel John Graham was a soldier who was responsible for the brutal clearing operation conducted by the British in 1812. Historian Julia Wells states that the aim of this operation was to to displace the amaXhosa from the area that is now known as the Eastern Cape. Colonel Graham and his men used extreme violence to conduct this, indiscriminately killing men women and children. They burnt farms and left the amaXhosa to starve as refugees through the winter (Wells 2014: 54,55).

I was born and raised in Grahamstown, named in honour of the success of this operation. Today the descendants of the amaXhosa make up the majority of the population but are still relegated to the peripheries of the town. This is set up and maintained through strategic town planning as a result of both colonialism and apartheid. The spatial planning is set up in order so that the white settler descendants enjoy the privileges of the space, living closer to the business center. They enjoy spacious suburbs with an abundance of trees, living near a number of elite learning institutions which have been traditionally set up to cater towards this white minority. I have had the privilege of attending Graeme College and Rhodes University, both examples of such institutions. Both institutions exist as ideological state apparatus of Britain (Althusser 1971: 142). Louis Althusser describes ideological and repressive state apparatus as mechanisms which are set up in order to maintain the status quo in favour of those who own the means of production. This is achieved through a reproduction of ideas and maintained by force. Schools, universities and public media are examples of ideological state apparatuses while the police force, military and private security companies are examples of repressive state apparatuses (Althusser 1971: 142). Both institutions exist as a result of the expansion of the empire. The values which have underpinned this process form the foundations for the reproduction of the "white supremacist hetero-normative capitalist patriarchal system" (hooks 1996: 105) within which we live.

Institutions like Rhodes University and Graeme College in South Africa are biased by the historicised perspective they maintain. Learners are taught about the world from a particular vantage point. This is a white European male perspective of discourse, where this point of view is made the norm and not questioned, thus leaving it invisible. This institutionalises the Eurocentric perspective of history, thus naturalising and normalising the coloniser's version of events. I would argue that these institutions reproduce the foundations of our political system, what bell hook's refers to as "imperialist white supremacist capitalist

patriarchy” (hooks 1996: 105). This is done through the historicised perspectives of their curriculums, cultural practices, names and symbols. At Graeme I learned to perform being a man amongst other men. Being an all-male school, it is an extremely gendered space. The institution itself is marketed on its website as being South Africa’s only all-male public school which runs from preschool to matric. As stated in the first chapter, all male schools teach men masculinity in relation to their absent other, women. Femininity is seen as a threat to the core identities which the school aims to inscribe. As the school normalises a Eurocentric white supremacist patriarchal perspective of history in the context of the colony, power relations are reproduced. This is a highly racialised and gendered space, advocating for compulsive heterosexuality. The power relations that are reproduced favour cis gender white men. Growing up at such a school as an English speaking white boy, my language was never questioned and I did not need to work nearly as hard as boys who were learning in their second language. Boys who spoke isiXhosa were often told by teachers that “this was not a township school”, and that they must only speak English when at school and in class. This is a specific manifestation of the broader discourse of the school which consistently favoured a perspective where white Eurocentric perspectives are elevated above everything else, enforcing this as the ideal to which all pupils at the school must aspire. The nationalist agenda of the cultural traditions at the school urges boys to become “Graemians”, what is implicit in this is that white Eurocentric Christian capitalism is modern and all other cultures must be forgone for progress.

The school was founded in 1872. It was initially housed in the Drostdy military Barracks (British military base) which now form part of the grounds of Rhodes University. According to the website Graeme College has only had thirteen head masters, implying that the “rich” cultural traditions established in 1872 have been strictly and meticulously maintained. Schools such as Graeme are set up upon the principles of reproducing imperial masculinities. These best serve the interests of the empire through the maintenance of the colonial status quo. This would involve cultivating the myth of individuality whilst urging unquestioning nationalist allegiance to school, church and state.

For my Masters I have set about with the intention of constructing a magic realist documentary which intends to be a mirror to this institutional reproduction of white supremacist heteronormative patriarchal capitalism. Taking my father’s PTSD as a result of the realities of conflict, I find the fantasy representation of the same conflict through *Boetie gaan border toe!* as an example of the intended construction of a mythologised reality. In between these two realities institutions such as Graeme form the middle ground, both

physically and mentally preparing boys for military service in support of a white supremacist patriarchal heteronormative capitalist agenda. The historicised perspective which is normalised through these institutions forms the foundation of the mythologies which fantasy constructions of reality such as *Boetie gaan border toe!* complement: a reality where white men are the top of the food chain and the ultimate self-worth of someone is measured through their material possessions. In this reality white women exist only to serve white men and black men and women are invisible and an implied threat.

I find that the racist, sexist and materialistic reality represented in the *Boetie gaan border toe!* film, is not unusual in my current context. On the contrary, I have grown up consuming an abundance of visual material presenting the same historicised political realities. In this way I wish through the production of my film to draw links between the on-going institutionalised productions of these realities. Boetie is contrasted against the invisible threat of the enemy in the bushes, the implied threat of what is deemed other by white capital. The school I grew up in taught us to be men in relation to the polarized and threatening identity of femininity. Similarly, the historicised perspective taught a polarisation away from the qualities associated with what has been deemed black.

In both the coat of arms for Graeme College and for Rhodes University (see Fi. 16,17), the symbols of Colonel John Graham and Cecil John Rhodes' family ancestry are placed alongside and supported by local indigenous wild life. Graeme has an ostrich, leopard and giraffe whilst Rhodes' incorporates a lion. The inclusion of these animals implies a dominant allegiance with the land whilst rendering the indigenous population invisible. It perpetuates the empty land mythology implying the coloniser's ownership and dominance, rooted in the land. Similarly this is played out in the opening sequence of *Boetie gaan border toe!*. The highway through an empty landscape frames Boetie and his partner's material lifestyle alongside the army that is there to defend this. Black South Africans are invisible and without land.

Spatial separation along class lines continues to exist. It is enforced by repressive state apparatuses, private security companies and the South African Police and defense forces. Colonialism and apartheid have resulted in class and race still being linked in South Africa. In Grahamstown students party in overalls, a tradition dictated by the university. According to the Centre For Applied Legal Studies, Rhodes University has the highest alcohol consumption in the country. The university is positioned next to the centre of town which has a number of drinking establishments. The following is an extract from a series of interviews I

conducted for the film. I interviewed University students partying and car guards working the same stretch of street on the same evening.

Q: what does it mean to be a Rhodent?

Student: “It means you can do what nobody else does in this town, and that is have more fun than any one, achieve much more than anyone and just over all, above everyone else, you can do what you want, but within the parameters of the law, because the law is everything.”

Car Guard: “look here, there are a lot of people standing here but they (the police) will come to me, and say get out of the town. And now me, I didn’t see the board in the township that say I must go, at this time I am supposed to be out of the town? I see people walking day and night.”

This difference in the experiences of the same physical space is illustrative of the way in which repressive state apparatuses are continually engineered and enforced to favour those privileged with capital. White students would hardly ever expect to be accosted by police. Black students who are clearly of a certain class and in spaces of privilege are also unlikely to be harassed. As spatial apartheid is still enforced on the basis of class and the history of the space is rooted in class separation based on race, the working class still predominantly has a black face and the bourgeoisie a white one. In this context if you are black and perceived to be of a working class background you are continuously subject to police and private security harassment. Students heading back to campus are often stopped and asked for their student cards if perceived to be of working class origins whilst I, for example, as a white student have never been subject to such treatment.

