



A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED IN FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENT FOR THE
DEGREE OF

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

In the

SCHOOL OF JOURNALISM AND MEDIA STUDIES

FACULTY OF HUMANITIES

RHODES UNIVERSITY, SOUTH AFRICA

Title:

**Listening otherwise in the face of gender-based violence in South Africa – A critical
exploration of the listening deficiencies in public narratives and a listening-based
framework for healing and social change.**

Name: Thandi Bombi

Student number: G13B2549

Supervisor: Professor Anthea Garman

October 2024

Contents

Acknowledgements	6
Abstract.....	7
Introduction.....	8
Origins of the research.....	8
Goals of the research	11
Presentation of research.....	11
Part 1	16
Chapter 1: Background and Context.....	17
Introduction.....	17
Understanding the meaning of gender-based violence in South Africa	17
<i>South African definitions of gender-based violence.....</i>	<i>20</i>
Exploring police statistics, a violent history, and the normalisation of violence	22
<i>A history of violence and social engineering: physical and mental boundaries that shape present day interactions and engagements.....</i>	<i>26</i>
Reshaping the cultural response to gender-based violence using a politics of voice and a politics of listening	30
<i>A turn towards a politics of voice and a politics of listening</i>	<i>31</i>
Chapter 2: Theoretical Framework	35
Introduction.....	35
Section 1: Listening in and through research	35
<i>Research on Voice and Listening</i>	<i>36</i>
<i>How do we listen?</i>	<i>37</i>
Section 2: Listening in the face of gender-based violence in South Africa	40
<i>Power, violent schemata and the shape of listening</i>	<i>40</i>
<i>Gender-based violence and the sticky concept of silence</i>	<i>45</i>
<i>The interconnections of love and violence in South Africa</i>	<i>49</i>
Section 3: A shift towards “Listening Otherwise”	53
<i>Understanding, incompleteness and listening otherwise.....</i>	<i>53</i>
<i>Adopting a love ethic in order to listen otherwise.....</i>	<i>58</i>
Chapter 3: Methodology.....	62

Introduction.....	62
Aims of the research	63
Research design.....	64
<i>Research ethics and considerations</i>	<i>65</i>
<i>Participant selection and sampling</i>	<i>66</i>
<i>Grounded theory methodology</i>	<i>70</i>
Data collection methods	72
<i>In-depth interviews and ‘information power’</i>	<i>72</i>
<i>Sampling and applying actual cases</i>	<i>74</i>
<i>Academic literature, news interviews and newspaper articles</i>	<i>75</i>
Data analysis and coding methods	76
<i>Open/ initial coding.....</i>	<i>77</i>
<i>The process of open/initial coding of the interviews</i>	<i>78</i>
<i>Focused and theoretical coding.....</i>	<i>80</i>
<i>The process of focused and theoretical coding</i>	<i>81</i>
<i>A preliminary look at the results of this research.....</i>	<i>84</i>
Part 2:.....	88
Chapter 4: Public representations and discourses of GBV	89
Introduction.....	89
The influence of media representations of GBV in South Africa	90
<i>Media discourses that shape the ‘collective emotional orientation to fear’</i>	<i>92</i>
How discourse shapes the collective orientation and habitus	98
How do representations, language and discourses shape our listening?.....	104
Chapter 5: Patriarchy, cataphatic listening and invisible rapes.....	106
Introduction.....	106
Exploring inferred consent and invisible rapes	108
The “no means yes” myth: exploring cataphatic listening and inferred consent.....	111
Listening counterintuitively and shedding the patriarchal habitus in South Africa	119
Considerations for journalists to avoid cataphatic listening	125
Part 3:.....	127
Chapter 6: An ethical consideration of the other	128
Introduction.....	128

Engaging in the pursuit of a caring society	129
<i>Care ethics and listening to build a caring society</i>	132
Understanding the role of play and trust in a caring society	134
<i>Historical boundaries, play and imagination in South Africa</i>	137
<i>How can we build trust where there is so much violence?</i>	139
<i>Rebuilding trust through dialogue: The restorative justice approach</i>	140
The ethics of listening in journalism practice	144
Chapter 7: Space and listening	147
Introduction	147
The production of spaces that can host listening	148
Physical spaces matter: Exploring space, power and empowerment	149
<i>Student activism and the remaking of university spaces</i>	151
<i>Reshaping the physical space through participatory communication practices</i>	153
<i>Demonstrating listening in participatory processes</i>	155
The space exists but it's not sufficient: providing space for testimony while working towards policy development	157
<i>Annual summits against gender-based violence and femicide: A new horizon for spaces of listening</i>	158
<i>Too many needs, not enough space: the shortcomings of facilitating a listening space</i>	159
<i>Contentions between bearing witness and listening towards achievable outcomes</i> ...	161
A turn to ideological spaces of solidarity: learning to provide mutual care through listening and bearing witness	163
<i>Understanding the Silent Protest as an ideological space of solidarity</i>	163
<i>Public ritual and creating spaces that facilitate listening: a process of building solidarity and bearing witness</i>	167
Journalists and editors creating the space for listening	171
Part 4:	174
Chapter 8: Critical Facilitation	175
Introduction	175
Facilitating listening toward achievable outcomes: a participator action research method for 'creating space'	176
<i>Step 1: Define the general context and planning scenario</i>	178
<i>Step 2: Define the action inquiry purpose</i>	179

<i>Step 3: Identify prior decisions</i>	180
<i>Step 4: Identify and clarify the specific question(s) and their sequencing</i>	181
<i>Step 5: Select the sequence tools and design all steps</i>	181
<i>Step 6: Plan the documentation process</i>	182
Facilitating listening across difference: confronting power, mediating engagement, and listening otherwise	182
<i>Understanding networks of privilege and power</i>	185
<i>Building trust and creating a safe space to engage across difference</i>	190
The role of a critically self-reflexive facilitator: empowering voice, promoting participation, and demonstrating listening	193
<i>The challenge of facilitation: using critical self-reflexivity to promote engagement and participation</i>	194
<i>Using art and writing to empower voice and demonstrate listening</i>	197
Chapter 9: The framework for listening otherwise	203
Introduction	203
A conceptual guide to shedding the habitus	204
<i>Critical facilitation</i>	205
<i>Awareness of space and power</i>	206
<i>Active and engaged listening</i>	206
<i>Dialogical communication</i>	207
<i>Listening towards achievable outcomes</i>	208
<i>Commitment to communal action</i>	208
The six actions of listening otherwise	209
1. <i>Recognise, acknowledge, and accept the other as an ‘other’</i>	210
2. <i>Create space for the other</i>	210
3. <i>Empower voice and participation in the other</i>	210
4. <i>Sit with or host the other</i>	211
5. <i>Create a “listening symbol”</i>	211
6. <i>Reflect on the listening process (alone and with the other)</i>	211
Considerations for the media as a critical witness	212
Conclusion	216
Reference List	221

Acknowledgements

This is probably one of the hardest things I have had to do in my life so far. I am ever grateful that I did not have to do it alone.

To my supervisor Professor Anthea Garman, thank you for coming on this journey with me. Thank you for applying your wisdom and expertise and reading my work even when the topic was unpleasant. I have grown so much during this process and appreciate your guidance, support and the ways you have challenged me throughout the process. I would also like to thank you for inviting me to join your Licence to Talk research project funded by the National Research Council of South Africa (Grant Number: 118583). It was through this project that I found the inspiration for my research. I would like to acknowledge and say thank you to the Rhodes University Postgraduate Funding Office who invested in my studies and awarded me an Andrew W. Mellon Foundation Scholarship to complete my PhD.

To my research participants who have contributed to the soul of the thesis – this work would not have been possible without your contributions. Thank you for making the time to talk to and listen to me. I truly appreciate your wisdom and engagement.

To my family and dearest friends. You have been an encouraging and supportive force. Thank you for your love and motivation. A special thank you to my mother, sisters and brothers for always believing in me and giving me the love and support to see this work through. And to my darling L, thank you for loving me and acting as my accountability partner – I hope to one day support you in the same way you have supported me.

To my father, you left us only a few weeks before I began this journey. I was very sad that you could not be here to see what would come of it. I carried your memory with me at every point of the journey and I dedicate this work to you.

Not only is this work a result of many hours of hard work, but there have been many prayers and hopes that have gone into it as well. Thank you, Jesus, for the love, strength and networks of support that made this process possible. Through you all things are possible.

Thank you to those mentioned here as well as everyone else who has been in my life and influenced this process. This work is dedicated to all of you!

Abstract

South Africa has one of the highest rates of gender-based violence (GBV) in the world. This includes femicide, rape and intimate partner violence. Scholars and activists in the space of GBV have challenged society to alter the way we have been taught to engage with rape and gender-based violence. Despite many interventions, gender-based violence remains an intractable social problem. This study uses Lipari's (2014) concept of "listening otherwise" to respond to the challenge. By interrogating how South Africa's violent history and patriarchal society has been normalised, the study attempts to see beyond the narrow ideas prescribed by the country's history and violent cultures. This study uses the grounded theory approach (Glaser & Strauss 1967) to investigate the relationship between listening and gender-based violence in South Africa. The concept of "listening otherwise" is explored alongside the concepts "voice", "speak out" and "break the silence" that are the most visible and codified strategies in the fight against gender-based violence. Following the exploration, the study then develops a theoretical and methodological framework for "listening otherwise" in the spaces, fields, and engagements that deal with gender-based violence in South Africa. The two central questions of the study ask; how do we reshape the collective emotional response to patriarchal structural violence? And furthermore, how do we listen otherwise when faced with experiences of gender-based violence in South Africa? The data used to construct the framework includes in-depth interviews, studies of actual cases, academic literature, news interviews and newspaper articles. There are a multitude of ways in which people are talking about gender-based violence, exposing perpetrators and "breaking the silence". There is, in fact, no silence around rape, gender-based violence and femicide. The silence exists around engagements about gender, misogyny and patriarchy when discussing the causes of gendered violence in the country. This research found that the public's listening practices around gender-based violence are shaped by patriarchal cultures and rape myths which are endemic in media discourses, legal discourses and in general social talk. Building a caring society, in which people play and use restorative justice practices, may alter the communal listening practices and have an impact on the public response to gender-based violence. The framework for listening otherwise, that emerged as a result of the research, is a contribution to listening scholarship and the activism against gender-based violence. The framework considered various aspects of listening and the field of gender-based violence and arrived at six conceptual considerations and six actions for listening otherwise.

Introduction

Origins of the research

This project stems from my experience of being a woman in South Africa, a country which is considered to have one of the highest rates of gender-based violence (GBV) in the world. This includes rape, femicide, and intimate partner violence (Matzopoulos et al. 2019), and has infamously earned the status of “rape capital of the world” (Abrahams, Jewkes & Mathews 2010). Having been raised in such a dangerous environment, I was socialised from a young age to perform and behave in ways shaped by ubiquitous gender-based violence in order to remain safe and unaffected. When I realised that remaining safe and unaffected was not an option, I participated in protest – silent, naked, and otherwise – to disrupt the prescribed performances. In the hope of inspiring a different kind of engagement, one that questions the normalisation of gender-based violence in our country, and the normalisation of making women responsible for keeping themselves safe from it, I have written short stories, attended talks, started conversations and broken silences around sexual violence and gender issues.

Before starting on this PhD journey, I was determined to publish a series of short stories that explored various types of violence against women and children and the cultural practices that facilitate that violence. It was one of my stories, titled *The taste of bleeding aloes*, which got me thinking about listening. When I shared the story with those close to me, I was told the story was too bitter. “It’s grotesque to think of sex in that way,” they said. They went on to explain that “there are those who have written it better – you should learn from them” and “we shouldn’t feel so disgusted by your writing”.

But *The taste of bleeding aloes* was never meant to be sweet. It was never meant to make readers think of a sensual experience. The taste of bleeding aloes was what happened when consent was removed from the conversation. It was the bitterness of a story that did not have a happy ending. It represented discomfort. Not the discomfort of losing control, but rather the discomfort of realising that control was never an option. It would always end with the sour taste of compliance, a custom embedded in our everyday realities. I have chosen to start with this story, as it is a true representation of where my thinking about listening emerged from.

(Trigger warning: sexual violence)

“The taste of bleeding Aloes”

I used to close my eyes a lot when I had sex. I don't do that anymore. I had to stop because it got me into trouble with my husband. Not at first. At first, he was worried that he was doing something to hurt me. I am a lot smaller than my husband is. So, when I would close my eyes, disappear into the feeling and allow my body to react naturally to the situation, he would stop and look at me as if I was demon-possessed. There were times that I could tell that he was as disgusted as I was at the whole ordeal.

The first time we had sex, I closed my eyes, and I could taste the disappointment I felt towards him. The taste was somewhat sour, but not all the way. It was lined with a touch of bitterness too. The taste was very similar to the taste of a bleeding aloe. Before I was married, my sisters and I would kiss bleeding aloes and then lick our lips. Our faces would scrunch up in disgust at the bitterness of the juices that flowed out of the aloes' wounds. That is what I thought of when I first had sex with my husband.

I remember asking myself why he had to be mine and I had to be his. My eyes were still closed when I began to disappear into the feeling. My mouth began to water with the bitterness, and I felt myself easing to allow my throat to open up. Three thrusts of hot bile, synchronised with three of my husband's thrusts, jolted me up and electrified my body before I allowed the hot bile to leave my stomach lining and come through me: into the world. On that the first day, when the hot liquid exploded on to my unsuspecting husband's face, he too was disgusted at the sex we were having. The heaving thrusts of hot bile stopped shortly after my husband left the room to go clean himself up.

That was the first time I closed my eyes while having sex. It was also the first time that I had sex. I closed my eyes while having sex the five times after that first one and every single time, I would explode hot bile on to my husband's face. That is when I got into trouble with my parents. I didn't know I was in trouble until my mother and my aunt arrived at our house looking concerned. When they arrived, I knew I was in trouble because it was unlike a mother to visit her daughter so soon after she was married. It was a short visit. My mother asked me what the community would think if my husband were to return me. My aunt told me that my father was never going to return the dowry. They both ended by telling me that I should be proud of how much

he was willing to pay. That for a man to come to them to tell them I was closing my eyes to make myself throw up while having sex, was shameful. Open your eyes and hold down your vomit. That was their last instruction. Or you will be returned like that other girl who is now alone. That was their threat.

The sex after my mother's visit is what landed me in trouble with my husband. When we started, my eyes were open. His eyes were open too. In the skin around his eyes, I could see small rivers that flowed and stopped, causing the small wrinkles that exposed his age. I remember wondering how much time it had taken for such intense rivers to form on such a rigid man. The skin around his neck and cheeks hung onto him flowing back and forth with each stroke of indulgence that he took.

As we went on, he began to drift off into his own world. His lips tightened as small beads of sweat started to form around them. His eyes began to roll back with his pleasure, and I noticed that he was no longer watching me to ensure I kept my eyes open. I made sure to keep my eyes open for the sake of my marriage. I thought about my mother's words and the girl who was returned.