In the *Boetie* reality white women are purely objects for white male pleasure to be used and discarded, whilst black women are completely invisible. The following is a memory of mine from Graeme College.

In grade 7 a German student teacher asked my class whether any of the white boys would date a black girl. No one put up their hand, I, even though knowing my opinion differed still gave in to the pressure. The teacher then asked the black boys in the class if they would ever date a white girl, all of them raised their hands.

In this narrative the white supremacist heteronormative patriarchal capitalist reality of *Boetie gaan border toe!* is reflected in real life. The format of the question by a teacher to a group of learners takes for granted a reality where men date women. By this it is implied that women are something that men partake in based on superficial attractions. The fact that the women

asked about are subcategorized by race already implies that the determining factor of having a romantic relationship with someone is foundationally based in how they look. Further from the answers it is clear how society's standards of beauty are in line with a white supremacist patriarchal view, where women's appearances are measured against an ideal beauty associated with whiteness and centred on the approval of men. I would argue that this narrative presents a window into the everyday violence of these institutional spaces. Violent for the boys whose impressions are being shaped through white supremacy, patriarchy and enforced heteronormativity. Violent for women who although not present physically will be met by the subjectivities which the boys are shaping. Violent for the black boys in the class who are having to constantly negotiate white supremacy and internal self-loathing being cultivated from this. Violent for the white boys whose invisible supremacist viewpoints blind them to the violence they enact on others as well as themselves. Paulo Freire's *Pedagogy of the oppressed* outlines how dehumanization is a historic reality. Within capitalist society there are those who oppress and those that are oppressed. Both have lost their humanity. The oppressor's reality causes those that are oppressed to strive initially to become oppressors themselves (men) in relation to the status quo that has been set up by the oppressors. The oppressed are tasked with liberating both themselves and their oppressors as the oppressors themselves have been dehumanized by their obsession with material reality over human life (Freire 1970: 27).

Institutions such as Graeme College, the Christian church and media representations such as *Boetie gaan border toe!* reproduce the oppressors' reality through representations that present a mediated aspirational ideal of humanity based on individualism, materialism, race, class and gender. As these representations are institutionalized throughout our mediatized culture, people identify with this reality. Therefore, as a result of this prescription to the oppressors reality, the oppressed have internalized an image of the oppressor and are fearful of freedom as that would mean doing away with prescribed reality and acceptance of autonomy and responsibility to create new realities. *Boetie gaan border toe* is an illustrative result of the need for the oppressors (white apartheid South Africa) to police and mediate an image of themselves. The oppressed remain invisible except for the white female characters and the black butler who both fulfill the prescribed reality of the oppressors. It is important for the oppressors to control and maintain the oppressed's invisibility and lack of autonomy through the control of representations of race, gender, class and sexuality to suit the maintenance of the oppressors' status quo: "white supremacist heteronormative capitalist patriarchy" (hooks 1996: 105).

In the “new” South Africa cultural imperialism continues to dictate representation. The image of success, excess and individualism continues to be institutionalized. Rhodes University for example is advertised as a place of “individual excellence, where leaders learn” (Rhodes University 2015). Rhodes University is positioned in Grahamstown which exists as an island in the poorest province of South Africa. The majority of the population of Grahamstown has no hope of sending their children to Rhodes University. Within this context the cultural tradition of wearing overalls by Rhodes students, in order to party, should be interrogated. Overalls are traditionally a symbol of the working class. However at Rhodes they are a symbol of allegiance to the concept of being a “Rhodent”, a Rhodes University graduate, and are closely related to ideas of excess and individualism associated with the drinking culture at the university. In the broader context of capitalist exploitation of cheap labour, the privileged elite of Rhodes University wearing attire usually worn by workers whilst stripping the attire of any symbolic connection to the workers renders these workers invisible. Instead the students are free to enjoy the fruits of exploitative labour without any conscience or connection to these people. Therefore the wearing of overalls by privileged students in order to party serve as a way of dehumanizing the work force and rendering them as invisible objects only to be used and enjoyed by the bourgeoisie. Paulo Freire states that for the oppressors, human rights only apply to themselves. All other people around them are just things to be used. The oppressors do not see their monopoly as a privilege which dehumanizes themselves and others. They cannot see that in the egoistic pursuit of having as a possessing class, they suffocate in their own obsessions and no longer are, they merely have (Freire 1970:39, 40).

The institutionalised ritual of wearing overalls at Rhodes University, the invisibility of blackness and the representation of white women as objects in *Boetie gaan border toe!* can all be seen as examples of the (white supremacist capitalist patriarchal) oppressors’ controlling representation of the oppressed in order to ensure they are changed into inanimate “things” (Freire 1970:41). This tendency of the oppressive consciousness to “in-animate” everything and everyone it encounters through its eagerness to possess, unquestionably corresponds with a tendency to sadism. Freire defines sadism as the pleasure in complete domination over another human being. The aim of sadism is to transform a human being into a thing (Freire 1970:42).

When I think about the way I was sexualized, I realize that I have dehumanized myself and others around me through engaging in a culture which has taught me to categorize and objectify other human beings based on appearance. My first memory of sexual arousal

through seeing naked women was on a page torn out of a magazine when I was twelve. Boys at my school who had access to such material would distribute these in class. These images were coveted material and boys would barter over them. Technology brought handheld access to such representations of women through internet searches on mobile devices. When I was fourteen I would lock myself in my room and spend hours googling images of naked women. When using the Google search engine to do such a thing one would realize that “women” is synonymous with white women: the invisible norm. Images of women who are of different nationalities and races are subcategorized into genres such as “ebony”, “asian”, “latina”, “arab” etc. The rest of the world raced and categorized whilst whiteness remains invisible. This violent act of consuming images which objectified women’s bodies carried over into the way I viewed myself. In the privacy of the locked bathroom I would voyeuristically imitate the simulated sexualized poses to my own satisfaction. Consuming this material taught me both to objectify and insinuated that women expect/wish/desire to be objectified.

When I was five I remember receiving my first “action man” figurine from my gran. This would be the start of a collection she and my parents would contribute to at Christmas times and on birthdays. These “action” men were white military dolls of a similar shape and size to the Barbie dolls advertised to girls. They had muscles and each had a scar on the left cheek. Each figurine came with its own special action: one swam in water if you wound its arms back. Another came with a reproduction of an AK-47 assault rifle and had a parachute so you could throw him up in the air. This character “action man” I immediately associated with the character of James Bond whom I first encountered at the age of eight. Through this character I was immediately introduced to a code of conduct with which “real men” interact with women. This was an idea of masculine promiscuity and the necessity to sleep with many different women in order to fulfill this identity. Around this time I requested a female Barbie doll. I named her Lucy Star and she would accompany “action man” on his adventures. I was very aware of the two as romantically involved, but had not yet encountered explicit sexual imagery so their relationship only carried the influence of Bond and his liaisons as part of the adventure.

The pornography I encountered from the age of twelve and the further access through the internet at age fourteen provided a new lens through which I viewed male-female relationships and sexuality. It provided a new way of reading Bond’s liaisons and a new way of fantasizing about sex. The cultural background noise I experienced through my interactions with everything from music videos, popular music, television talk shows, sexual

innuendoes in family sit coms and scantily clad women in advertising all supported my longing and fantasizing about a sexual encounter. This led me to initiate my first sexual encounter at the age of fifteen through the social networking platform MXIT which was popular amongst South African teenagers at the time. MXIT provided access to chat rooms where I would spend hours attempting to initiate private conversations with other users representing themselves as and who I assumed were women from around the country. The girl who I lost my virginity to was older and lived in my neighbourhood. On MXIT she had told me she was not a virgin and I pretended the same which led to our encounter.