What would it be like to be thirteen and unmarried or returned? Distracted by the thought I closed my eyes and began to taste the sourness of disappointment. It took one thrust for my bile to reach climax and as I opened my mouth to allow my hot fluids out, my husband threw his head back and allowed his hot fluids in. That was the last time I closed my eyes while having sex with my husband. It was the last time that I thought about girls being returned home. It was the last time that I thought of the bitter fluids of bleeding aloes. It was the last time I thought of the games young girls play with their sisters. It was the last time that I allowed my throat to open and my body to react naturally to the situation. It was also the last time that any thrusts or strokes naturally arrested my body and drove me to possession-like explosion of any kinds of hot fluids. For my husband, this was good, and it was enough. His disappointing sex life with his lush but expensive child bride had finally managed the hurdle and the child was now acting like a proper woman [End].

I wrote this story to start a conversation about choice, rape, consent, child molestation, and child marriage. But there was no conversation, nothing was said because the story had a disgusting representation of something we have grown to accept. My writing was not received well, and the conversation did not take place. This led me to wonder: what is a

useful way to represent gender-based violence in order to be listened to? How can the conversations around it take place in a creative and constructive environment? But most importantly, what does it mean for people to listen to such unpalatable truths? I set out on a journey to answer those questions and this thesis is the documentation of what emerged from that process.

Goals of the research

The field of gender-based violence has become categorised, schematised and codified in ways that may no longer be helpful. One of the most visible and codified strategies (Gqola 2015: 09), in the space of gender-based violence today is the call to “voice”, “speak out” and “break the silence” (Oparinde & Matsha 2021). This research interrogates ‘voicing’, ‘speaking out’ and ‘breaking the silence’ as they are used while exploring listening and how it has been deprioritised in the communication transaction to understand what would happen if it weren’t. The research asks how do we approach gender-based violence with alterity in a way that we can cure it? How do we open the space, and make the familiar strange? What is possible when listening otherwise is equally prioritised in the fight against gender-based violence and what can we hear that we have not heard before?

The research aims to understand explicitly how listening otherwise (Lipari 2014) operates, to transform it from merely being a philosophical challenge to becoming a constructive tool (Gqola 2015) that encourages meaningful communication to take place. This research uses listening theory to contribute to the strategies and understanding of the fight against gender-based violence and intends to contribute to the theoretical understandings of gender-based violence and participatory communication.

Although listening is put forward as an important element of consideration, the research does not prioritise listening over speaking or thinking. Instead, the intention is to engage using a paradigm that prioritises both “verbal and non-verbal, spoken and gesture, speech and listening”, and “words and everything else” (Lipari 2014: 158).

Presentation of research

The presentation of this research is somewhat unconventional. The thesis presents a continuous argument with the analysis built into the thematic chapters. The development of the argument is dependent on the material gleaned from interviews, cases, academic literature and news reports. The material is not presented in the usual format of one set of data and an

analysis, the next set of data and an analysis and the third set of data and analysis. Instead, the data gathered during this research will be used to build an argument that is presented in four parts. This argument works by considering an analysis of the problem of gender-based violence, through to strategies for overcoming the challenges and then presenting practical methods of listening in this particular situation.

Part one of the thesis is concerned with understanding listening as an appropriate response to gender-based violence in South Africa. This part consists of three chapters that present the background, the theoretical framework and the methodology of the research.

Chapter 1 begins with the exploration of the definitions of gender-based violence and highlights the South African crime statistics for gendered violence and assault. The discussion moves to South Africa's history of violence, inequality, and oppression and reflects on how such history may be responsible for the high levels of gendered violence in the country's current context. One of the main responses to gender-based violence has been the call to, "voice", "speak out", and "break the silence". The chapter explores the concept of "voice" and offers listening as an appropriate strategy and response. The chapter ends with a question that asks how we as South Africans can collectively listen better to matters and engagements surrounding gender-based violence in our country.

Chapter 2 presents the theoretical framework of this thesis and builds a case for listening as a strategy to engage with and combat gender-based violence in the South African context. The chapter begins by outlining the existing literature on listening. The concepts associated with how one listens are presented and the concepts "listening otherwise" (Lipari 2014), "apophatic listening" (Dobson 2014) and "cataphatic listening" (Waks 2007) are defined and explored. The chapter then turns to the South African context and illustrates how we listen. The section focuses on listening to silence, breaking the silence, and love and intimate partner relationships to highlight the need for better listening practices. The chapter ends with the presentation and argument for "listening otherwise" (Lipari 2014) with a focus on embracing misunderstanding, incompleteness and unconditional compassion.

With the foundations of listening theory firmly in place, **Chapter 3** presents the methodological framework that this research uses to investigate the relationship between listening and gender-based violence and to construct a listening framework that can appropriately respond to that violence. Highlighted in this chapter are the aims of the research, the research design, the data collection, and the data analysis methods. The chapter

ends with a presentation of the six thematic codes that emerged from this research and the accompanying arguments for each code. These codes are space, patriarchal habitus, listening, challenging power, transformational strategies and facilitation.

Part two of the thesis explores the challenges of listening when faced with gender-based violence. It consists of two chapters that present arguments and findings that illustrate where the problems lie with regards to listening and the factors that influence how the public collectively listens to matters of gender-based violence. **Chapter 4** explores the discourses, languages, and representations of gender-based violence popularised by media and government institutions in South Africa. The chapter presents specific cases and examples to argue that the way these institutions represent gender-based violence, rape and femicide, has an impact on the public's understanding and listening with regards to these matters. The chapter argues that discourses and languages that normalise misogyny, for example, might influence the public to also normalise it and fail to hear it in instances where gender-based violence has taken place.

Chapter 5 explores the shape of listening in a patriarchal society and engages with prominent rape cases and rape myths to illustrate how these affect the society's ability to listen. The idea of invisible rape is explored in relation to dominant rape myths that teach people how to behave in intimate, private and public spaces. The myths explored in this chapter include the "no means yes" myth and the "women play hard to get" myth. The chapter then explores feminist listening practices that are aimed at countering listening that is prescribed and shaped by cultures of patriarchy. The feminist listening practices are explored alongside the concept of "listening otherwise" (Lipari 2014) to argue that both methods of listening may be useful tools to overcome some of the challenges South Africans face when engaging with gender-based violence. The chapter concludes with a presentation of considerations for journalists seeking to avoid cataphatic listening in their media reports. This section highlights how journalists can adopt an ethics of listening as a normative framework particularly when reporting on issues related to gender-based violence.

Part three engages with theories and practices that can overcome the challenges of listening in the face of gender-based violence. This part contains two chapters which argue for the ethical consideration of others and which explore space and the production of spaces that are conducive to listening. **Chapter 6** presents the concept of a caring society and highlights the necessary listening actions and values that might lead to one. Here the concepts

of “play”, “trust building” and “restorative justice” are defined and explored. The chapter argues with the conviction that building a caring society requires physical and conceptual spaces to be created to allow people to begin to talk about what a caring society entails. The chapter ends with a set of practical considerations for journalists looking to engage with the “other” through their work. The section highlights that journalists do this by creating continuous space on the news agenda for stories about gender-based violence, as well as being willing to relinquish storytelling control and being prepared to have their assumptions challenged.

Chapter 7 follows up with an exploration of the concept of space, how spaces are transformed and the possibility of listening within certain spaces. This chapter relies on the lessons learned within specific cases where spaces were created to host listening engagements in response to issues of gender-based violence in the South African context. The case studies leaned on here include the #RUPreferenceList protest and the subsequent space created by the Rhodes University Sexual Violence Task Team; the Presidential Summit Against Gender-based Violence and Femicide, a space created in response to the #TotalShutdown protest; and the Silent Protest, an annual protest against gender-based violence that was started at Rhodes University. The chapter concludes with practical considerations for journalists attempting to create the space for listening in local communities. This section shows that journalists can create space both physically and online by ensuring that the space is accessible, dialogical, aware of power dynamics and mediated by community members.

Drawing on findings from the previous sections of the thesis, **part four** presents the methods and concepts that can aid in the process of facilitating listening engagements in spaces that deal with gender-based violence. This part consists of a chapter on critical facilitation and a chapter that presents the framework for listening otherwise that has resulted from this research.

Chapter 8 explores the role of a critical facilitator and provides guidelines for anyone attempting to facilitate a listening engagement. The chapter highlights how facilitators can use process design, a participatory action research methodology (Chevalier and Buckles 2019), to create a listening space with the goals, questions and tools to facilitate a process of listening towards achievable outcomes. The key roles of a facilitator are also outlined. These roles include building trust, fostering safety and empowering voice in those participating in the listening engagement.

The final chapter of the thesis, **Chapter 9**, presents a framework that consists of six conceptual guidelines and six actions for listening otherwise. The six conceptual guidelines are 1) critical facilitation, 2) awareness of space and power, 3) active and engaged listening, 4) dialogical communication, 5) listening towards achievable outcomes, and 6) commitment to communal action. The chapter argues that these concepts can guide anyone attempting to listen and, paired with the six actions, can lead to a process of listening otherwise. When one applies the six actions for listening otherwise, they recognise, acknowledge and accept the other, create space for the other, empower voice and participation in the other, sit with or host the other, create a listening symbol with the other, and reflect on the listening process (alone and with the other). The chapter concludes with a few considerations for the media acting as a critical witness. Some of these considerations include media practitioners using ‘slow journalism’ to report on gender-based violence and adopting an ethics of listening to create space on the news agenda for voices that have been othered and left in the shadows of the public sphere.

The concepts discussed in the thesis may seem fairly complicated, but the listening process outlined in the framework is for everyone to use. The listening practices highlighted through this research can be applied by ordinary people in workplaces, newsrooms, schools, and spaces where they engage with issues surrounding gender and gender-based violence.

Part 1

Understanding listening as an appropriate response in the fight against gender-based violence in South Africa

Chapter 1: Background and Context

Introduction

Gender based violence is a social and public health concern as well as a human rights issue in South Africa (Meyiwa, Williamson, Maseti and Ntabanyane 2017). Scholars who have investigated gendered violence and oppression in South Africa have argued that present day violence has strong ties to the country's history of colonialism and apartheid (Scully 1995; Britton 2006; Campbell and Elbourne 2014; Gqola 2015; Baderoon 2015). Britton (2006) for instance, argues that colonialism, apartheid, the social consequences of the migrant labour system and the impact of patriarchal authority, exacerbated violence against women and turned it into the most visible and destabilising sign of South Africa's history (p. 147).

This chapter provides a context of the history of violence, inequality and oppression and illustrates how history has affected gender relations in South Africa now. The chapter begins by exploring global and local definitions of gender-based violence to understand the meaning of this kind of violence in the South African context. This is followed by exploring police records of crime statistics for sexual offences and assault against women and children for two financial years of the research period. This section aims to contextualise the rising statistics using South Africa's history of oppression and gendered violence. The chapter then explores the relationship between speaking out, empowering voice, and embracing a politics of listening as possible interventions in the fight against gender-based violence in South Africa. The chapter concludes with a complex question, how do we begin to reshape the collective listening habitus of South Africans, so we can see beyond what has been normalised by our history of oppression?

Understanding the meaning of gender-based violence in South Africa

The 1993 World Conference on the Elimination of Violence Against Women moved the international community to acknowledge violence against women (VAW) as an important public health, social policy, and human rights concern (Devries et al. 2013). Violence against women, however, was a major concern long before it began receiving international attention (Chinkin 1995; Read-Hamilton 2014). The definition of violence against woman, presented in the official Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women (DEVAW), is one

that has been adopted broadly as the definition of gender-based violence (Chinkin 1995; Joachim 1999; Fried 2003; Wilson 2014; Meyiwa et al. 2017). Article 1 of the declaration defines “violence against women” as “any act of gender-based violence that results in or is likely to result in physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty whether occurring in public or private life” (United Nations 1994: 03).

The term gender-based violence, however, is a contested term with various and at times conflicting ideas of what gender-based violence is and is not (Read-Hamilton 2014; Graaf 2021). Scholars writing on gender-based violence tend to lean on the UN declaration’s definition of violence to understand gender-based violence in various contexts. Writing on the South African context, Meyiwa et al. (2017) for example, argue that although there are various definitions of gender-based violence, the essence of the definition usually focuses on “acts that uphold female subordination” (p. 8615). Meyiwa et al. (2017) write

This violence can occur on multiple levels and may include intimate partner violence, economic violence, emotional abuse, childhood sexual abuse, female genital mutilation, forced prostitution, deliberate malnourishment of female children, dowry related murder and marital rape (2017: 8615).

Such definitions, which borrow from the UN declaration, are centred on violence against woman and girls (VAWG) and risk leaving out other vulnerable communities (Graaf 2021). Scholars in the field have called for more inclusive definitions of gender-based violence to both account for the varying contexts in which the violence takes place as well as the intersections of gender identity (Graaf 2021). Writing on definitions of gender-based violence in communities affected by armed conflict, Read-Hamilton (2014), argues that one of the reasons behind the call for a broader interpretation of gender-based violence is the “increasing awareness of the different forms of gendered and sexual violence” that similarly to violence against women “are hidden for reasons of shame, stigma, and taboo and entrenched social norms around sex, sexuality, and gender” (p. 06). Read-Hamilton (2014) suggests that there are three main interpretations of gender-based violence, each with different forms of violence and different theoretical tools. The first interpretation, informed by feminist theory and used in the UN declaration, views gender-based violence as “primarily men’s violence against women and girls” (p. 06). This interpretation highlights the gender power relations that cause and perpetuate gender-based violence by showing the structural nature of male violence against women across the life span. Read-Hamilton (2014) writes:

Within a violence against women framework... the gendered dimensions of violence against women are different from those of violence against men because, “while men may certainly be exposed to violence as a result of their socially determined gender roles and norms, the violence they experience – or even perpetuate against other men – rarely if ever contributes to or confirms the overall subjugation of men as an entire subgroup” (p. 06).

The second interpretation that Read-Hamilton (2014) presents views gender-based violence “as violence primarily used by men against women, some males and children” (p. 06).

According to this interpretation, gender-based violence is used as a policing mechanism to enforce gender hierarchies (Lang 2002), where men are not only privileged in relation to women and children but also some groups of men (Read-Hamilton 2014). Included in this interpretation are homophobic violence and sexual exploitation and abuse of children. The third interpretation, according to Read-Hamilton (2014), views gender-based violence being used “against women, girls, men, and boys to assert and reproduce gender roles and norms” (Read-Hamilton 2014: 06). This interpretation asserts that gender-based violence “can happen equally to a person of [any] sex and is used to reinforce conformity to gender roles” (Read-Hamilton 2014: 06).

Graaf (2021), who writes from the South African context, problematises the public discourse around gender-based violence and its sole focus on violence against women. According to Graaf (2021), the discourse, based on a violence against women framework, “excludes and others widespread forms of violence against minority communities” (p. 118). Because of this discourse, gender non-conforming (GNC) individuals and others in the lesbian, gay, trans, intersex, asexual, (LGBTQIA+) community are excluded from this particular focus on violence. Graaf (2021) writes:

A narrow application of the concept of GBV in prevention efforts may fail to address the full range of gendered violence and therefore only be successful in preventing heteronormative and cisgendered forms of GBV (p. 118).