In hindsight I would diagnose myself at that age as addicted to pornography. As phone technology became better the images only became clearer. As a teenager I would spend hours in my room consuming images of racialised and categorized naked women, a blurred faceless mass which inhabits my subconscious. This impacted my relationships with real women and other men. In my social setting at school amongst other boys this practice of consuming images was completely normalised and a widespread practice. Enjoying such material was considered a normal healthy part of asserting your heterosexuality. Boys also would brag about their real life sexual encounters, further objectifying women, girls we knew. Within this terrain I was complicit in asserting my manhood in this space by further bragging about my own encounters. In fact part of the driving force behind me losing my virginity so young was in order to assert my masculinity within this space.

My first proper relationship introduced me to a different aspect of sex, one related to love or the idea of love and a far more fulfilling intimacy. Yet the underlying urge to consume and be fulfilled through the seduction of many other women meant that I was continually unfaithful in this relationship and ones to follow. Whenever I would engage in the act of alcohol consumption, “going out” and “partying”, the underlying implied subconscious goal of the process was to find someone to sleep with. This did not only relate to women as I experimented with men. This was always initiated through “going out”. The idea of “partying” and “hooking up”, the “one night stand” is one that I became familiar with through the popular music, television and movies which me and my peers grew up consuming. This combined with the compulsive objectification which I developed as a teenager means that whenever to this day I enter a bar and have a drink I have the subconscious desire of finding someone I find attractive and instigating a sexual encounter. In my life this has brought me a vicious cycle, in some instances I value the experiences and connections I have made but other times it follows a pattern of regret and self-loathing. I have led people on and

objectified them in order to fulfill my own desires without thinking of the emotional pain and trauma potentially caused by my actions.

In order to curb this process I have stopped consuming pornography and have moved away from excessive alcohol consumption. Yet my interactions with women I find attractive are still problematic. Through my formative process of violent objectification and consumption I have developed a language of interaction with women and men where I flirt in order to feel desired, a selfish act out of desperation in search of self-fulfillment and recognition. My experiences are not unique as much of what I have learned I have taken from my environment, one shared and affirmed by those around me. In order to change ideas we must be honest with ourselves and look critically at what is normalized through the spaces where ideas are produced. White supremacy capitalism and patriarchy frame a culture of violent hyper-sexualization and consumption which incubates racism, sexism, homophobia and rape culture. These concepts are as a result of the attempted maintenance of power relations in favour of white supremacy, capitalism and patriarchy. As a white male I cannot truly fight against this without honestly staring in the face the violence my own actions have had on others. My racism, sexism, classism and homophobia. My consumption through objectification. My self-perception as a womanizer and the validation this image receives from my cultural context. I want to be a feminist but first I need to call myself out. I need to stand and properly survey the violence I have enacted on others.

Although this narrative is personal I feel it is relevant as the ideological material which influenced these experiences continue to operate influencing society. In the following chapter I will discuss the film I have constructed entitled *Boetie is verlore*.

CHAPTER FOUR: BOETIE IS VERLORE

In Sara Ahmed's essay entitled "The Phenomenology of Whiteness" (2007) she points out how any project which aims to be critical of whiteness also runs the risk of perpetuating what it aims to critique (2007: 149). With the making of this film I have tried to be highly conscious of that and yet already feel there are instances where I fall close to replicating the manner in which imperialist white supremacist heteronormative capitalist patriarchal ideologies make certain identities and experiences invisible whilst privileging other voices. With this film I have tried to turn a mirror to these privileged voices, who are already visible, yet my aim in doing this is to emphasise the grotesque realities of dehumanization which inevitably takes place through an embracement of objects over human beings. I am wary of Sara Ahmed's point as with this work I am privileging already privileged voices in an attempt to critique this privilege. As the film seeks to engage the construction of militarized white masculinities, I felt that in places the film could be perceived as quite masculine. I worried earlier in this project that my feminist mother was not present in this work and that I had only drawn upon my father's entanglement with the SADF. My supervisor then pointed out to me how my mother is present throughout the project as she is one of the motivating factors to even attempt such a critique and journey of unlearning.

Boetie is verlore (Brother is lost) is a reference to the caricature of Boetie from *Boetie gaan border toe!* Boetie (Brother) was no doubt chosen for its broad inclusivity, implying the character as an aspirational example of appropriate masculinity for white South African men to model themselves against. The title *Boetie is verlore* is intended to point out how this idea of militarised white masculinity is in crisis and disconnected from humanity. I have chosen to use a collage of interviews and constructed dream sequences in order to reference magic realism. My understanding of a documentary is that it is a medium which presents itself as something close to truth. I see this as an interesting contradiction as I see a documentary as something just as subjectively constructed as a painting. With this film I did not aim to present something as truth but instead wished through the use of magic realism to intuitively make a response to Boetie which brings this caricature into the present in order to highlight continuities in the production of similar realities. The Film opens with an image taken from the cover of a Jehovah's Witness pamphlet. In this image a white nuclear family stare blankly into the distance while text to their right asks "Does God really care about us?". The image begins to scroll down and a second question is posed "if so why does he permit pain and

suffering?” I have chosen to begin with this in order to foreground the picture the film paints of classism, white privilege and excessive escapist consumption culture with western Christianity. A number of collages I have created follow this image, each of these have been created using repetition in order to reference the reproduction of ideas. The images themselves provide a schematics for issues that will come up later in the film and serve as frame through which to view the material. The collage’s reference images of white supremacist capitalist heteronormative patriarchy. The collages themselves have been filmed off a computer screen and so my reflection is vaguely visible at moments. This is intended to reference the manner in which I myself have been shaped and socialized by such imagery. In the centre of the collages a video of a shopping mall appears. The mall itself looks temple like and is intended in combination with the collaged imagery to provide an introductory frame to the rest of the film. The mall transitions to a group of European tourists surveying the valley of Grahamstown from the vantage point of Fort Selwyn, a former British military base (see Fig. 18.). This is layered with an image of a street artwork by artist Boda. The painting is a grotesque face with multiple twisted and anguished expressions. These have been painted in many parts of Grahamstown and for me personally reference the underlying violence of whiteness. I have then layered an image of a “Remember Marikana” also written on a wall. Both these images are layered over the tourists, in order so that you can still see them. I have used this layering technique throughout the film in order to create conversations and meanings between different materials. I have used an image of a cow in the street alongside the mall and the tourists and a series of barred and locked suburban houses. This is in order to reference ownership of land and further intended to frame what is followed. The colonial empty land myth is perpetuated through the imagery from *Boetie* on the high way. Boetie is framed through his material possessions as the troops ask “waar is die jol?” and Boetie inserts a cassette. I have replaced the theme music with a composition by South African collagist and music producer Caydon Van Eck. In this music he samples and references the mainstream hip hop artist Drake. I used this so as to draw a link between the materialistic and patriarchal content of the Boetie opening sequence. The iconography of the sports car, champagne, Rolex and interchangeable female partner in order to introduce and frame the character Boetie is very reminiscent of mainstream music videos today, especially that of the mainstream hip hop music videos I have grown up watching. The artist Drake references this formula in his music video for the song, “Started from the Bottom” (2013). In this music video it tells the narrative of him finding success through the American dream. It begins with him working in a retail outlet and then continually cuts between that and him

standing inside a convertible white sports car in all-white clothing, with fake snow blowing over him as he drives through the suburbs (See Fig. 19.) . He in later scenes jumps out of the car and raps while walking alongside it. This shows his attempt at possibly questioning the fake qualities associated with industry standards.

Framing individuals through their material possessions is something we see all around us in contemporary popular culture. With the Drake reference through sound I wanted to reference this. There is also another layer to this reference, the sampled Drake reference comes in as the champagne has been popped and the female passenger is standing in order to toast the troops. I wanted to use this visual reference to white supremacist self-indulgent individualistic consumption culture whilst alluding to the way whiteness makes use of cultural appropriation. This is an underlying theme I reference throughout. In an interview with a white Afrikaans male currently serving in the South African National Defence Force (see Fig. 20.), he speaks of a Miley Cyrus song entitled “23” that he really likes (2013). Miley Cyrus is an American former Disney child star who has now become famous as a hiphop artist. The soldier speaks of how, “when we high we just like to listen to this gangster shit”. He speaks of how popular culture serves as a function in order to help him get into his civilian identity. This is especially disturbing as he talks about going out to clubs and “getting some chicks” in reference to the American reality television show *Jersey Shore* (2009-2012). He states: “we live like they do, we bring chicks over and when we are done we call them a cab and just walk them to main gate.”

Jersey Shore is a reality television show where a group of male and female Italian Americans stay in a house, party, sleep with each other and fight. The show is extremely patriarchal and heteronormative as well as having no black characters (see Fig. 21). The model of masculinity which is presented is a violent one where one’s male identity relies on fighting and sleeping with numerous women. The soldier also speaks of lyrics “we’ve got the choppers in the car” by rapper Rick Ross, where “choppers” refers to a machine gun. He recounts how he and friends when off duty bought a “chopper” to keep in the car, inspired by the song. In relation to the Miley Cyrus song he states that when he is at the club he is always looking for a girl like Miley: “I’m looking for someone who is classy but she doesn’t give a fuck about anything.”

With this interview I wanted to emphasise the blurring of fantasy and reality. When asked further about his civilian mindset he explains how “you spend the whole day at work and when you are finally off you just want to forget, and this music helps me relax into my civilian mindset.”

There is an irony with the following song that he plays in the interview, Anti flag's 1998 song "I don't want to be like you." He plays this song while recounting how because of his father being in the military he felt the obligation to join as with his father's father before him. He states that he recently went for Special Forces training and got a Zippo lighter burn on his arm. He says how he is proud of this so that he may show the burn to his son one day. All this while the lyrics "I don't want to be you, I don't want to be just like you" plays from his cellphone in his hand. The narrative of the zippo burn in relation to his father, grandfather and future son captures a sense of the reproduction of ideas.

This interview is layered over cellphone footage taken from the vantage point of the back of a military vehicle during training. This aims to constantly contextualize the interview. The imagery of landscape passing by references the continual use of military action in favor of enforcing access to land and resources. The constant popular culture references in relation to constructing real lived reality captures elements of contemporary identity construction which resonates with that of the Boetie reality.

The next series of interviews centres on the "jol". It focusses on the ideological branding of Rhodes University, (see fig. 22). I aim with this to capture the enforced class-based spacial apartheid of contemporary South Africa. The interviews all took place on one night on New Street in Grahamstown. New Street is a central street in the small town which contains many drinking establishments and coffee shops frequented by students. As the majority of Grahamstown's population is unemployed, New Street is a space where extreme inequality becomes apparent. Many people use the street as a means of income through such things as car guarding and washing cars. The following short story I have written illustrates the difference in realities experienced on the same street by privileged students and car guards working. I have included it as it encapsulates some of what I have tried to capture through the interviews I conducted on New Street for the film.

The boys across the street staggered tall, well fed and fresh off a USN growth supplement programme their high school rugby coach had suggested. Their drunken hollers blended into the howling wails of a few hundred voices singing along with the Rat and Parrot's playlist. The Pub was a double storey building with a glassed off balcony on the second floor. This resulted in a situation where anyone on the street below could witness the spectacle of flat screen TVs and a drunken crowd. The street itself buzzed as drunken students made their way up and down between the various clubs and bars, jabbering at each other, taking no notice of the car guards and street hustlers.

Deveron stood at his usual spot. "Friday..." Robo spoke up to his right. They shared a cigarette while watching the boys across the street. "That one on the right is a

loud, never does me any favours, always swears at me if I ask him for,” he trailed off as another group walked passed. They stopped in the street a few metres away, girls in high heels and tiny skirts. The one retrieving a sleek Galaxy smart phone in order to take a group selfie. They moved on.

Deveron was tired tonight he needed sleep. He had been up for two nights and needed to crash soon. He couldn't leave yet though, there was rain coming and his aunt needed money for paraffin. Back across the street, the boys were whistling at another group of girls, flexing muscles in tank tops with their purple overalls tied at the waists. “I never got the whole overalls thing,” Robo began after flicking the cigarette, “Overalls are something used by the men they have working in their gardens, mines, hard work. All these mense ever seem to do is drink their parents geld away.” “Boss's son goes to boss's school to become boss, Illuminati” Deveron concluded. The boys now crossed the street with one of the girls; she appeared to be the one's girlfriend. They passed Deveron and Robo, continuing their conversation not bothering them a glance. Deveron followed them into the light of the side street, illuminating the yellow on his dirty high res vest. A new black Golf GTI. The couple were now inside blasting trance music from their system. Deveron liked some dark psy trance, but mostly house music. In his head he cringed at the bubble-gum thud of the euro trance they were playing. The driver, the taller one whom Robo had referred to as earlier was standing to the side of the car, his zipper unzipped and aimed at the back tire. He turned his head towards Deveron and said “Hey my man how's about I give you a hundred bucks if I can piss on you!” Laughing he turned wildly banging on the car window and yelling, “Mikie, Mikie this ou doesn't want a hundred bucks hahaha.” Deveron stood silently making that in another place/time I'll show you mental note. He was used to this sort of behaviour, there were of course nice students, none he would consider friends but definitely connections. The driver flicked a 50-cent coin in Deveron's direction and jumped in the drivers' seat, making a show of revving the engine before pulling off. He was a child, Deveron acknowledged, a large dangerous child, but not hard. The street and hunger makes you hard. He returned to the corner where Robo stood. Another group passed with loud giggles, “Hashtag oh my god!” someone shouted.

The interviews I conducted were with students wearing overalls on New Street, asking them why they were dressed in this attire and what it means to be a Rhodes student (see Fig.23-25). The answers are revealing of blind conformity to tradition without questioning the use of such symbolically charged attire. I have framed the introduction to these interviews through a collage of found imagery accessed on Facebook. The imagery is all from the “Send your kids to Rhodes” Facebook page created and administered by students where images of debauchery are uploaded and encouraged. This is combined with music I have created which repetitively state's “students continue to party as they do” alongside imagery of Cecil John Rhodes and an iconic photo of the miners at Marikana. This year has seen a wave of student protest around the country with a mandate to decolonize institutions and challenge the colonial legacies of individuals such as Cecil John Rhodes. Rhodes being an architect of the exploitative and dehumanizing labour system which is a continuation of apartheid today.