Graaf (2021) explains that although violence against women is a serious issue that needs effort and attention to be addressed, the limited success of current interventions may be a result of the violence against women framework of gender-based violence work. Graaf (2021) raises three major concerns about thinking of gender-based violence solely as violence against women. Firstly, the violence against women approach risks implying that women are a “unitary and homogenous group, all facing equal risk of and exposure to violence” (Graaf 2021: 125). This first concern highlights how “trans women, disabled women, queer women,

women of colour, and sex workers” are women at significantly higher risk of violence (Graaf 2021: 125). Secondly, the narrow “focus on male violence against women” could result in the negation and exclusion of violence against those in the LGBTQIA+ community (Graaf 2021: 125). Thirdly, limited understandings of gender-based violence may exclude some forms of gendered violence between and against men. Graaf (2021) explains:

When viewed through the lens of societal expectations underlying masculinities, much of the violence perpetrated both by and against men is gendered. Men who do not conform to heteronormative gender roles, such as LGBTQIA+ men, may be at higher risk of GBV. Similarly, violence used against men often has the intention of emasculating, shaming, or feminising them specifically because of the societal norms and expectations arising in patriarchal contexts (p. 126).

Graaf (2021) explains that interventions in the field of gender-based violence may have more success if the heteropatriarchal gender norms, and gender binaries in its definitions are addressed. Fortunately, South Africa’s legislation around gender-based violence is “relatively progressive and encompassing” (Graaf 2021: 120). The Criminal Law Amendment Act, for example, considers rape to be any form of sexual penetration without consent, regardless of gender (South African Government¹ 2021; Graaf 2021). Added to this is that South Africa has a comprehensive set of definitions of gender-based violence that have the potential to help identify forms of violence and aid in interventions aimed at curtailing such violence in South African society.

South African definitions of gender-based violence

According to a gender-based violence resource guide, found on the South African government’s website, the most common form of gender-based violence experienced in South Africa is domestic violence. The Domestic Violence Amendment Act 14 of 2021, which includes same sex-couples (Graaf 2021), defines domestic violence as forms of abuse which include “physical abuse; emotional abuse; verbal abuse and psychological abuse; economic abuse; intimidation; harassment; stalking; damage to property; etc.” (South African Government¹ 2023). Domestic violence can also refer to any “forms of abuse or controlling behaviour that threatens the health, safety and well-being of the complainant” (South African Government² 2023). The definitions of forms of abuse, according to the act have been tabled below.

Term	Definition
------	------------

Physical Abuse	May include but is not limited to shoving, slapping, punching, kicking, throttling, and biting. Assault with objects, guns, knives, or any other dangerous weapon.
Sexual Abuse	May include but is not limited to rape, attempted rape, and indecent assault. Ongoing verbal abuse with sexual slurs such as bitch, whore, slut, etc.
Emotional, Verbal and Psychological Abuse	May include but is not limited to constant insults, ridicule or name calling. Repeated threats of violence or death to cause emotional pain.
Economic Abuse	May include but is not limited to selling of shared property such as livestock or matrimonial house without the consent of the victim. Accessing a joint bank account for personal use without the consent of the victim.
Intimidation	May include but is not limited to written or verbal death threats. Sending strange objects such as beheaded dolls, small coffins, dead flowers, or dead pets to the victim.
Harassment	May include but is not limited to repeatedly watching the victim outside or near her/his house, workplace, school or business premises or any place where she/he happens to be. Constantly phoning the victim or causing another person to phone the victim, whether or not the caller speaks to the complainant.
Stalking	May include but is not limited to constantly approaching the victim and asking or demanding to talk to her/him against her/his will.
Damage to property	May include but is not limited to breaking the window or door to gain entry into the victim's property. Cutting, breaking, or damaging in any other manner shared furniture or the victim's clothes.
Unauthorised entry into the victim's residence	May include but is not limited to using a duplicate key to gain access to the victim's property. Jumping the wall to gain access to the victim's property.

Table 1.1. Domestic Violence Amendment Act 14 of 2021 definitions (South African Government² 2023).

Other terms that have been included in the gender-based violence resource guide include femicide, which is defined as “the murder of a female partner by an intimate male partner, usually using strangulation or weapons such as a knife or firearm” (South African Government² 2023), and sexual crimes. Listed in the sexual crimes are rape, sexual assault, compelled self-sexual assault, flashing, sexual exploitation, sexual grooming, and child pornography (South African Government² 2023).

Exploring police statistics, a violent history, and the normalisation of violence

South Africa has extremely high rates of all forms of violence, and particularly gender-based violence (Graaf 2021). According to Norsworthy and Khuankaew (2004), understanding gender-based violence, especially in contexts with such high rates, “involves recognising the interlocking systems that support and maintain this form of oppression at the community, institutional, and structural level” (p. 259). As previously mentioned, scholars who have extensively studied the South African situation argue that the high statistics in the present context can be related to a history of oppression and violence. Presented here are the police recorded crime statistics released by the South African Police Service (SAPS) for the two financial years spanning from 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2023. These statistics, recorded within the timespan of the first two years of this research, provide an interesting context and starting point for “recognising the interlocking systems” that produce and maintain violence in South African society (Norsworthy & Khuankaew 2004: 259).

Although the overall crime statistics present a variety of areas and crimes, the ones tabled below (Tables 1.2. and 1.3.) relate mainly to sexual offences, common assault, and assault with intent to do grievous bodily harm. These categories have been chosen because they relay some statistical information of the crimes that fall under the broad category of gender-based violence. According to the police statistics, sexual offences refer to “activities that a victim has not consented to” as well as “a broad range of sexual behaviours that make a victim feel uncomfortable, frightened or threatened” (South African Police Service¹ 2021: 55). Sexual offences according to the South African Police Service constitute rape, sexual assault, attempted sexual offence, and contact sexual offence (South African Police Service¹ 2021). According to the statistics for the two financial years, 106 541 cases of sexual offences were reported and recorded over the eight quarters (South African Police Service³ 2023).

Category of crime	Quarter 1: 01 April 2021 - 30 June 2021	Quarter 2: 01 July 2021 - 30 September 2021	Quarter 3: 01 October 2021 - 31 December 2021	Quarter 4: 01 January - 31 March 2022
Rape (total reported)	10006	9556	11315	10818
Rape (in the home of the victim)	3766	6144	5012	4653
Sexual Assault	1900	1758	2069	2165

Attempted sexual offences	514	400	524	547
Contact sexual offences	282	255	280	269
Common Assault and grievous bodily harm	76936	72762	97999	88738

Table 1.2. Police Recorded Crime Statistics for 2021/2022 Financial Year. Quarter one crime statistics reflect the crime levels during the time when South Africa was placed under adjusted lockdown levels 1, 2 and 3 due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Category of crime	Quarter 1: 01 April 2022- 30 June 2022	Quarter 2: 01 July 2022- 30 September 2022	Quarter 3: 01 October 2022- 31 December 2022	Quarter 4: 01 January 2022- 31 March 2023
Rape (total reported)	9516	10590	12419	10512
Rape (in the home of the victim)	3780	5083	5935	4768
Sexual Assault	1707	1895	2156	1843
Attempted sexual offences	416	538	763	663
Contact sexual offences	217	262	209	287
Common Assault and grievous bodily harm	73262	85640	103323	92316

Table 1.3. Police Recorded Crime Statistics for 2022/2023 Financial Year.

Rape was the highest category of recorded sexual offences. In this period there was a total of 84 732 recorded cases of rape. Of the rapes that were reported during this period, 39 138 occurred at the residence of either the perpetrator or the victim of the assault. This includes a residence known by the perpetrator or the victim, for example, the residence of family, friends, or neighbours (South African Police Service³ 2023). The statistics highlight this factor to show that in at least 46% of the rapes that were reported during this period, the rapist was either known by or had some form of relationship with the victim (South African Police Service³ 2023). In the same period, the crime statistics show that a total of 598 660 cases of common assault and assault with intent to do grievous bodily harm were reported. Of these assaults, over 121 528 of the cases were domestic violence-related, which indicates that the victim and the perpetrator have a relationship (South African Police Service³ 2023).

South Africa has a problem of violence against women and children, particularly sexual violence and fatal violence against girls and women (Brodie 2020; Enaifoghe, Dlelana &

Dlamini 2021). Tables 1.4. and 1.5., which provide a breakdown of the police reported crimes, shows that over the two financial years there was a total of 122 206 reported cases of assault against women and children. This accounts for just over 20% of the reported cases of common assault and assault with the intent to do grievous bodily harm that were reported for the period. During this period, there were a total of 9 352 reported cases of murder and 12 746 reported cases of attempted murder of women and children in South Africa (South African Police Service³ 2023).

Crimes against women	Murder	Attempted Murder	Assault with the intent to do grievous bodily harm
Quarter 1: 2021	558	897	7585
Quarter 2: 2021	897	1155	11824
Quarter 3: 2021	902	1240	15692
Quarter 4: 2021	898	1222	15034
Quarter 1: 2022	855	1179	11734
Quarter 2: 2022	989	1277	13701
Quarter 3: 2022	1101	1636	17271
Quarter 4: 2022	969	1485	15141
Total for 1 April 2021 - 31 March 2023	7169	10091	107982

Table 1.4. Police Recorded Crime Statistics: Crimes against women in April 2021 – March 2023.

Crimes against children	Murder	Attempted Murder	Assault with the intent to do grievous bodily harm
Quarter 1: 2021	116	222	1054
Quarter 2: 2021	287	283	1670
Quarter 3: 2021	352	394	2048
Quarter 4: 2021	306	331	1937
Quarter 1: 2022	243	283	1670
Quarter 2: 2022	315	294	1895
Quarter 3: 2022	319	488	2039
Quarter 4: 2022	245	360	1931
Total for 1 April 2021 - 31 March 2023	2183	2655	14244

Table 1.5. Police Recorded Crime Statistics: Crimes against children in April 2021– March 2023.

These crime statistics tell an important story of violence that is on the increase and particularly dangerous for women and children. It is, however, important to note that these numbers only account for the cases that have been reported to and recorded by the South

African police. Oparinde and Matsha (2021: 03) explain that although “a series of senseless killings, assaults, rapes and cases of abuse” get reported to the police, justice has only been served in a small number of the cases that have been reported while many have gone unreported and therefore unrecorded as part of the national crime statistics.

The categories presented here also form part of what the South African Police Service (SAPS) deem to be “less policeable crimes” (Masiloane 2014: 136). These crimes, which include “murder, attempted murder, assault, and sexual offences” are considered by the police as less policeable “because they are committed by people who know their victims” (Masiloane 2014: 136). If the police’s notion about these crimes is true, then “neither the increase nor decrease of these crimes can largely be attributed to police actions” (Masiloane 2014: 136). The normalisation of violence, particularly intimate partner violence and domestic violence, therefore, could explain the increasing numbers of less policeable crimes. With regards to rape in particular, Gqola (2015) argues that the “rethinking and debunking of rape myths” (p. 143) could play a role in decreasing rape statistics in South Africa.

These approaches, however, cannot alone effectively address South Africa’s violence problem. According to Gqola (2015), violent masculinities help normalise violence by creating “a public consciousness in which violence is not just acceptable and justified, but also natural and desirable” (p. 152). Norsworthy and Khuankaew (2004) argue that gender-based violence is sustained and maintained through the support of cultures and systems of sexism and misogyny. They write:

Within these systems, femininity is devalued, women’s access to resources is limited, and women are systematically disadvantaged. Within these same systems masculinity is privileged. Men are systematically advantaged and have access to benefits and resources because of the privilege associated with their social location. Sexism and misogyny interconnect with other forms of oppression, such as racism, classism, homophobia, and religious oppression, thus supporting and reinforcing the subjugation of women as well as other targeted groups (Norsworthy & Khuankaew 2004: 260).

If a country supports and perpetuates systems of sexism and misogyny, then violence against women becomes a social norm and that is reflected in the annual crime statistics with increasing violence and crimes against women and children. These systems, however, are not new in South Africa. The violence represented through police crime statistics is a “legacy of unfinished pasts” that have trickled into post-apartheid South Africa (Gqola 2015: 54). To really address the issue of violence one needs to understand the kinds of “violent cultures”

and “violent masculinities” (Gqola 2015: 54, 152) that have resulted from South Africa’s history of violence, oppression, and social engineering.

A history of violence and social engineering: physical and mental boundaries that shape present day interactions and engagements

South Africa is currently a post-colonial and post-apartheid state with ongoing features of coloniality and segregation. Although South Africa’s democracy is almost 30 years old, there are scars that serve as a reminder of the physical, mental, and structural violence inflicted on South Africans during the colonial and apartheid years. The “difficult process of transition” from apartheid to democracy alone, was not without “pain and collision” (Posel 2005: 125). According to Posel (2005), the “project of social engineering” that was apartheid in South Africa, could “not be easily undone” (p. 125). Apartheid’s legacy “was bound to be at best difficult to erase in some areas and at worst utterly intractable” (Posel 2005: 125). In his work, “Explaining the apartheid city: 20 years of South African urban history”, South African historian Paul Maylam explains the structure of physical and social control that took place under the apartheid regime. Maylam (1995) writes:

Segregation was essentially a form of spatial control over residential space. But residential segregation was an insufficient means of achieving the kind of overall control for which the state was striving. The segregated space set aside for the occupation of the black underclass also had to be subjected to control. This control took various forms. Housing policy for instance, was geared not only towards the provision of shelter but also towards the subjugation of urban residents. A local state apparatus responsible for ‘native administration’ was established in each of the major urban areas. This apparatus further regulated the lives of those that fell under its sway. Access to political space was closed down – instead forms of co-option were created in an attempt to head off the growth of the urban social movements. On top of all of this, access to the city itself or rather to the controlled, segregated spaces within the city – was tightly regulated by influx control and the pass laws (p. 29).

Maylam’s (1995) account of the apartheid apparatus responsible for the spatial and social control of the “black underclass” highlights two important points with regards to social engineering. Firstly, because the black underclass’ movements were controlled using state apparatus and violence, they were legally and physically forced to stay within or outside of boundaries conceived and imagined by the state. And secondly, the control extended beyond housing, towards with whom the black underclass associated and engaged as well as the kind of activities in which they were legally allowed to participate. This could even extend to an attempt to control the imagined identities and imagined realities of the black underclass.

Although the physical and social boundaries may have been dismantled when South Africa embraced democracy in 1994, there are remnants of this control and the effects it had on the imagined identities and realities of South Africans.