The layering of this imagery over the students' answers is intended to draw connections between Rhodes the man who made his blood money through the exploitation, the Marikana massacre and the purple branding of Rhodes the university. The Marikana massacre took place at Lonmin platinum mine in 2012, where thirty four miners were gunned down for asking for a minimum wage increase. None of the students make the link between overalls and the working class. Instead they view them as a symbol of "unity" between students. Further, many state that being a Rhodes student means being "free". On the other hand the car guards regard the students as a source of income. Instead they are most preoccupied with harassment from the police (see Fig.26.). Two young men who wished only their torsos be filmed relate how the police will gather up working class people if they are on the "wrong" side of town after a certain time at night, and will drive them out to a farm where they will be beaten and pepper sprayed. After speaking to these men outside of Debonairs Pizza, I went inside and spoke to two students who stated that being a Rhodes student meant the pizza they were about to eat.

The next interviews I have used are with two American missionaries who had come to Grahamstown in 2014 (see Fig. 32.). Their presence in the film is to frame the history of missionaries and their part in colonialism as an ongoing process. Their ideas of the world are shown to be limited as they are not allowed to watch news during the period they are abroad. Yet they patronizingly diagnose the problems with South Africa: "South Africa it's a little more dangerous than we are used to, but that makes it exciting to say that we were here for two years." This perspective is a telling example of the manner in which these missionary programs incentivize people to become missionaries through adventure whilst spreading American imperialism and reinstating superiority complexes. I have layered the American missionaries over video footage of Rhodes students partying, taken from youtube. The layering of these is intended to reference the manner in which through American cultural imperialism we are taught to reference American culture. The party culture at Rhodes is deeply influenced by the fantasy image of "spring break". The missionaries stare into the distance, overlooking the valley of Grahamstown. I have then layered the final scene from *Boetie gaan border toe!* Where a chopper arrives blowing dust while Boetie crouches over the 'korperaal' biting back tears and repeating "ons is alright" (we are alright). This is layered over a video of a black man in sunglasses pouring water over himself in slow motion. I filmed this initially in collaboration with the actor, performance artist Thatho Lesoro for the purpose of a friend's music video. The scene is intentionally referencing popular cultural imagery that would appear in music videos and advertising. The students' partying is the

background layer. The combination of these three is intended to read as follows, Boetie stating “ons is alright” has connotations for white South Africa, “we have secured our privilege and resources we are alright”, this layer is shielded from the partying students by the aspirational image of “cool” black masculinity. Boetie is telling the students that we are alright, but inadvertently that we continue to benefit from existing apartheid whilst the students interpret this through an idealised fantasy of blackness. These serves as the final moments of the film, the layers disappear and the viewer is left with the students. Bright text appears telling the viewer to “enjoy capitalism” while students excessively pour alcohol on each other. The music I have used for this scene is intended to create an ominous mood, framing the imagery. It fades to black and a window suddenly appears where a white man in armour stands peering out at the viewer through curtains and security bars. This intended as a last reference to the underlying psychotic paranoia manifested through living in a stolen land in a stolen house. Having material possessions whilst others do not.

The magic realist dream sequences I have used, centre around my own experience of my socialization as a white man in South Africa; going to a British imperialist model boys’ school. I have used a red robed figure with a white mask as a signifier for colonial discourse (see Fig. 33.). When I first began using this figure to do so my father pointed out a story by American writer Edgar Allen Poe entitled “The Masque of the Red Death” (1842). In this story there is a kingdom where grave inequality and disease plagued the general public. During this time the king and the entire bourgeoisie barricaded themselves behind the palace walls in order to wait out the plague. They spent their time enjoying lavish parties and attempting to forget the outside world. In one of the rooms there was a clock which would chime at midnight. This would cause everyone at the party to pause, momentarily reminded of the outside world, and then the party would continue. At one of these parties, a masked ball, the king noticed an unfamiliar figure dressed all in red robes and a mask, standing by the clock. He immediately called for the guards to seize the figure and remove his mask. The king then stares into the eyes of his own death. Poe’s narrative further inspired my use of the red robed figure. I initially chose the outfit as it carried visual references to the academic gowns and religious vestments of institutions such as universities and the church. In Poe’s story I found a metaphoric picture of privileged white South Africa barricading themselves behind private security companies and continuing to enjoy the Jol whilst the majority of the population starves. In the name itself, the “*Red Death*” carries interesting connotations with the apartheid government’s fear of communism, the *rooi gevaar* (red danger) which drove much of the apartheid propaganda in support of the conflict. I therefore chose to use it as an

alternative title for *Boetie is verlore* as I liked the idea of subverting the fear of the *rooi gevaar* to mean the fear of capitalism, making the figure of the red death an embodiment of this.

The second fantasy figure I have used is a white boy in a mask, with an army print hat and Adidas t-shirt. The boy is sitting holding two swords in order to visually symbolize the violent reproduction of militarized masculinity (see Fig. 34). Alongside these two figures, the red death and the boy with swords, I have placed myself praying in a shopping mall (see Fig 35, 36). These sequences interrelate and I intend them to visually reference the sadism of consumer culture where we increasingly alienate ourselves from our humanity through our material possessions. The images of me kneeling in the mall aim to provide a frame through which to review the mall's aesthetics. In this context the mall appears far more temple like and the shop displays are cast in a new light. My aim with the combination of all these elements is to provide a visual representation of the ongoing reproduction of colonial identity. I wish for this to foreground the extreme restrictions of people's movement through classist repressive state apparatuses, using the example of the police on New Street. Whilst those in privileged positions enjoy an excess of materialistic pleasures. My focus has been to frame these extreme excesses through images from Boetie in order to highlight the ongoing intersections between consumption culture, escapism, racism, classism, compulsive hetero normativity and patriarchy.

CONCLUSION

With this project I have earnestly attempted to analyse the culture I have grown up a part of. I hope that this work can exist as a useful tool for people to contemplate the way in which we are socialized in relation to white supremacy. This work aims to draw the past into the present and hopefully exists as a sobering reminder of ongoing apartheid. It also aims to draw links to a broader global social context where militarised white masculinities continue to be reproduced. Growing up in a context where I have been raced white and gendered a man I have both experienced violence and perpetuated it towards others. Images of white militarised masculinity are re-produced and continue to influence people's identity construction. Within the current political context of South Africa the two richest South Africans Johan Rupert and Nicky Oppenheimer, both white men, have more wealth than half of the entire population combined (Forbes 2015). According to an Oxfam report South Africa continues to be the most unequal society on the planet (SABC 2015).

The gap between the rich and poor is larger today than it was at the end of apartheid. I have had the privilege of attending what is considered a good school within this context yet this means I have been programmed to focus on achieving the aspirational Boetie reality. I have been dehumanized through being taught to value individualism and materialism above other human life. I have been taught my racial, class and gender superiority. I have been taught to receive other people's labour as a given which transforms them into objects for my use. I have been taught that women are objects to be used for my own pleasure and reproduction. These ideas continue to be manufactured around me.

White patriarchal capital must be challenged in order that we can unlearn and begin to humanize our society. Boetie is an extreme caricature of white patriarchal capitalism originating from the apartheid state, through bringing him into the present I wish to highlight the continuing reproduction of realities similar to this. My experiences and those from interviews I have conducted provide a testament to the manner in which constructed realities such as Boetie continue to influence identity construction, dehumanise people and cause violence.

I have been involved in the Black Student Movement at Rhodes this year. This has led me to interrogate my whiteness and patriarchal privilege in many different situations. In my work I have intentionally focussed on fundamental aspects of the Rhodes University branding; the overalls and party culture so as to critique the institution. I have been in two minds whether to include interviews and footage of the student movement and protests this

year. My resolve was to focus primarily on showing a mirror to aspects of the reproduction of the “Rhodent” branding. This was not intended to make other aspects of the student body invisible, rather this is intended as a piece of propaganda through which to further critique the institutions mainstream branding. In this way I have opted to focus primarily on the overalls as a metaphoric symbol of consumer apathy and draw it into the context of a broader class critique of our society.