In an attempt to understand the lasting effects of South Africa's apartheid legacy on gender relations, Moffett (2006) appeals to researchers, activists, and scholars to examine how the legacy "intersects with justificatory narratives of rape, and the use of sexual violence as a tool of social control and intimate terrorism" (p. 143). Although Moffett (2006) highlights the possible problems that could arise with discussions of rape and gender-based violence being causally linked to South Africa's history of apartheid, understanding apartheid's influence on contemporary gender relations is an important task. Moffett (2006) explains that developing countries, such as South Africa, hold wide-ranging and complex "narratives of normalisation surrounding sexual violence" (p. 131). Understanding these histories and narratives is important because this normalisation is usually present in societies with "complex forms of othering" and "a history of extreme racial/ethnic conflict" (Moffett 2006: 131). Moffett (2006) explains that although there has been a transition from apartheid, the control and regulation once reserved for black people was transferred to women – in an attempt at a different kind of social stabilisation. Moffett (2006) writes:

Under apartheid, the dominant group used methods of regulating blacks and reminding them of their subordinate status that permeated not just public and political space, but also private and domestic spaces. Today it is gender rankings that are maintained and women that are regulated. This is largely done through sexual violence, in a national project in which it is quite possible that many men are buying into the notion that in enacting intimate violence on women, they are performing a necessary work of social stabilisation (p. 132).

Moffett's (2006) reflection on the regulation of women resembling apartheid style control suggests that although an ideological shift took place during the transition, the practices used during apartheid have remained and are being used as a means to achieve different ends in democracy. This process, however, is not unique to South Africa but rather a common occurrence in nations that transition from war to peace. According to Moffett (2006) activists and scholars attending a 1999 conference on Women in Post-War Reconstruction in Johannesburg, noted that "during the transition from war to peace or from military dictatorship to democracy, the rhetoric of equality and rights tend to mask the reconstruction of patriarchal power" (Moffett 2006: 133 quoting Meintjies, Pillay & Turshen 2002: 04).

What Moffett raises here is that the policing of bodies, through violence and intimidation, is a possible inheritance from the apartheid system – which resembled a war on black bodies. There is clearly a “link between South Africa’s past, and failure of its citizens under democracy to respect women’s bodily autonomy and integrity” (Moffett 2006: 137). Moffett explains how even in a democratic society, patriarchy systematically creates a clear concept of the “othered”, and methods learned from apartheid inform those in power of how to regulate those who fall under the category of “other”. Moffett (2006) writes:

Some men believe that by resorting to sexual violence, they are participating in a socially approved project to keep women within certain boundaries and categories... After all, the ‘other’ has historically been seen as powerful, subversive, potentially unstable, needing to be policed (even if this meant torture, detentions, and murder) not only for ‘their own good’ but also for the ‘greater good’ of society (p. 140).

If one is to embrace Moffett’s (2006) argument, then it becomes clear that the boundaries highlighted by Maylam (1995) extend past the physical and social borders dictated under apartheid. Through a process of systematically nurturing and sustaining a patriarchal system of dominance these boundaries have permeated into democracy and now serve as mental boundaries that police the actions of women and men in contemporary South Africa. South African crime statistics alone provide evidence that not only supports Moffett’s (2006) argument about the “othering”, policing, and brutalisation of women’s bodies, but also shows how relevant this argument is nearly 20 years after it was written. Gqola (2007; 2015; 2021), who calls this phenomenon the “Female Fear Factory” alerts readers to the fact that the history that has led to the normalisation of such violence extends even further back to before apartheid and has deep colonial roots.

These texts provide evidence that although the system of patriarchy may not have been the main system of domination prevalent in South Africa’s history, it easily existed alongside colonialism and apartheid because of its culture of “control and domination in almost every area of human existence” (Johnson 2004: 29). Johnson (2004) explains that, as a system, patriarchy’s core value is “gaining and exercising control” and exerting “power over” – which is “the ability to control others, events, resources, or oneself in spite of resistance” (p. 29). This system of domination lent itself so easily to other systems because of its “androcentric and hierarchical” nature (Plaatjies Van Huffel 2011: 2). Plaatjies Van Huffel (2011) explains this nature and the force and power it exerts over humankind:

By patriarchy, we mean not only the subordination of females to males, but the “whole structure of Father ruled society: aristocracy over serfs, masters over slaves, kings over subjects, racial overlords over colonized people” (Reuther 1983: 61) ... Patriarchy also refers to structures and ideologies which engender the domination and exploitation of the weak and the powerless amongst us. Therefore, patriarchy can be rightly described as empire, *a spirit of lordless domination, created by humankind* (p. 2-3).

By insisting that patriarchy emphasises a process of domination and exploitation of the weak and powerless in society, Plaatjies Van Huffel (2011) shows that where there are any forms of oppression, patriarchy is probably near. The transition out of one form of oppression, therefore, does not necessarily mean the transition out of all forms – particularly those which function well alongside patriarchal systems of domination. Because the “spirit of lordless domination” (Plaatjies Van Huffel 2011: 03) was left to reign supreme alongside other systems of domination, it was structurally sewn into the South African culture – providing “symbols and ideas out of which [South Africans] constructed their sense of what is real” (Johnson 2004: 29).

In the post-apartheid era, the South African government “has enacted legislation and ratified international and regional instruments, formulated policies and passed bills which have a direct bearing on gender” relations in the country (Plaatjies Van Huffel 2011: 3). These laws and gender policies form part of a constitution that entrenches gender rights. Despite having such a constitution in place, “discriminatory practices, structural inequalities, cultural factors, prejudices, patriarchy and sexism are still prevalent in South Africa” (Plaatjies Van Huffel 2011: 06). She (2011) writes:

Despite the enacted legislation... the engendering of society has not advanced at the desired rate. The dominant discourses which imprisoned women and men remain the same. Essentially, nothing has changed. No major paradigm shifts with regard to gendered objects have come to pass. Only a few modifications of the human image have taken place. The root cause of gender injustices lies in the patriarchal structure of society. Therefore, the structural and underlying causes of subordination and discrimination should be emphasised in the engendering process (p. 06).

Plaatjies Van Huffel (2011) highlights the need for alternative measures to shift the patriarchal paradigm and reshape the society into one that practices gender equality and equity. To achieve this kind of society, Plaatjies Van Huffel (2011) suggests a move away from the development of laws on employment equity and other legislature on gender equality/equity to redress discriminatory practices. Instead, she (2011) suggests that

discriminatory practices be redressed “through the deconstruction of the sexist and racist bias of our society and the replacement of the racist and sexist foundational categories of our society with an egalitarian non-sexist foundation” (p. 06).

Essentially what is suggested here is to rebuild the cultural foundations, by first removing the foundation of sexism and racism firmly built in by South Africa’s oppressive past and replacing it with an egalitarian, non-sexist, non-racist foundation in order to create a cultural response that engages with violence differently. This suggestion understands how violence is sewn into the norms of South African culture and, like Gqola’s suggestion that we rethink and debunk rape myths, attempts to oppose what the violent cultures have normalised.

In order to begin the process of deconstructing the sexist and racial biases, as Plaatjies Van Huffel (2011) suggests, one needs to understand how these biases shape the cultural foundations in South Africa. Understanding rape myths and violent cultures that have been normalised, for example, would then require us to look at them unflinchingly and listen to what they say and what they prescribe. Listening in the context of gender-based violence is not a new idea. Bennet (2000: 2001) suggested that there may be a metaphorical deafness that exists as a strategy of colonial and patriarchal approaches to gender. Bennet (2001) explains that a process of “finding the ears” to understand violence against African-based women is crucial (p.88). She explains that listening is an important process for any healing practice because it is only when we hear the other and respond that we may truly tend to the other person’s context and needs (Bennet 2001: 94). In this research, the process of listening is used firstly, to understand how our history and patriarchal cultures shape our engagements and beliefs in the current context. And secondly, as it is presented throughout this thesis, listening is used as a method to unlearn the harmful cultural foundations that make us deaf to certain voices, gendered and racial violations, and the day-to-day discourses and languages that reinforce violent cultures.

Reshaping the cultural response to gender-based violence using a politics of voice and a politics of listening

Listening theorist Lisbeth Lipari explains how French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu developed the concept of “habitus” to “describe the constellation of deeply embedded and experientially shaped patterns of thoughts, attitudes, practices, [and] tastes”, that each person acquires “as a result of socialisation” (Lipari 2014: 52). Drawing on the concept of habitus Lipari (2014) argues that the way we listen is also a result of socialisation. According to Lipari (2014)

people develop ways of listening that are shaped in two major ways. Firstly, a person's listening is "shaped by culture and the [person's] social location within" that culture and secondly, the person's listening is shaped by their personality and "particular life experiences" (Lipari 2014: 52). What is developed with regards to listening, is the person's "listening habitus, which is based on a combination of cultural, social, and personal experiences" (Lipari 2014: 52). Bourdieu's "habitus" and Lipari's "listening habitus" prove to be useful concepts to interrogate Plaatjies Van Huffel's (2011: 03) suggestion that we replace sexist and racist foundational categories with non-sexist egalitarian ones. The foundational categories of racism and sexism are, as Plaatjies Van Huffel (2011) explains, informed by a patriarchal paradigm.

Understood through Bourdieu's concept of habitus, these categories can therefore be seen as patriarchal habitus. Where patriarchal habitus exists, the "cultural, social and personal experiences" that shape the listening of the person is informed by sexist and racist foundational categories. Understood in this way, the suggestion that we replace these foundational categories is a call for us to replace a patriarchal listening habitus with one that is egalitarian and non-sexist. This call is not a call for individuals alone to replace these foundational categories. Plaatjies Van Huffel (2011) suggests the replacement of these categories at a structural, systematic, and societal level to undo the collective socialisation that has taken place through the deep learning and internalisation of South Africa's racist and sexist history. Adhering to this suggestion would mean changing the way in which we listen as a society towards listening with categories that see beyond the normalisation of gender-based violence and essentially challenge the violent behaviour that leads to such extreme crime statistics. Replacing the foundational categories, however, is a complex process that requires introspection, understanding who has and has not been empowered to speak, and collectively adopting a politics of voice to empower the voices that have been silenced by patriarchal habitus and oppressive categories.

A turn towards a politics of voice and a politics of listening

In her article titled "Women's activism and gender-based violence in South Africa: recognition, redistribution and representation", Gouws (2016) argues that the apartheid regime created a state that was "a hostile space for women but even more so for black women" (p. 403). Gouws (2016) highlights how the state was oppressive to women to the extent that their presence in the state was negligible. Gouws (2016) explains that "citizenship

was based on masculine categories and predicated on the subordination of women” (p. 403).

Gouws writes:

Household and domestic relations were produced through state regulation. Regulations around “the native” were a masculine category of rule, with black women viewed as dependants of men – mothers, wives, carers – not citizens in their own right. State policy in this way constructed women as objects of rule, reproducing certain political and social identities at the same time (2016: 403).

Understood through Bourdieu’s frame of habitus, “patterns of thought, attitudes, practices, tastes and preferences” (Lipari 2014: 52) of women were determined by “masculine categories” that denied women their citizenship and therefore denied them certain aspects of their social and political identities. With regards to the listening habitus shaped by the “masculine categories”, women were denied “voice” as citizens in the political sphere and were only listened to in relation to their roles as “mothers, wives, [and] carers” (Gouws 2016: 403).

By bringing into question the citizenship of women during the apartheid regime, Gouws highlights the fact the political participation was not inherently a given for women, particularly black women, under apartheid. Although there have been reforms in post-apartheid South Africa, Gouws argues that “social and labour reforms are still based on perceptions of the male breadwinner” and “[do] not prioritise women’s needs”, especially “around issues that are hard to regulate” such as gender-based violence (2016: 403). There is, however, a political necessity for diverse voices to be present within democratic political systems to realise equality (Warren 2002: 698). Therefore, what Gouws illustrates in her argument is that the curtailing of women’s citizenship under apartheid and participation in post-apartheid South Africa has had an impact on the kinds of issues that are “voiced” and prioritised in present day South Africa.

The denial of voice, or equal participation in politics, points to inequalities that are present in the matters that are prioritised on the political agenda. What this means with regards to the collective listening habitus is that history has shaped South African society to devalue women’s political participation, especially with regards to matters that affect women the most, like gender-based violence. With scarce resources and limited political will to find long-term solutions to deal with gender-based violence, “women have to turn to civil society to take up the struggle on their behalf” (Gouws 2016: 401). What this points to is that although women may have contributions to make with regards to their safety and the policies

that regulate issues such as gender-based violence, they have historically been denied participation through the curtailing of their citizenship and political voice. Furthermore, women in present day South Africa are forced to rely on civil society, activists, and feminist groups to be their “voice” in the fight for women’s representation and intervention with regards to policy around gender-based violence.

More and more woman, however, are coming to the fore and contributing the “collective voices and outrage” against the levels of gender-based violence in South Africa (Oparinde & Matsha 2021: 03). According to Oparinde and Matsha there is a “resistance” to sexist and masculine categories that normalise violence in the country. The resistance is expressed through people voicing “counter-discourses” by formulating and distributing messages that “expose the gravity and prevalence of the problem, call for recognition of alternative ways of seeing the world from the point of view of women and survivors of violence and ultimately call for action in changing the perpetrators’ mindsets and behaviours” (Oparinde & Matsha 2021: 12).

As the calls increase to “speak out” (Oparinde & Matsha 2021: 08) against gender-based violence and the “counter-discourses” do the work of removing gender-based violence as a societal norm, the categories that shape the listening habitus of society also begin to shift. A politics of listening becomes an important tool in the process of replacing sexist and racist categories because it insists on the empowerment of those who have been previously silenced to “speak out” and have their voices listened to as part of a political process (Couldry 2009; Couldry 2010; Bassel 2017). Oparinde and Matsha (2021) explain that the process of “[l]istening and amplifying the voices opposing and denouncing gender-based violence is a step in the right direction” (p. 13). Through listening, we can begin to undo the systematic silencing of women under our historic political systems and new voices can emerge with insights that can affect the current situation. Listening is foregrounded because the amplification of voices cannot take place without a concerted effort to prioritise listening (Lawy 2017). Lawy explains:

Voice (as both political as well as performative) is not just about voicing or speaking: it is about listening and hearing, for it is in the ways that the audience or listener reacts to; accepts, or rejects what has been put out into the social milieu that reveals the (political/social) impact of that voice. Listening/hearing/mishearing has an effect on the way that the voice is produced (p. 194).

Lawy (2017) emphasises that with each call to “speak out” against gender-based violence, there should be an equal call to listen to the voices that speak out. How we listen, however, and our listening habitus (Lipari 2014) should not be shaped by “masculine categories” (Gouws 2016) or “sexist and racist categories” (Plaatjies Van Huffel 2011) but instead should be shaped by categories that prioritise equal participation.

South African crime statistics indicate that gender-based violence is on the rise. This kind of violence is a “sign of deep structural problems in a society that often cannot be addressed with one strategy or one type of intervention” alone (Gouws 2016: 403). To understand the issue of gender-based violence one would have to “recognise the interlocking systems that support and maintain the form of oppression” at all levels including community, institutional and structural levels (Norswothy & Khuankaew 2004: 259).

Interrogating South Africa’s complex history of violence, social domination and oppression provides interesting insights into the practices, ideologies and regulations that have trickled into post-colonial and post-apartheid South Africa. Although the complexity of South Africa’s violence makes it “challenging to determine how to deconstruct gender-based oppression and violence” understanding the foundational categories that shape societal norms can work as a decent starting point (Norswothy & Khuankaew 2004: 259). One could begin by asking what are the categories, and how have they shaped society’s collective response to gender-based violence in South Africa? This question could lead to the question, what kinds of violence has society normalised because of these categories? And most importantly, how do we begin to reshape these categories and subsequently reshape the collective listening habitus of South Africans, so we begin to see beyond what has been normalised by our history of oppression.

Chapter 2: Theoretical Framework

Introduction

The following chapter is organised into three main sections: *Section 1: Listening in and through research*; *Section 2: Listening in the face of gender-based violence in South Africa*; and *Section 3: A shift towards listening otherwise*. The first section, on listening in and through research, begins by outlining the existing literature on listening and highlights conceptions of listening that leading scholars have conceptualised to fill the gaps in the literature on listening. Among these conceptions are “rhetorical listening” (Ratcliffe 1999), “listening out” (Lacy 2013), listening as a “response to difference” (Connolly 1997) and as “receptive generosity” (Coles 1997). The section then moves towards understanding the current research on *how* one listens and the types of listening that exist. In this section the concepts of cataphatic listening – which “involves listeners imposing their own pre-existing schema” into the process of listening; apophatic listening – where “one suspends their schema on a temporary basis” to allow for better listening; and listening otherwise – where one “listens beyond schemas, categories and the dualistic thinking of the conceptual mind” – are defined and explored (Haroutunian-Gordon & Waks 2010; Waks 2018; Lipari 2014: 183).

With these foundations in place, Section 2 of the chapter then turns to the South African context with regards to listening and gender-based violence. In this section, the chapter illustrates and argues that South Africa’s history, patriarchal structure and socio-political context directly influence the manner in which we are able to listen as a society. The section then focuses on listening to silence, the breaking of silence, and then focuses on love and intimate partner relationships to highlight the need for a systematic turn to apophatic listening and listening otherwise. *Section 3: A shift towards listening otherwise* begins by arguing for conviviality (Nyamnjoh 2017) and misunderstanding (Lipari 2014) as a turn towards listening otherwise. This section further argues that in order to listen otherwise, one should show unconditional compassion – regardless of whether we deem a person worthy of compassion or not.

Section 1: Listening in and through research

In her book, *The art of listening* (2007: 09), Les Back makes an argument for sociological listening “committed to profane illumination, of reading against the grain, which looks for the

outside story that is part of the inside story”. Listening, for Back, is a practice of scholarship that attempts to give “attention to the hidden life of objects and places... that is either concealed within those objects or bleached from them by the formalities of power or the forgetfulness of conventional wisdom” (2007: 08). Listening, in the way that Back understands it, as a practice of listening with ethics and care, can act as an invaluable resource to understand the contemporary world and shape changes that lead to a different kind of future (Bassel 2017). “Humility” and “ethics” (Back 2007) however, are not enough and even though this approach may make the case for more compelling research, it may not “translate to effective and immediate political action” (Bassel 2017: 04).

Listening has the potential to be a form of politics undertaken in “adversarial inequality and tense political moments when complexity is engendered” and the catalyst for such potential lies in paying close attention to the power relations (Bassel 2017: 05). Bassel argues for a pairing of the sociological and political approaches of listening, to understand the nature of power and privilege and of speaking and listening and how it can be shaken by voices that have been unheard in the communication transaction. This does not mean that listening should be elevated over speaking as the primary social activity, instead one should “understand their interdependency, the dynamic between them and the necessity for engagement in both modes” (Bickford 1996: 144). Even though this is the case, a range of scholars across disciplines have repeatedly noted that listening has been given little theoretical attention, in contrast to the focus on voice and speaking (Bickford 1996; Husband 2000; Dreher 2009; Dobson 2010; Lacey 2013; Dobson 2014; Lipari 2014; Macnamara 2015; Bassel, 2017).

Research on Voice and Listening

As mentioned in Chapter 1, voice has value, and the value of voice is appreciated when listening takes place. This section leans on democratic theory because a substantial amount of scholarship in this area has gone into understanding voice and illustrating the value of it. Deliberative politics is defined by inclusion and exclusion (Dreher 2009). What determines whether one is included or excluded is their right, and/or capacity, to speak. Progressive politics therefore can be read as the struggle for the right and capacity to speak (Dobson 2010). Scholars have argued, however, that very little attention has been paid to listening as opposed to speaking in democratic political theory (Bickford 1996; Husband 2000; Dreher 2009; Dobson 2010). Allowing voice and speaking has been at the forefront of improving

democracy (Dobson 2014), but the problem does not lie in voicing or speaking, it lies in the denial of an audience (Calder 2011). Even in the most “sophisticated thinking about communication, listening is all too often regarded as a second thought, dragged along as speaking’s necessary but slightly embarrassing, dull partner” (Lipari 2014: 09).

Susan Bickford’s work on political listening provides the criteria for a type of listening with the potential to undo the “oppression that happens partly through not hearing certain kinds of expressions from certain kinds of people” (Bickford 1996: 149). This criteria emphasises attentiveness and openness to stimulate engagement and communication across difference rather than consensus (Dreher 2009). Listening requires as much engagement as speaking and should be thought of as a joint, receptive project where “speaking and listening are active responses to each other” (Bickford 1996: 144).

The existing literature shows the diverse ways that listening can be undertaken to respond to the gap in theory and practices of listening in political or deliberative engagement. Listening has been understood as a “response to difference” (Connolly 1997); as receptive generosity (Coles 1997); a process of bringing differences together and hearing difference as harmony through “rhetorical listening” (Ratcliffe 1999: 204); an ethical and complex approach to sociology (Back 2007); integral to understanding voice as value as a counter-rationality to neoliberalism (Couldry 2010); an attentive and anticipatory communicative action through the process of “listening out” (Lacey 2013); a process of suspending expectations, frames and views through “apophatic listening” (Dobson 2014); engaging outside of one’s cultural, social and experiential habitus through “listening otherwise” (Lipari 2014); as a “cannon” of markers organisations should work towards to achieve “organisational listening” (Macnamara 2015); as contrasting to pretend listening (Bussie 2011: 31); and pseudo-listening (Adler & Rodman 2011: 136). Many of the scholars suggest a move to a listening practice that “emphasises attention and a giving to others” and avoids only hearing which is limited to “perception and receiving from others” (Lipari 2014: 50).

How do we listen?

Reflecting on Shipley’s (2010) understanding of “good listening” Dobson highlights three main features of what is generally regarded as good listening in face-to-face contexts. Dobson writes:

First [Shipley] reflects on listening as an activity. There is a constant refrain through the literature that while listening may be thought of as passive, good

listening entails active engagement with the speaker. Second this engagement involves checking that the listener has understood the speaker as well as possible through asking questions ('reflections and feedback') designed to bring the listener's understanding into line with the speaker's intentions. Third Shipley refers to listening as involving attention to verbal and non-verbal communication or what is commonly known as body language. On this thread listening is a matter of responding to visual as well as aural stimuli (2014: 50).

Good listening has been contrasted with other forms of listening including inattentive or "interruptive listening" (Dobson 2014; Coakley et al. 1996). Through interruptive listening, as opposed to good listening, one predicts what the other will say and impatiently awaits the opportunity to speak (Coakley et al. 1996), all while "reloading a verbal gun" to "fire off a killer rebuttal" (Bussie 2011: 31). Lipari alludes to this kind of listening and explains a scenario where a shared story is met with a quick solution or the person listening "recounting in tedious detail what happened to them, what they did about it, and how they felt" (2014: 176). This process of listening where one is "speaking their vulnerabilities to another human being who utterly fails to listen, and merely hears" the suffering through "the lens of [their] own unending story" (Lipari 2014: 176) is similar to what Haroutunian-Gordon and Waks (2010) refers to as "cataphatic listening". Cataphatic listening, which "involves listeners imposing their own pre-existing schema onto what is being said by a speaking other, potentially disrupting the transmission of meaning" (Waks 2007: 85) is primarily centred around the self and not the other.

As previously mentioned, Lipari draws on Bourdieu's (1977) concept of "habitus" to argue that the way in which a person listens (or not) is shaped by culture and their social location with it. She explains that a person's "listening habitus is based on a combination of cultural, social, and personal experience" and it influences how they perform their listening (2014: 56). Dobson argues that the refusal to listen outside of one's schemata or habitus is a "powerful form of listening in that it amounts to monological listening – effectively a refusal to listen, and therefore a refusal to enter into dialogue" (2014: 67). The tragedy in this kind of listening (or not listening) lies in the power relations because "people, typically those with the most power, stop listening, and monologue takes the place of dialogue" (Lipari 2014: 198).

In contrast to cataphatic listening, Waks (2007) offers apophatic listening. As an apophatic listener, one suspends one's schema on a temporary basis, to allow the speaking other an opportunity to speak without any internal disruption (Haroutunian-Gordon & Waks 2010;

Dobson, 2014; Waks 2018). The apophatic listener, for example would not interrupt the speaker or offer counterarguments or interpretations of what the speaker is saying. Lipari's (2014) concept of "listening otherwise" is a similar approach to listening with an emphasis on care and ethics while attempting to play host to the other's voice. Lipari offers the process of "listening otherwise" as an ethical breakaway from cataphatic listening in an attempt to move beyond the "unquestioned formations that [have] distort[ed] our perceptions and point[ed] us to what we expect to see and ignore everything else" (2014: 183). Listening otherwise encourages one to both "listen beyond schemas, categories and the dualistic thinking of the conceptual mind" (2014: 99) and become a hospitable, dwelling place offered to host others with a resistance of "certainty, closure, categorisation, the imperatives for natural flow and [the] insatiable appetite for the familiar" (2014: 102). The approach to listening is done, not for the sake of hearing or interpreting, but rather to be "fully present, mindful and patiently aware" (2014: 185). Lipari writes:

When we relinquish control and our attempts to master other people, listening engenders something like a quickening, wherein a birth mother first begins to feel the new life growing within her womb...More than a mere metaphor, quickening, like listening entails the recognition of another self, the startling presence of another being, a not-self. As an enactment of ethics, listening like quickening, brings a recognition of an unknown other to whom we are bound and about whom we feel care and concern. In this way we might say that ethics speaks by way of listening and more specifically it speaks by way of *listening for and to the otherness* of others. (2014: 176).

The process of apophatic listening and listening otherwise is made complicated by our natural tendency to use schemata and language to make sense of the world. "How we understand our feelings, what we think things mean and, indeed, any human encounter is already inside language" (O'Neal, Plumert & Peterson 2016: 258). Language offers convenient tools to structure and shape one's logical preconceptions and verbal formulas (Lipari 2014). With language one can construct meaning – which involves putting words into meaningful thought units, making inferences, relating information being derived from the [source] with background knowledge, and responding critically to the meaning that is constructed" (Pikulski & Chard 2005: 511). Fluency in social and cultural languages is one of the many "psychological tools with which we are able to regulate behaviour, structure thinking and solve problems" (O'Neal, Plumert & Peterson 2016: 257). The process of suspending one's habitus and schemata requires the listener to reconsider what society, culture and language have rendered normal.

Section 2: Listening in the face of gender-based violence in South Africa

Power, violent schemata and the shape of listening

Embedded in the politics of listening are “hierarchies of language” and “linguistic conventions” that determine which voices are undervalued or ignored (Dreher 2009: 445). These hierarchies of language and linguistic conventions determine the pre-existing schema that shape the way one listens and who one chooses to listen to. This is true even in the case of listening to instances of gender-based violence in South Africa.

In her book, *Rape – A South African Nightmare*, Pumla Gqola argues that the act of rape is not a moment or singular event but rather a language. This language communicates patriarchal power in order to “enforce submission and punish defiance” in women and those rendered female (Gqola 2015: 21). Gqola challenges the reader to think “unrelentingly about how what we are taught in a patriarchal society [language, performance and representations] seduces us into thinking that rape only looks a certain way, and therefore that we should only believe rape when it fits into that narrow idea” (2015: 06). Drawing on her reading of Bennett (1997: 100), Gqola explains:

[p]lausibility [of a story] depends on a range of things all of which are dependent on the audience of the narrated events. The listener/reader has to: firstly, be open to believing and understanding what is presented; secondly, find that the different events and aspects of what is being told individually make sense; thirdly, to be convinced of the connections between said events/aspects of the narrated rape; and finally, everything has to be possible in how listener/reader thinks the world works. A rape story is plausible when all four requirements are consistent (2015:30).

Gqola further explains that specific logic around gender is taught in patriarchal societies and our fluency in that logic “requires exposure through repetition of messages, warning inducements, explicit statements” and “interpreting and clustering signs” into “meaningful thought units” (2021: 73). This exposure normalises the environment for anyone it renders female and eventually controls those who become fluent in its language.

With regards to listening, Gqola’s argument is that a patriarchal society not only shapes the cataphatic listening of the society, but also uses fear as tool to reinforce this type of listening in any communication that takes place with regards to rape and gender-based violence. Gqola argues that in patriarchal societies we are socialised into the *Female Fear Factory* in ways

similar to those in which we are made fluent in a language. The female fear factory, which is defined as “a theatrical and public performance of patriarchal policing of violence towards woman and others cast as female, who are, therefore considered safe to violate,” is the embodiment of a language because it “requires an audience and relies on a series of recognisable cues to communicate with those who watch” (Gqola 2021: 18-19).

The female fear factory understood as a language of public patriarchal policing can provide insight into how one’s behaviour and methods of listening are shaped in a patriarchal society. Gqola’s metaphor in which female fear is “manufactured” assembly style like in a factory evokes the system of capitalism – and its insistence on coercion, accumulation, injustice, and massification. The fear factory, like capitalism, is characterised by specific dimensions and articulations of power and the structures that uphold that power. Gqola writes:

Like a real factory [the female fear factory] takes up public physical space, requires many bodies and different components. Like an assembly line, it involves movement with the addition of components as the belt moves from post to post. It is a machine set to work in one direction and one that could injure those who get in the way. Interfering promises injury to any body parts that attempt to interfere with the process. It needs a power source and is a very effective process of production. Its products are ready for consumption and although harmful, it finds such high circulation that it seems normal. Although the product is female fear, its products are generalised fear in all audiences (2015: 79).

This metaphor articulates how acts of violence can “be used as a way of reinforcing hierarchies or maintaining gender protocols” (Storkey 2015: 175). In this factory, fear becomes a powerful force in controlling the actions of those who are part of the assembly line. For example, “fear of violence might curtail a woman’s likelihood” of acting out of line and “opposing or humiliating her husband” (Storkey 2015: 175). On rape, Gqola argues that the factory acts as an effective reminder that women “are not safe and that their bodies are not entirely theirs” (2015: 79). Rape then becomes an exercise of power that achieves multiple goals. Firstly it “communicates that the man creating fear has power over the woman who is the target of his attention” all while simultaneously teaching “women who witness it about their vulnerability either through reminding them of their own previous fear or showing them that it could happen to them next” (2015: 79).