Rhodes University has traditionally been an institution which caters towards a privileged elite. There is a twisted yet calculated double speak in the appropriation of the overall by the privileged students of Rhodes. Promoted as an expression of “individuality” the institution sells its students white overalls and encourages them to personalise them with purple paint. Each overall is the same yet within those parameters students are encouraged to show their “individuality”. The links to the working class are violently severed. The power of appropriating the overall and gutting its symbolism as an attire worn by the working class serves to further dehumanise and objectify people who work in the same vicinity as the students. The Rhodes logo states: “where leaders learn” (see fig.17.) The overalls as a tradition exist as a revealing manifestation of the dehumanisation that needs to occur to prepare new owners of the means of production. The consumption culture that is sold to us in the west serves a similar purpose. We are to do as Boetie does, focus on our material possessions whilst dehumanising the people around us.

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ILLUSTRATIONS

Fig. 1. *Exodus Gods and Kings* (2014). [Poster] At:

<http://www.beliefnet.com/columnists/moviemom/2014/12/exodus-gods-and-kings.html>

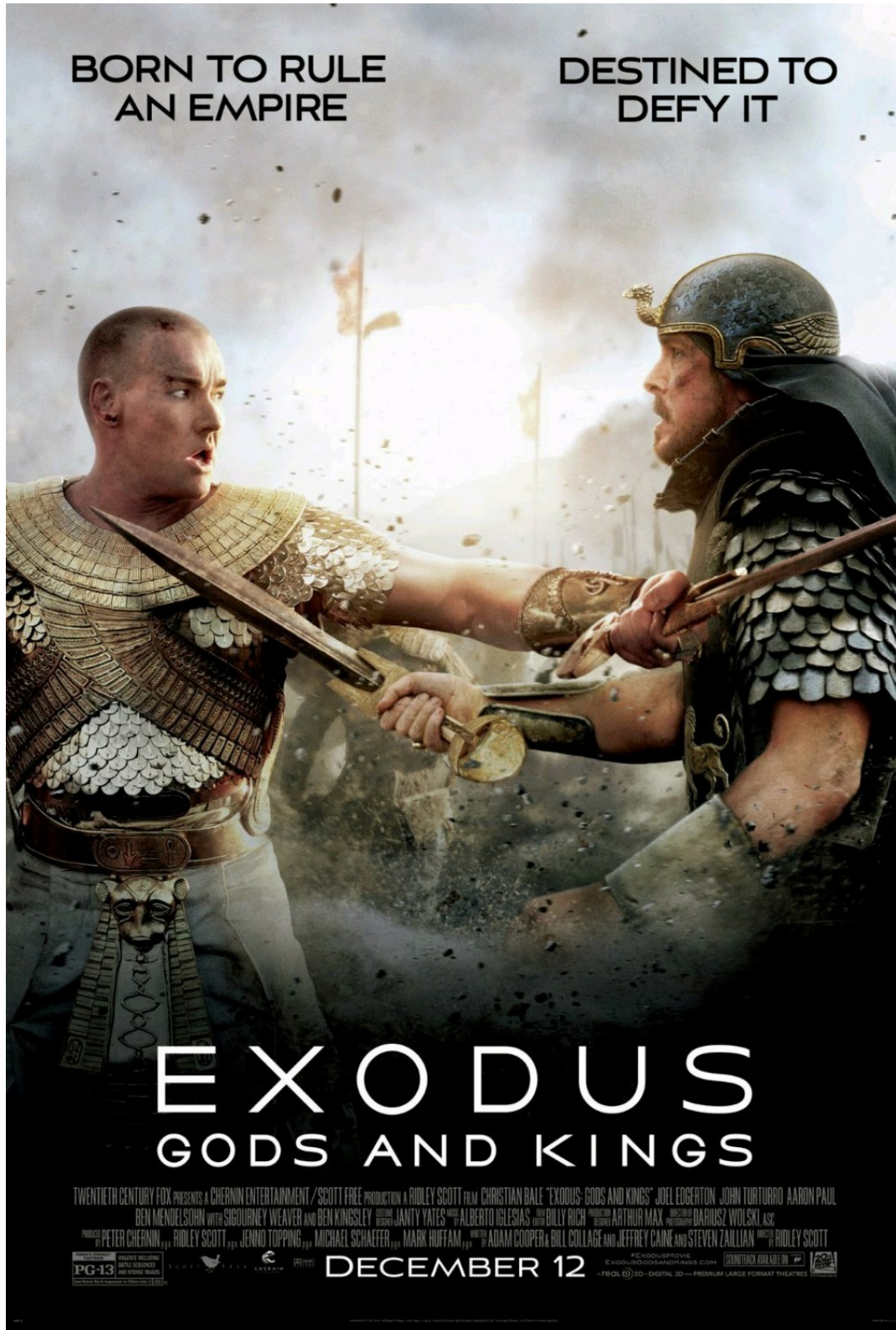


Fig. 2. *Noah* (2014). [Poster] At: <http://www.dvdsreleasedates.com/covers/noah-dvd-cover-45.jpg>



Fig.3. *Gods of Egypt* (2016). [Poster] At: <http://cdn3-www.comingsoon.net/assets/uploads/gallery/gods-of-egypt/gqesjuw.jpg>



Fig.4. *Forces Favourites* compilation [cover] At: <http://redmp3.cc/cover/3051007-460x460/forces-favourites-vol-2.jpg>



Fig.5. *Grensvogter* Photo comic, [cover] At:
<https://duinemense.files.wordpress.com/2009/11/rocco-de-wet-1.jpg>

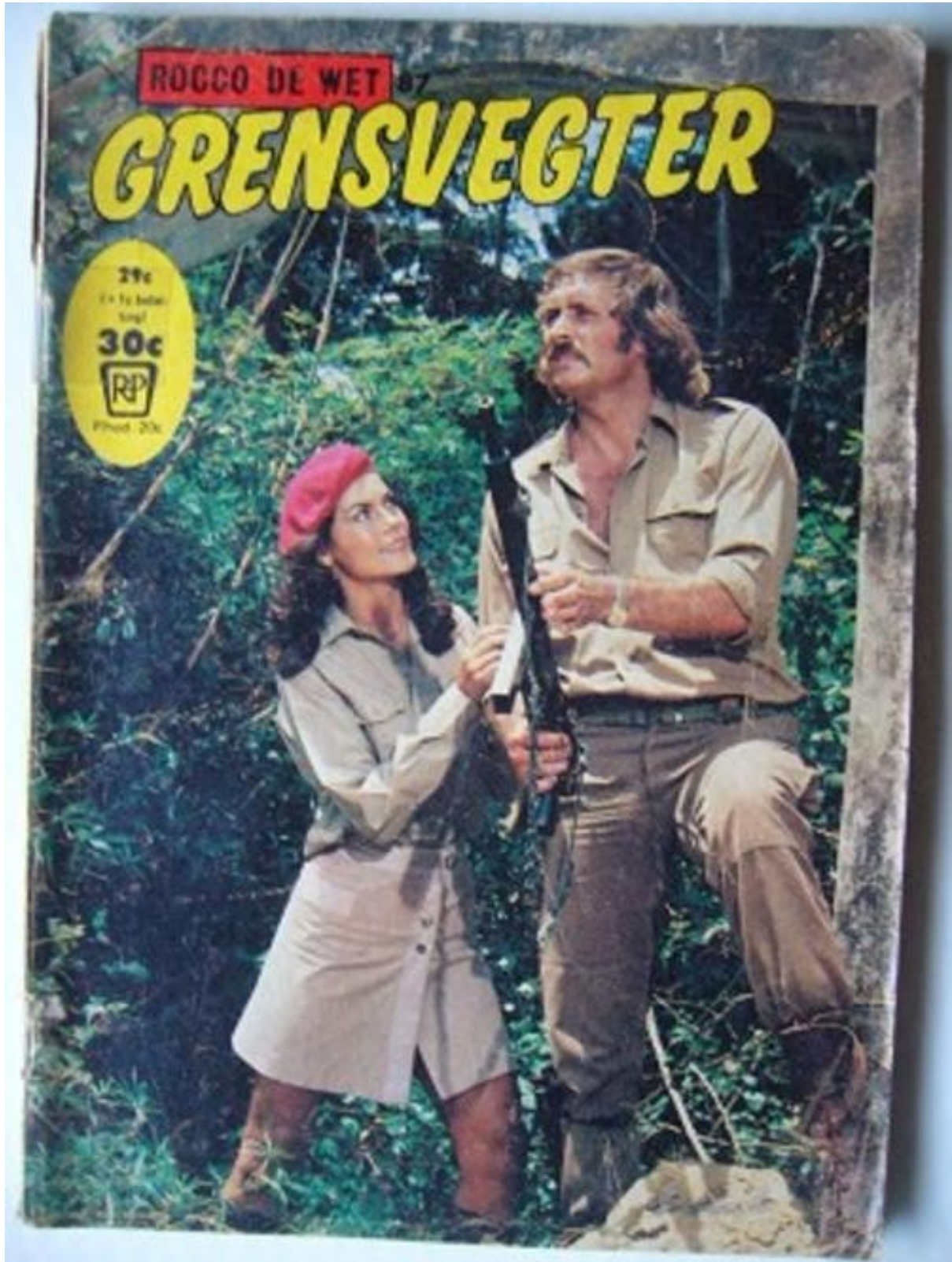


Fig.6. *Boetie gaan border toe* (1984). [Poster] At: <http://regardtvandenbergh.com/images/movie%20covers/Boetie%20gaan%20Border%20toe.JPG>

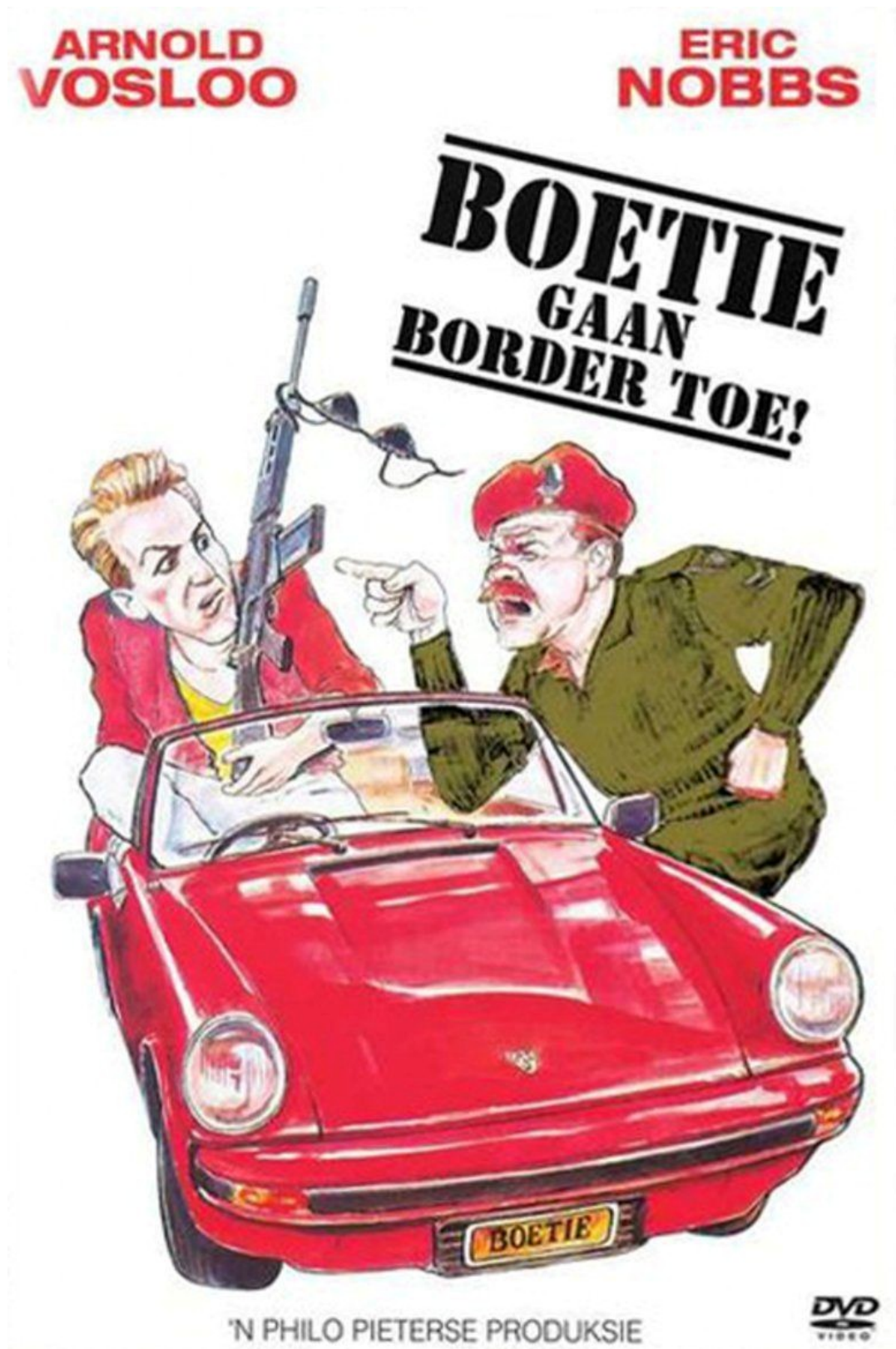


Fig.7. Boetie's Porche, *Boetie gaan border toe* (1984)



Fig.8. White SADF conscripts going to the 'border', *Boetie gaan border toe* (1984)



Fig.9. Boetie, *Boetie gaan border toe* (1984)



Fig.10. Waar is die jol? *Boetie gaan border toe* (1984)



Fig.11. Boetie and partner, *Boetie gaan border toe* (1984)



Fig.12. Champagne on the highway, *Boetie gaan border toe* (1984)



Fig.13. A toast to the troops, *Boetie gaan border toe* (1984)



Fig.14. SADF Soldiers on the Highway, *Boetie gaan border toe* (1984)



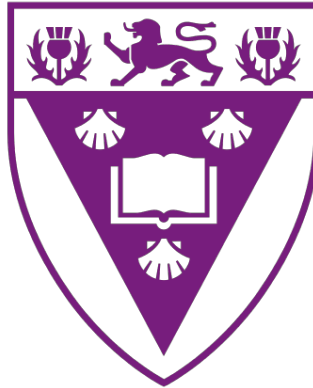
Fig. 15. Boetie in class, *Boetie gaan border toe* (1984)



Fig. 16. Graeme College crest; At: http://www.rugby15.co.za/wp-content/uploads/2013/02/GRAEME_COLLEGE.jpg



Fig. 17. Rhodes University Logo, At: <http://zssa.co.za/wp-content/uploads/2012/10/Rhodes-Logo-purple.jpg>