The manufacture of female fear uses the threat of rape and other bodily wounding to communicate power and legitimacy as well as to showcase the contest between the powerless and the powerful. This performance relies on both direct and indirect violence to achieve its

goal to “silence women by reminding them of [their] rapability and blackmail [them] to keep [themselves] in check” (Gqola 2015: 80). Direct violence – “which refers to the visible, easy to count acts such as rape, sexual assault, murder, and grievous assault” (Ratele 2022: 26) – is normalised through a process of “frequent repetition of performance until the performance becomes invisible” (Gqola 2015: 78-79).

The invisible performance then forms the foundations of the indirect violence – which “may not straight away be seen as violence but can be as inhumane as direct violence” (Ratele 2022: 27) – and facilitates a process where the violence is so expected that “its interruption becomes strange, dangerous and often unthinkable” (Gqola 2015: 79). The indirect violence becomes “baked into the structure of society becoming a part of the common-sense idea of how the world works” (Ratele 2022: 27). To Gqola, the assembly-style performance and reinforcement of cataphatic listening, in the face of rape and gender-based violence, is a form of indirect violence that is similar to structural and cultural violence as Galtung (1969; 1990) imagined it.

Structural and cultural violence and the manufacture of violent schemata

Galtung’s theory of violence is focused on how people unintentionally cause or experience harm. He argues that “violence is present when human beings are being influenced so that their actual somatic and mental realisations are below their potential realisations” (1969: 185). Galtung argues that although a loss of life can occur due to this kind of violence “the violence is built into the structure and shows up as unequal power and consequently as unequal life chances” (1969: 171). In this way structural violence, without implicating the actor, exposes a clear logic behind the systematic nature of how violence is distributed (Ho 2007). Ho argues that structural violence finds its origins in the “unequal distribution of power” in ways that have an impact on human agency and “then systematically disadvantages those who do not hold as much if any power at all” (2007: 04).

Structural violence is transformed into patriarchal structural violence, when it happens to girls and women specifically because of their gender (Brock-Utne 1989; Anderson & Christie 2001). Patriarchal structural violence takes place when “systems or structures of exploitation [normalise] socially constructed gender differences and legitimise male domination” (Ebert 1996; Anderson & Christie 2001). Storkey writes:

Structures of patriarchy grow through the entwining of significant cultural areas of discourse constructing ideas of what is ‘masculine’ or ‘feminine’ which have

lived out implications in psychological, economic, social, legal and even religious life... [G]ender-based violence is not different in kind from any other kind of oppression or disadvantage suffered by women in patriarchy; it is simply more total, intimate and closer to issues of identity (2015: 183-184).

Drawing on the work of Farmer (2007), Ho explains that the suffering brought on by structural violence is constructed by historically given processes and forces to constrain agency. Ratele (2022: 27) suggests that South Africa's history of structural violence began in 1652 with colonisation and endured through apartheid to continue into the new republic of the country. Gqola's work illustrates this suggestion and argues that patriarchal structural violence is baked into South African history. Gqola (2015) highlights the troubling history and culture of rape and sexual assault being used as a means of warfare (Davis 2014), objectification (Campbell & Elbourne 2014) and exploitation (Baderoon 2015). This history extends into the early period of colonisation in which "slaves were objects to be used... and could neither consent nor dissent to the manner of their use" (Gqola 2015: 46). Placing the problem of rape firmly within the continuity of this historical context, Gqola argues that when the "rape of black women became normalised and mythologised", these women became 'unrapable' – that is "marked as free to be raped with no consequence" because of the "refusal of the court to convict a man for the rape of a slave woman" (Gqola 2021: 16-17). Gqola writes:

The construction of Blackwomen as unrapable becomes an important stage in the creation of permissible forms of violence, and the impossibility of justice... The contemporary South African legal justice system routinely fails to offer justice for women, especially Blackwomen, who report cases of rape and other forms of GBV (2021:17-18).

Understanding this history from Galtung's perspective shows how structural gender-based violence has shaped South Africa's schemata and habitus as it affects listening to cultures, languages and experiences of gender-based violence – particularly those of black women. Gqola's example illustrates how the history of violence has shaped the "unequal power and unequal life chances" (Galtung 1969: 171) afforded to those who have been historically constructed 'rape-able'. Gqola illustrates how rape, is dependent on the existence of patriarchy and forms part of a patriarchal "violence toolkit" aimed at instilling fear and shame in those that the structure constructs as feminine. Gqola writes:

Rape is not possible without patriarchy. It is for patriarchy. In [patriarchal] societies sexual assault is routinely used by states to discipline women activists,

as it is used to discipline women everywhere. In detention [for example] sexual assault reminds women of their legitimate place: powerless and weak. This is a particularly important lesson for those women who have exercised their power to claim the freedom to push against the boundaries of patriarchal states. Sexual assault is yet another attempt to break troublesome women down, make them smaller, make them female through violence and shame (2021: p. 25-26; 45).

This violence has been reinforced over time thus normalising its cultures and turning it into what Galtung refers to as cultural violence. Cultural violence includes “those aspects of culture, the symbolic sphere of our existence – exemplified by religion and ideology, language and art, empirical science and formal science – that can be used to justify or legitimise direct or structural violence” (Galtung 1990: 291). Cultural violence normalises direct and structural violence in a way that renders it acceptable, invisible, and unrecognisable as violence. Alexander writes:

Galtung’s cultural violence is predicated on oppressive and exploitive social structures. These social structures both make the perpetrators of violence invisible and at the same time serve to legitimize the violence so as to make it imperceptible and/or acceptable to the majority of the people (2018: 14).

Many forms of gender-based violence have been normalised in patriarchal societies through the use of fear. As a tool of “internal intimidation where [one] group’s communicated threats protect another group’s power at the expense of the former” (Robin 2004: 25), fear acts as an integral part of maintaining power (Gqola 2021). Women and vulnerable others in patriarchal societies receive “prolonged exposure” to the “dangers that await” if they conduct themselves in certain ways all while “witnessing the treatment of others” who “step out of line” as a “collective emotional orientation to fear” (Gqola 2021: 61). Patriarchy does the work of cultural violence by normalising direct physical violence against women, rendering the perpetrators of the violence invisible and using fear as a tool to control women into submission. Gqola refers to Wright’s (2018) article on why sexual coercion is not consent to argue that the normalisation of violence has led to women expecting it in day-to-day engagements. Gqola writes:

“Women are afraid men will murder them, by the time women reach sexual maturity, pretty much every woman has learnt that you do not want to make men angry. Ever.” Patriarchy says men are volatile and that their anger is legitimate grounds for unleashing public violence, or just violence on the bodies of women, privately or in full view (2021: 73).

When women are made to expect violence at every turn and are expected to protect

themselves from the violence, they begin to police their own actions and movements to ward off any potential violence that they could attract (Oparinde and Matsha 2021). This process, of self-policing, is a function of the fear factory to enforce patriarchal power over women and instil shame in those the factory renders female. Gqola quotes Shaila Patel (2014: 25) to explain that “to understand how power works in a society, watch who is carrying the shame and who is doing the shaming” and further explains how, “as a function of oppression”, shame determines “who is valued and who is invisibilised in any society” (Gqola 2015: 38). What the factory expects to follow from the brutalisation and shaming is silence. The manufactured female fear works to silence women by consistently reminding them of their vulnerability (Gqola 2015: 80).

Gender-based violence and the sticky concept of silence

Interventions in gender-based violence spaces have seen civil society organisations, activists, survivors, scholars, and members of the South African government reaching out to society to break the silence and expose perpetrators of violence. Oparinde and Matsha for example, have called on the “collective voices” of people encouraging the amplification of “outrage...activism, care and support from all sectors of society to bring about change”. They demand that we “break the culture of silence and dismantle popular misconceptions and myths on GBV” (2021: 3-11).

The individuals tasked with breaking the silence, however, do so at their own peril with little chance of protection or justice from the legal system. Gqola writes:

We often place so much pressure on women to talk about rape, to access counselling and get legal services to process rape, but very seldom do we talk about the rapists. We run the danger of speaking about rape as a perpetrator-less crime (2015: 07).

Gqola explains that although there is no silence about who the victims of rape and rape culture are, the silence about who the rapist is enables rape culture. Exposing the perpetrator and the actual “face of the rapist” is the true act of breaking the silence (2021: 108). There is, however, no point in inviting women to lay charges when successful prosecution rates are so low (Gqola 2015; Oparinde & Matsha 2021).

Although the victims of violence are continually encouraged to “break the silence”, when they do, patriarchal structural violence and rape culture ensures that their actions are met with backlash, shaming, inaction, apathy, and betrayal from the public and the justice system

(Gqola 2015). First the structure creates a climate of fear that violates and silences women, then it manipulates them into believing that silence is the reason why the victimisation is taking place. In a study that engages with discourses and counter-discourses about gender-based violence in the South African public domain, Oparinde and Matsha analyse a government twitter post to illustrate how blame is often attributed to survivors of rape rather than the perpetrators. Oparinde and Matsha write:

The original message [reads] ‘Violence and abuse against women have no place in our society. Govt is calling on women to speak out, and not allow themselves to become victims by keeping quiet. Women who speak out are able to act, effect change and help others’ ... [In this message] the burden is put on the women... The word “women” is mentioned thrice, while the word “men”, referring to the perpetrators, is not mentioned at all. This suggests the overt and covert implications of victim blaming. Calling upon women to protect themselves gives the notion that, although men will continue to perpetrate these crimes, the advice of the government is for women to protect themselves, leaving men to carry on with their behaviour. Even more disconcerting is that the post specifically calls on women to speak out against the crime they are a victim of, implying that the key to stop GBV lies with them (2021: 06).

The burden or responsibility never shifts away from the victim to the perpetrator. This discourse of women taking responsibility is a form of “victim blaming” – “which is a term used to describe a situation where the victims are blamed for the events they experienced” (Oparinde & Matsha 2021: 05). The discourse is also contradictory and reinforces structural violence because, on the one hand it communicates the need for women to be security conscious, while on the other it normalises gender-based violence (Gordon & Collins 2013: 100; Oparinde & Matsha 2021: 06).

The above example illustrates more clearly where the silence in matters of gender-based violence lies; in the naming and shaming of perpetrators of rape and gender-based violence. This however does not mean that when perpetrators are named, the breaking of the silence is taken lightly. The “deeply entrenched systematic repression of voices rising against GBV – for example, the use of state violence against people partaking in marches against GBV” – indicates that instead of actual silence, there exists a push to protect perpetrators, often at the expense of the victims of the violence (Oparinde & Matsha 2021: 07; Gqola 2021). The public treatment of the Jacob Zuma rape trial is a good illustration of this as it was “instructive of how [South Africans] deal with rape, why rape survivors make certain choices, and the fraught ways in which the legal system responds to and treats rape complainants” (Gqola 2015). The 2006 trial took place after politician (later-elected president) Jacob Zuma

was charged with rape by a well-known HIV positive activist. The lesbian activist later referred to as Khwezi “reported that Zuma, whom she had known as a father figure or uncle, raped her at his Forest Town home on November 3, 2005” (Gqola 2015: 102). Following the charge, there was an outpouring of writing in creative, op-ed, journalist, and academic publications. The trial itself became a form of public theatre with qualities akin to both a carnival and a circus. Hassim writes:

Outside the courthouse supporters on each side lined up for a verbal and at times physical battle that required police to intervene. On Zuma’s side supporters were dressed in traditional Zulu clothing and many men carried sticks. There were a large number of vociferous women among them too, some brandishing the provocative invitation ‘Zuma rape me’ holding up banners saying, ‘burn the bitch’ and ‘100% Zuluboy’, and of course ‘Zuma for President’. Zuma’s supporters chanted about conspiracies and drew attention to the failings of the new democracy (2009: 58-59).

Zuma was acquitted of raping Khwezi when Judge Willem van der Merwe accepted Zuma’s claim that Khwezi’s short skirt, familiar tone, and the fact that “she did not seek to stop him in any way nor did she verbalise her reluctance to engage in sex with him” was evidence that he had consensual sex with her (Hassim 2009: 58). Her process of “breaking the silence” and exposing her perpetrator proved to be very dangerous and life changing for her and her family. During the initial stages, the media went against the law and officially published the case number and later her identity in the news (Gqola 2015). This was followed by violent threats outside of the courtroom and the publishing of the threats in news media. Khwezi received attacks on the homes of her family members, had objects thrown at her while going into court and had pro-Zuma supporters burning photocopied pictures of her. For the duration of the trial, Khwezi was secluded in a safehouse under police protection and when the trial ended, she was forced to leave the country for safety reasons (Motsei 2007; Hassim 2009; Gqola 2015).

In the contemporary context, the rape trial stands as our society’s “collective emotional orientation” to the act of breaking the silence (Gqola 2021: 61). This means that through the public nature and publicity of the trial, South Africans have been collectively socialised by the trials “discourses, symbols, models, epistemic authorities, emphases, values, norms, narratives, beliefs, attitudes, influences, and learning” (Gqola 2021: 61) to behave in certain ways with regards to “breaking the silence”. This is evidenced in the treatment of gender-based violence and rape protestors whose primary aim is to break the silence and expose

perpetrators. This treatment has been met with a critical response from gender-based violence activists and scholars. In 2016, for example, student activists initiated the #EndRapeCulture protests as a “representation of students’ frustration with the way university management dealt with sexual assault cases; which students perceived as reinforcing victim-blaming and supporting perpetrators of sexual assault” (Gouws 2018: 03; Orth, Andipatin & Van Wyk 2021: 193).

The call to break away from cataphatic listening becomes the necessary if not ethical response to the call to break the silence in the face of gender-based violence. The examples above illustrate the dangers that await women who stand up and break the silence; particularly if the perpetrators hold power within the patriarchal structures and society. Patriarchal structural violence requires cataphatic listening, as part of its “violence toolkit” (Gqola 2015), to uphold schemata, habitus and languages that are able to silence women even after they have come forward to break the silence and expose their perpetrators.

This points to two important considerations one has to make regarding silence and listening in the face of gender-based violence in South Africa. Firstly, the patriarchal structure and collective emotional orientation of the society either does not want or is not equipped to listen apophatically/otherwise to the breaking of silence. That means, the way we have been taught to both break the silence and respond to the breaking of silence does not leave room for us to listen or act out of accordance with past structures and expectations. And secondly, the cataphatic listening structure – as seen in the Jacob Zuma rape trial – is ill-equipped to understand silence as a possible means of communicating resistance or protest.

Silence, with an ideological shift that prioritises listening beyond preconceived schemata, can be understood as an agential tool rather than acceptance or resignation. Hatzisavvidou explains that ‘keeping silent’ can be a meaningful act because of its potential to bring about political change, because first “it disrupts the primacy of language [and voice] as means of communication of political demands” and second it disrupts the “association of political participation with speaking” (2015: 03).