RHODES UNIVERSITY

Where leaders learn

Fig. 18. Tourists at Fort Selwyn; scene from *Boetie is verlore* (2015)



Fig. 19. Drake: *Started from the Bottom* (2013). [screen shot] At: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RubBzkZzpUA>



Fig.20. Soldier; scene from *Boetie is verlore* (2015)



Fig.21. Jersey Shore; Reality television show (2009-2012). [Poster] At:
[http://www.dvdsreleasedates.com/movies/4409/Jersey-Shore-\(TV-Series-2009-\).html](http://www.dvdsreleasedates.com/movies/4409/Jersey-Shore-(TV-Series-2009-).html)

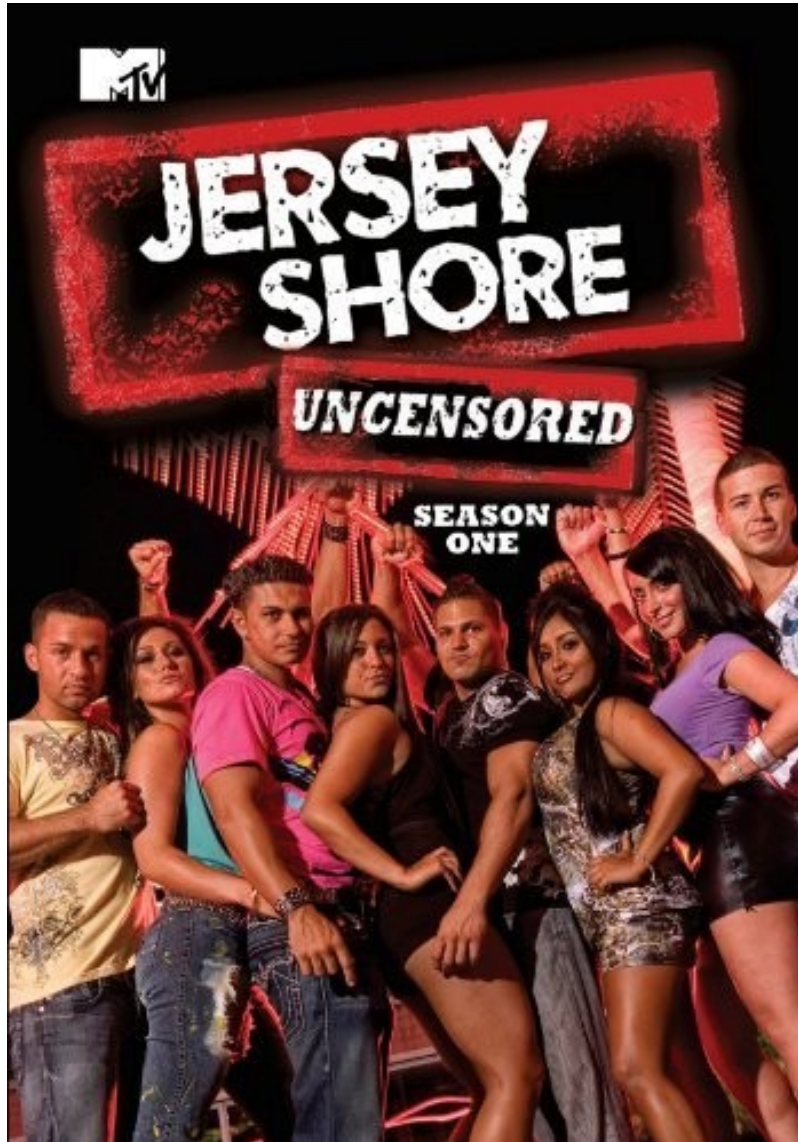


Fig.22. Rhodes the Brand, scene from *Boetie is verlore* (2015)



Fig.23. Overalls scene from *Boetie is verlore* (2015)



Fig.24. Overalls scene from *Boetie is verlore* (2015)



Fig. 25 Overalls scene from *Boetie is verlore* (2015)

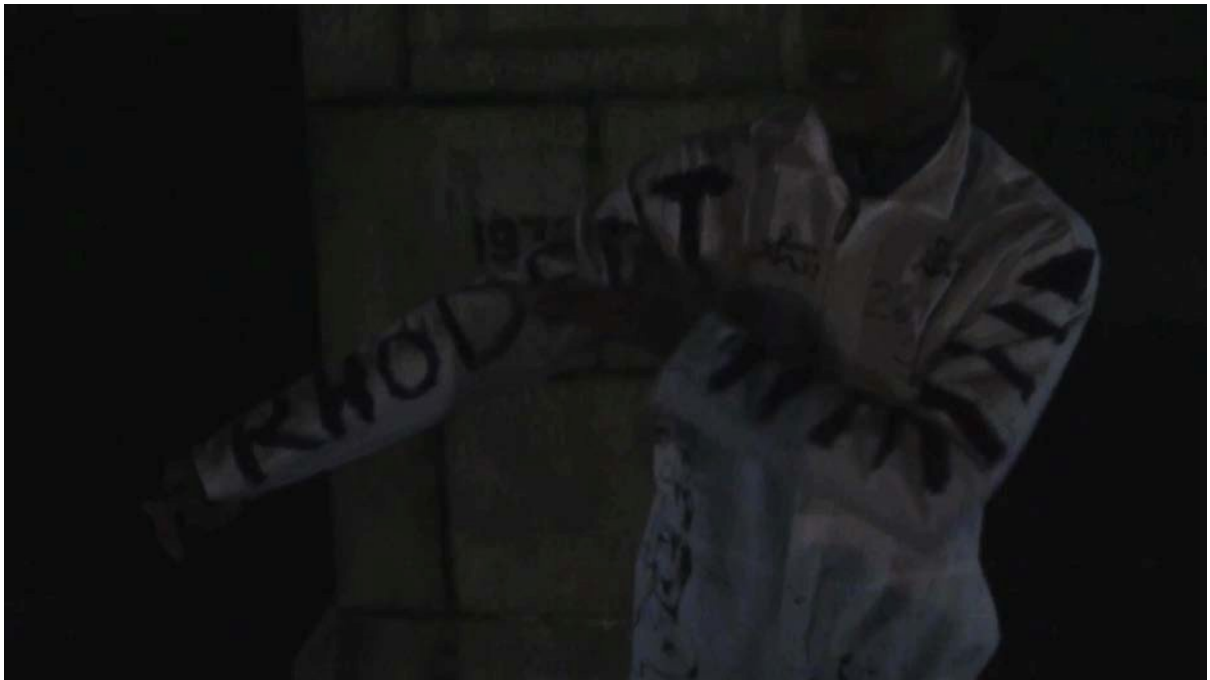


Fig.26. New Street; scene from *Boetie is verlore* (2015)



Fig. 27. Shooting, scene from *Boetie is verlore* (2015)



Fig. 28. Wrestling, scene from *Boetie is verlore* (2015)



Fig.29. Seamus; scene from *Boetie is verlore* (2015)



Fig. 30. Philani; scene from *Boetie is verlore* (2015)



Fig. 31. Paranoia, scene from *Boetie is verlore* (2015)



Fig. 32. American Missionaries, scene from *Boetie is verlore* (2015)



Fig. 33. The Red Death, scene from *Boetie is verlore* (2015)



Fig. 34. Boetie, scene from *Boetie is verlore* (2015)



Fig. 35. The mall; scene from *Boetie is verlore* (2015)



Fig. 36. The Red Death; scene from *Boetie is verlore*(2015)