Lipari uses an example that occurred in Texas, where a cheerleader used silence to protest against her rape, to illustrate the shortcomings of only prioritising voice and speaking as means of communication. The cheerleader was raped by a basketball player that her team cheered for. In protest against her assault, the cheerleader chose to be quiet when it was time to cheer for her rapist. When the player went to the foul line for a shot “the young woman

stepped back and sat silently on the bench” (Lipari 2014: 185). Although the basketball player later pleaded guilty to assault, the principal of the school gave the young woman an ultimatum to either cheer for her aggressor or quit the team. The cheerleader’s family then sued for infringing on her free speech rights and for punishing her and not her rapist.

Lipari explains that the case later made it to the Fifth Circuit of Appeals, which found that the cheerleader’s silence was not, in fact, protected speech. “The eloquence of her silence was simply lost on them; both within the schooling and the judicial system. They did not listen (Lipari 2014: 185). By not listening, the school and judicial system created an “unequal life chance” (Galtung 1969: 171) where the violence of the male aggressor infringed on the woman’s right to silently protest against her abuse and continue to be part of her cheer team. Here the silence of the woman is understood cataphorically, and interpreted as mere silence, instead of its intended meaning which is an act of protest. Listening apophatically or otherwise provides a temporary oasis for communication to exist without the pressure of history and power’s influence to dictate its outcomes. Within this oasis, there is space for silence, broken or otherwise. The oasis of listening otherwise becomes a safe “dwelling place” (Lipari 2014) where “words can be superfluous” and “communication can be present in the quality of silence” (Ratele 2022: 77). Listening otherwise moves beyond language, signs and the receipt of information to engage with the “eloquence of silence” and the “emergent self-transcendence that involves opening and vulnerability” (Lipari 2014: 185).

Although scholars have encouraged the listener to suspend their core understanding of the world to truly listen – even to silence – suspension is a difficult, if not impossible process. The difficulty is due to history, culture and the structure of society shaping our understanding of the world. One cannot begin to ‘listen otherwise’ or apophatically in the face of gender-based violence in South Africa without first interrogating how history, culture, socio-economic and patriarchal structures have shaped the way one performs one’s identity. These structures, violent or otherwise are characterised by their own “habitus” and normalised ways of doing things, like listening. The constructions of love, violence, femininity and masculinity are important contextualising factors to consider when attempting to listen apophatically or otherwise to instances of gender-based violence in South Africa.

The interconnections of love and violence in South Africa

In his book, *Why men hurt women and other reflections on love, violence and masculinity*, South African cultural psychologist Kopano Ratele first proposes that men in our society

suffer from lovelessness to which he follows up with a second proposal that lovelessness appears to lie at the root of some of the violence of men against women. To Ratele lovelessness, which is characterised by “various experiences and effects” that include “feelings of being unlovable, of being unworthy of love, of being unloved, of a poorly gratified need for love” creates in men a love hunger that is “refused admittance into cultural consciousness” and “largely veiled, minimised or displaced by conventional ideas of masculinity” (2022: 25). Ratele argues that it is the men with chronic love hunger who are at higher risk and in need of saving from patriarchal masculinity that intersects with racism and capitalism. Ratele writes:

To probe men’s love while keeping in mind men’s violence reveals the dynamic interplay of male power and powerlessness, the structural and subjective meanings of masculine domination, and the fear of equality or subordination...when a man wilfully hurts another person, power and its opposites (whether incompetence, weakness, failure, suffering, hurt or helplessness) are always in play, refracting through each other. Men’s violence is always a reaction, a reassertion or deflection. Regardless of whether a person realises it, he uses violence to (re)assert power and repel his sense of vulnerability, his own hurt and impotence, perhaps even a sense of hopelessness. More generally power flows throughout love whether we are aware of it or not (2022: 32).

In societies that are capitalist, patriarchal and racist, the experience and effect of lovelessness become interwoven into the identities of men and women. Ratele insists that one must never minimise “the role played by the structures, policies, discourse and institutions that govern, influence and mould [one’s] interiorities” (2022: 34). One does not expect love from government structures and policies but there is a degree of care that can be expected. This care or lack thereof – for example “how the police treat us when we come to lay charges” – has an influence on one’s experiences and affects one’s subjectivities (Ratele 2022: 24). It is with this in mind that Ratele conceptualises love as not merely being “a private condition that originates inside” a person, but rather “as a series of internalisations shaped, experienced and expressed within the context of structures, policies, discourses, institutions and cultural norms” (2022: 35).

Although the way one loves is primarily shaped by the history and structure of society they are a part of, love is learned from early childhood within the household. In her book, *All about love*, bell hooks argues that one learns about love in one’s childhood and whether a home is happy, troubled, functional, or dysfunctional it is the original school of love (2001:

17). The actions and words of parents or guardians done in the name of love can have lasting effects on the child's conception and performance of love as an adult. In a passage where she reflects on her own childhood experiences, hooks writes:

In early adolescence when we were whipped and told that these punishments were 'for our own good' or 'I'm doing this because I love you,' my siblings and I were confused. Why was harsh punishment a gesture of love? As children do, we pretended to accept this grown-up logic; but we knew in our hearts that it was not right. We knew it was a lie. Just like the lie grown-ups told when they explained after harsh punishment, 'It hurts me more than it hurts you.' (2001: 17)

This kind of love, which Ratele refers to as “wounding love” can lead to feelings of “lovelessness, or ungratified love hunger or feeling unworthy” (2022: 34). Wounding love, as seen in hooks's reflection, is characterised by parents or caregivers either interlacing utterances of love with harsh discipline or punishment; or making the satisfaction of the child's yearning for love conditional (Ratele 2022). This kind of love, where “the satiation of affective needs becomes enmeshed with hurts or terms and conditions” can lead to the child understanding love to be coiled around pain and hurt. Ingrained in a child's performance of love, wounding love then becomes the primary expression of love in later years. The depth of that hurting childhood experience, left with no reflection, then leads to the adult living with “love and pain scrambled together” (Ratele 2022: 34). It is only through self-examination and reflection that a less wounding kind of love can be imagined and practised.

Healthy love or non-wounding love has been theoretically constructed as care, responsibility, respect, knowledge and the active concern for spiritual growth of the other (Fromm 1957; Peck 1978; Walsh 1995; hooks 2001). According to these theorists, love should not be understood only as a passive affect or deep affection that overcomes a person at first glance or first encounter (hooks 2001), love rather is an active engagement – and should be understood as a “standing in” rather than a “falling for” (Fromm 1957: 11). “Love is as love does. Love is an act of will, namely, both an intention and an action...[w]e choose to love” (Peck 1978: 82). As an action and activity, through love we attempt to understand, respect, trust, care for, respond to, be responsible for, commit to and help those who experience it to grow, emotionally, spiritually, and mentally (Fromm 1957; Walsh 1995; hooks 2001). This understanding of love transcends the constructions of love as “feelings we have no control over” and encourages “accountability and responsibility” (hooks 2001) for the actions we do in the name of love.

Although love has been theoretically constructed as healthy, some constructions of love in the South African context indicate a clear intersection between healthy and wounding love in intimate partner relationships.

In a study that explores healthy youthful African sexuality, Mudaly (2013) draws on the work of Bhana and Pattman (2011), Harrison (2008) and Jewkes and Morrell (2012) to argue that there is an absent scholarly discourse of healthy African sexuality, sexual agency, love, romance and excitement. According to Mudaly (2013: 38), African sexuality has been framed in the context of “repression, disease, fear and doom” and love and desire have been ignored by researchers “to perpetuate racist and biased perceptions”. The framing of love and sexuality, in South African research, has been focused on the “multiple social inequalities” and “the call for the adherence to cultural practices which regulate sexuality during the age of HIV and Aids”, which has resulted in research that focuses on “unequal gender relations and the resultant symbolic and substantive violence” (Mudaly 2013: 39).

To address this paucity in research, multiple studies have been conducted to understand how young South Africans construct love and the role of love in relationships in various contexts. Findings from these studies show that love has been constructed as financial support, respect, sexual engagement and intimacy, fidelity (from women) and discreet infidelity (from men) (Wood & Jewkes 1998; Hunter 2010; Jewkes and Morrell 2012; Mudaly 2013; Willan et al. 2019). In most of the studies intimate partner violence, although undesirable, is a normal and sometimes expected element of love-relationships (Wood & Jewkes 1998; Jewkes and Morrell 2012; Willan et al. 2019).

In a South African study conducted with young women living in informal settlements, Willan et al. (2019) explored the women’s experiences and constructions of love relationships. The study also explored the role of agency in the women’s decisions to remain in or leave violent relationships. The study found that the women’s views about love were the determining factor on whether they tolerated violence in their relationships (Willan et al. 2019: 1230). Although the women in the study would have preferred to not experience violence at all, violence was accepted and seen as a trade-off for being loved and respected (Willan et al. 2019; 1235). Findings from the study show that slapping, shouting and being locked up were frequently viewed as minor forms of violence or not violence at all and the women viewed respect, economic support and in some cases even violence as expressions of love (Willan et al. 2019: 1235).

Reflecting on violence in intimate partner relationships, Ratele asks the question, “Why do men hurt those they claim to love?” (2022: 65). In response he argues that to blame patriarchy and the historical and contemporary socio-political architecture of our society cannot complete the picture of why men hurt the women they claim to love. Although these are important causational factors, they do not account for the men in South Africa who have been exposed to both factors and do not hurt those that they claim to love. To him, contradiction is at the heart of the matter. Ratele writes:

[I]f we were to unwrap an individual’s declarations of love, we might find what I call ‘unlove’, feelings that are opposed to what we regard as love, even loathing and a belief that one is unlovable. Similarly, in almost the same moment a person can be violent and feel tenderness toward the person against whom they are aggressing. What I see as abusive behaviour another person may see as loving concern: this indicates that there are conflicting ideas about love among people within one society, even one family (2022: 69).

This conflict or contradiction – which is “not unusual in psychological and social life, in affective life as well as within structures” – is an important matter of consideration when attempting to understand how love and violence can coexist (Ratele 2022: 68).

What this contradiction points to, with regards to this research, is the need for a concerted effort to “listen beyond schemas, categories and the dualistic thinking of the conceptual mind” and become a hospitable, dwelling place offered to host others with a resistance of “certainty, closure, categorisation, the imperatives for natural flow and [the] insatiable appetite for the familiar” (Lipari 2014: 99; 102). To listen openly to instances of gender-based violence, outside of habitus and schemata, may seem impossible and intangible. Is it possible to suspend one’s historical and contemporary socio-political architecture of society? Or are these habitual and schematic frameworks the only tools one can conjure to make sense of the world?

Section 3: A shift towards “Listening Otherwise”

Understanding, incompleteness and listening otherwise

To understand is in general to grasp something, to see things clearer and be able to integrate a particular meaning into a larger frame (Parret & Bouveresse 1981). Understanding however is complicated by its subjective nature and its relationship to misunderstanding. Lipari argues that understanding and misunderstanding should be embraced equally, not as a linear

progression moving from one end to the other, but as “nested in each other... where bits of understanding are seeded in a field of misunderstanding, each containing the other”. This argument, to move away from the notion that one can understand something in its completeness, is aimed at inspiring an openness to experiences that can shift already existing forms of understanding. Lipari writes:

When we mistake understanding for something fixed and final, something out “there” rather than something accomplished between and within a situation, we create a wall around possibility and limit the living creativity of our learning and being. For the myth of perfect understanding, and its high-handed renunciation of misunderstanding, deafens us to the on-going birth of understanding. In any given context, there are thousands of understandings and to insist on one is to kill the living movement of another (2014: 139).

Misunderstanding, in the communication transaction, is often “thought of as a kind of poison”, or a “mistake” to be avoided (Lipari 2014). But misunderstanding, perceived through the lens of Nyamnjoh’s concept of conviviality, has the possibility of provoking transformation, learning and growth. Conviviality, according to Nyamnjoh, “is the recognition and provision for the fact or reality of being incomplete” (2017: 10).

Reflecting on his own research and scholarship Nyamnjoh explains that Africans advocate for cultures, identities, places and spaces “to be seen and studied as socially, politically and historically constructed realities and [importantly] permanent works in progress” (Nyamnjoh quoted in Wasserman 2022: 07). His concept of conviviality stems from this reality. Nyamnjoh’s idea deepens the common understanding of conviviality which refers to friendliness by framing it through the lens of the African concept of Ubuntu which states that a person is a person because of, or through others. To Nyamnjoh, conviviality is a far deeper recognition of other human beings through the process of admitting that one is in essence never complete and is therefore always in need of engaging with others. Nyamnjoh (2017) explains:

If incompleteness is the normal order of things, natural or otherwise, conviviality invites us to celebrate and preserve incompleteness and mitigate the delusions of grandeur that come with ambitions and claims of completeness. Not only does conviviality encourage us to recognise our own incompleteness, it challenges us to be open-minded and open-ended in our claims and articulations of identities, being and belonging (p 10).

Similar to Lipari’s call for the embracing of misunderstanding, Nyamnjoh’s conviviality encourages the individual to become aware of their own incompleteness and allow for that

reality to challenge them to be openminded and open-ended in the way they claim and articulate identity, being and belonging. When an individual allows themselves to be incomplete in nature, they will be inspired to “reach out, encounter and explore” other ways to complement themselves with the “added possibilities of potency brought [their] way by the incompleteness of others” (Nyamnjoh 2017: 10). To Nyamnjoh, conviviality and embracing incompleteness is an admission that we need others, we need community, and we need processes that allow us to embrace aspects of our beings that are in themselves naturally insufficient. Through the lens of conviviality something like misunderstanding transforms from a poison to a challenge to reach out to others. It encourages a commitment to things that are difficult to comprehend and an exploration that goes beyond what is familiar. When we embrace misunderstanding and incompleteness in everyday life, we create the space to engage with the ‘other’.

This process is done not to achieve completeness but rather to add to impact on the relationships around us as well as the society we live in. Rather than threaten the other, conviviality plays host with a fascination for the other as well as other ways of being. This is a process that allows us to look beyond ourselves, beyond our own explanations and understandings and possibly see the world from a different perspective. Nyamnjoh explains that through conviviality “[c]onversation is privileged over conversion and ritual influences are more amenable to the logic of conviviality than is coercive violence to control others – mind, body, and soul – and resources with reckless abandon in a delusionary quest for completeness” (2017: 10-11).

The embracing of misunderstanding over complete understanding or completeness is a potential starting place to for the process of shedding habitus (Lipari 2014), schemata (Dobson 2014) and languages (Gqola 2015) that hinder one’s ability to listen apophatically (Haroutunian-Gordon & Waks 2010; Dobson 2014) or to listen otherwise (Lipari 2014). This process of allowing incompleteness (Nyamnjoh 2017) to be the starting point, creates a space in which one “can tolerate the painful ambiguities of not understanding or not knowing and, in turn, of being misunderstood” (Lipari 2014: 140). By embracing the processes that incompleteness and conviviality engender, one is able to open oneself to an encounter in which one is able to disrupt the “familiar taken-for-granted understandings and make the other strange” to truly understand or misunderstand the other as an ‘other’ (Lipari 2014: 140).

The shift, in thinking about the self in relation to the ‘other’, is important because of its impact on the kind of listening one is able to commit to. The natural inclination in cataphatic listening is to impose pre-existing schemata as an attempt to understand completely what the other is saying, who they are and how they relate to the self as either similar to the self or a different other. Embracing conviviality and misunderstanding have the potential to have an impact on the process one undergoes when listening because through this process compassion – which usually only follows understanding – precedes understanding (Lipari 2014). Here the listening begins to move from cataphatic to apophatic through the process of showing compassion even to those who one’s pre-existing schemata would dictate as not being deserving of the compassion.

In an exploration of listening otherwise, Lipari performs the complex task of reversing the idea that understanding precedes compassion to explore how compassion (feeling together with) must precede understanding for an ethical engagement to take place. Lipari writes:

Putting compassion and otherness together in the context of communication ethics as informed by dialogic and postmodern philosophy at first glance may appear troubling, since the ethical impulse of compassion seems to conflict with the ethical impulse to honour the other as other, as not self...[O]ur affirmation of the other’s alterity – the otherness of the other – is central to ethics. So, the dialectical tension between compassion (which emphasizes sharing) and alterity (which emphasizes difference) [is only at] first glance irreconcilable (2014: 179).

Lipari illustrates the complexity of placing the terms “compassion” and “alterity” together using an example of Buddhist monk Thich Nhat Hanh’s response to 9/11 and the question “what would you say to Bin Laden?”. To this the monk replied, “[t]he first thing I would do is listen. I would try to understand why he acted in that cruel way. I would try to understand all of the suffering that led him to violence” (Reynolds (2002) quoting Simkinson 2001; Lipari 2014: 179). This response exemplifies what Lipari refers to as the height of ethical communicative action – “which involves openness toward the radical other, a willingness to listen, and a concern for the others suffering” (2014: 180). Here compassion, which is neither simple nor unambiguous, as illustrated in this example, has preceded understanding through the openness of the monk to show compassion to someone who has been labelled a “Muslim fundamentalist” and “uncivilised and barbaric” (Yusof et al. 2013: 109). Instead of limiting the compassion to the amount deserving of someone who is not “uncivilised or barbaric”, the monk lets go of any schemata that would have an impact on his ability to open himself to Bin Laden and attempts to listen apophatically or listen otherwise.

In instances where understanding is expected to come before compassion, the compassionate self fails to respond to the suffering of others because of the presence of alterity – the radical otherness, difference, incomprehensibility of the other, and the impossibility of being otherwise (Lipari 2014: 179). This highlights how embracing misunderstanding and incompleteness becomes the ethical response to the suffering of others because “[t]he excesses of alterity – of difference, otherness and strangeness – will always inevitably exceed [one’s] knowledge, experience and understanding” (Lipari 2014: 180) but letting go of the expectation of completeness and understanding allows one to engage even with those who have been rendered radically strange or otherwise.

Compassion born from understanding, and therefore “restricted to certain kinds of sufferers and certain kinds of suffering” is vulnerable to ideological beliefs about who is deserving and worthy of being listened to and who is not (Lipari 2014: 180). Through the relinquishing of control and embracing incompleteness, in understanding, one creates space for the “empowerment of the individual and group alike” instead of “the marginalisation of one by or for the other” (Nyamnjoh 2017: 12). Understanding compassion, through the lens of conviviality and incompleteness, allows for the transcendence of alterity by providing “accommodating togetherness beyond tolerance, where the individual can express themselves in a hospitable place” that allows them to be other than the self (Nyamnjoh 2017: 12). On conviviality Nyamnjoh writes:

Conviviality tasks us to go beyond simply providing for a setting where one can risk a glass too many and be hilarious in the extreme, without fear of being taken advantage of... Conviviality is a disposition that constantly challenges us to go beyond tolerance with accommodating processes, institutions and practices that enshrine and emphasise good fellowship and feelings of security that one – in one’s incompleteness – is part of the whole, imbued with the spirit of togetherness, interpretation and interdependence and intersubjectivity (2017: 11-12).

Although conviviality stresses the pursuit of sameness and facilitating commonalities, it does not do this at the expense of alterity by asking the self to become the other or the other to become the self. Sameness, through conviviality, is created through embracing incompleteness and relinquishing control over the illusion of understanding of the other. Through conviviality one can begin to listen otherwise and engage outside of schemata determined by structural and cultural gender-based violence (Galtung 1969) or listen beyond the normalised fluency of the female fear factory (Gqola 2015).

Like conviviality, listening otherwise challenges the self to “preserve our sense of vulnerability of all beings, of the sense that everyone suffers without insisting that our sense of the other be rationally comprehensible or even imaginable to us” (Lipari 2014: 184). It is through this challenge to the ego – to let go of the illusion of control – that one may finally see “how the distortions that arise from [the] insistence on innocence, certainty and understanding damage [the] capacity for compassion” (Lipari 2014: 184) and limit one’s listening to everyday habitus and schemata.

Adopting a love ethic in order to listen otherwise

The nature of knowledge, understanding and the role of language, cognition and belief make up a great deal of why we are unable to listen (Lipari 2014). This focus on the exchange of signs and receipt of information is a “selective ethics” if it can be considered an ethics at all because it excludes “from our moral consideration those who we cannot understand or who violate our understanding” and those who seem to provide nothing in return in the communication transaction (Lipari 2014: 185). Fromm (1957), who has similar sentiments with regards to love, argues that in capitalist societies, the concept of fairness, “meaning not to use fraud and trickery in the exchange of commodities and services, and in the exchange of feelings... in material goods as well as in love,” (Fromm 1957: 106-107) has wrongly been equated to love. The equating of love and fairness creates a condition that insists that once love is shown or given, the receiver should give a similar value in love or material goods in return. In this engagement, if one does not immediately see a return on the invested love, or the work of loving outweighs the potential benefits, they choose to withhold the love or limit it to intimate partners, friends and family (hooks 2001).

Similarly to love, the system of capitalism has habituated people into believing that listening may be transactional. Lipari (2014) draws on the work of Emmanuel Levinas to highlight the distinctions between the concepts of listening and hearing. Contrasting the two, Lipari (2014) illustrates how without the appropriate ethical measures a transactional hearing that emphasises perception and the receiving from others takes precedence over the holism of a listening which emphasises attention and giving to others. Lipari writes:

“The listening,” in contrast to “the heard,” is an enactment of responsibility made manifest through a posture of receptivity that can receive the other without assimilation or appropriation. “The listening” is a process of contracting, of stepping back, that creates a distance so that the other may come forward... In contrast “the heard” like “the said”, pertains to propositional content, and it arises

from taking in your words and making them mine. “The heard” thus involves judgement and distinction – seeking certainty using cognitive structures, schemas, and familiar ways of seeing and doing. “The heard” is created when I fix your words over and against mine in order to assimilate, appropriate, convince, or seek communion... “The listening”, as opposed to “the heard”, does not absorb the other into conformity with the self, but instead creates a dwelling space to receive the alterity of the other and let it resonate. (2014: 198)

It is through “the listening” that one can begin to listen otherwise and bear witness; that is “to listen from a space of unknowing, loss of control, loss of ideas and concepts: an opening to what is, not shrinking away, being there” (Lipari 2014: 187). And it is from this place that the ethical response emerges.

A love ethic has the potential to support the process of listening otherwise and bearing witness, “which is to not turn away from suffering [of others] but to look at it unflinchingly” (Lipari 2014: 186). When one bears witness, one listens “without resorting to what is easy,” and “make space for the difficult, the different, and the radically strange” (2014: 187). A love ethic provides the space for one to bear witness because “when we are committed to doing the work of love, we listen even when it hurts” (hooks 2001: 54).

A love ethic has the potential to make space for the difficult; where one can begin to receive the other convivially without the insistence of understanding, reciprocation, or control. To engender this love ethic, love should not be understood only as a passive affect or deep affection that overcomes a person at first glance or first encounter (hooks 2001). Love, rather, is an active engagement, that should be understood as a standing in rather than a falling for (Fromm 1957). “Love is as love does. Love is an act of will, namely, both an intention and an action...[w]e choose to love” (Peck 1978: 83). As an action and activity, through love we attempt to respect, trust, care for, respond to, be responsible for, commit to and help others (Fromm 1957; Walsh 1995; hooks 2001). This understanding of love transcends the constructions of love as “feelings we have no control over” and encourages “accountability and responsibility” (hooks 2001) for the actions we do in the name of love. Fromm (1957) writes:

To be loved, and to love, need courage, the courage to judge certain values as of ultimate concern – and to take the jump and stake everything on these values... Love is an activity; if I love, I am in a constant state of active concern with the loved person. To love demands a state of intensity, awakeness, enhanced vitality, which can only be the result of a productive and active orientation in many other spheres of life (p. 105-106).

The active nature of love, with its emphasis on accountability and responsibility has the potential to overcome the belief that love is and should only be reserved for intimate partners, family and friends with access and ability to reciprocate the love properly, and fairly. On the contrary, love that is active and concerned with an array of spheres in one's life, "empowers us to meet [even] strangers without fear and extend to them the gift of openness and recognition" (hooks 2001: 143).

Without a love ethic, bearing witness or listening ceases to exist outside of reciprocal or transactional love relationships. A love ethic, similarly, to holistic listening, interrupts "the habitual attributions of meaning that language, culture [and capitalist society] impose on our everyday experiences" (Lipari 2014: 56) and moves beyond the fear-based constructions of love that are prevalent in our patriarchal and capitalist societies (hooks 2001). A love ethic guides us to show love beyond the point where it is easy to extend love and compassion. A love ethic allows us to holistically engage with those who would not receive it otherwise.

Referring to the components of love, Fromm (1957) notes that showing care, taking responsibility, giving respect and committing to know others forms the cornerstone of any attempt to love. Fromm (1957) writes:

[With regards to care], love is the active concern for the life and the growth of that which we love... Care and concern imply another aspect of love; that of responsibility. Responsibility in its true sense is an entirely voluntary act. It is my response to the needs, expressed and unexpressed, of another human being. To be responsible means to be able and ready to respond.

Respect is not fear and awe. Respect means the concern that the other person should grow and unfold as they are. Respect implies the absence of exploitation... To respect a person, [however], is not possible without knowing [them]; care and responsibility would be blind if they were not guided by knowledge... Knowledge is only possible when I can transcend concern for myself and see the other person in [their] own terms (p. 28-30).

Love, guided by care, responsibility, respect, and knowledge, allows us to bear witness to all those who suffer and offer assistance to help us communally face reality without fear, while providing sustained acceptance and affirmation to everyone in its path (hooks 2001).

Listening, with the consideration of love, misunderstanding and conviviality, has the potential to overcome some of the challenges outlined in this chapter. The processes of apophatic listening and listening otherwise, highlighted in Section 1 of the chapter, provide strategies to suspend one's habitus and provide space for the listener to move beyond pre-existing

categories and schemas that might get in the way. The importance of having such listening practices is highlighted in Section 2 of the chapter. Section 2 shows how South Africa's oppressive history, patriarchal structures and socio-political context directly influence the manner in which people are able to listen as a society. Apophatic listening and listening otherwise may provide the tools to engage in such a society and to reshape the listening habitus. Section 3 of the chapter presents the concepts of conviviality and misunderstanding and shows how these concepts provide ideological frameworks that may be helpful and conducive to the process of listening otherwise. This chapter illustrates that it may be possible to create a better listening response to gender-based violence but crucial to this response would be the prioritisation of love and compassion.

Chapter 3: Methodology

Introduction

My research and thesis form an ongoing conversation about listening and gender-based violence. The conversation started many years ago when I realised that listening is a very important part of understanding gender-based violence in South Africa. At some point another realisation came to me and I saw that I needed to explore this idea of listening with rigor, and have a very honest, open and explicit conversation about this topic in order to equip myself in the fight against gender-based violence.

Now, this research acts as a document that captures very crucial aspects of my listening process within last couple of years. The research started off with me reading and thinking not only about listening but also thinking about gender-based violence theoretically. I tried to understand gender-based violence, how it has happened, and what the things that structure its existence are.

In the process, I discovered that I needed to speak to people who have theoretically and practically engaged with these topics extensively. When I spoke to them, they said a lot of things. They talked about their experiences, the lessons they have learnt and their own approaches to this thing we call listening. I had to do the work of creating a space for the conversation to embrace what they had to say. I became a facilitator of listening and for listening. My role as a researcher was to create the opportunity for this conversation to take place and listen carefully to what all the contributors had to say. What I present in the rest of the thesis is the conversation that emerged.

What has happened is that I have listened to these people, I have sifted through all of the issues and topics they raised. And, I have put them all in conversation with one another as well as any others that have had the conversations in the public domain. This includes people speaking in the news and any relevant statements and stories that I have come across that adds to this conversation.

I put this conversation together so that at the end of it all I would know what listening looks like. What I have learnt is that listening is not a simple thing. Even the conversation I present here was difficult and confusing to both have and to represent through research. I have chosen to write some parts of this chapter in first person as my way of extending my hand

and taking the reader on the journey of the methods and analysis that have gone into understanding listening otherwise in the context of gender-based violence in South Africa.

The following chapter begins by explaining the aims of my research. This is followed by an engagement with the research design. Included in the research design are the research ethics and ethical considerations, the participant selection criteria and the theoretical and methodological approaches that were consulted for the research design. What follows next is the research's data collection methods and the research's approaches to data analysis and coding and well as a detailed account of the coding and analysis methods. The chapter concludes with a presentation of the research's main conceptual codes and the accompanying arguments which are explored in the chapters that follow.

Aims of the research

This research sought to construct a theoretical and methodological framework for “listening otherwise” that could be used in the fight against gender-based violence in the South African context. In doing so, this research interrogated how Lipari's (2014) concept of “listening otherwise” operates to transform it from merely being a philosophical challenge to becoming a constructive tool (Gqola 2015) that encourages meaningful communication to take place. By interrogating how South Africa's violent history and patriarchal society has been normalised, the study sought to see beyond the narrow ideas articulated in this language.

This research aimed to use grounded theory approaches (Glaser & Strauss 1967; Bryant & Charmaz 2007; Martin 2019) to develop a theoretical and methodological framework for “listening otherwise” in the spaces, fields, and engagements that deal with gender-based violence in South Africa. The field of gender-based violence has become categorised, schematised, and codified in ways that may no longer be helpful. One of the most visible codified strategies (Gqola 2015: 09) in the space of gender-based violence today is the call to “voice”, “speak out” and “break the silence” (Oparinde & Matsha 2021). This research interrogated these three factors while exploring listening and how it has been deprioritised in that communication transaction to understand what would happen if it wasn't. The qualitative study relied on in-depth interviews, analysis of prominent discourses, interpretation of secondary sources, and thematic analysis of newspaper articles and activist communication, freely available in the public domain.

Ultimately this research aimed to create a framework for listening that understands and responds to four main questions. Firstly, how do we create a better response to gender-based violence? Secondly, how do we reshape the collective emotional response to patriarchal structural violence? Thirdly, how do we listen otherwise when faced with gender-based violence in South Africa? And fourthly, with regards to listening in practice, what are some practical considerations to guide journalists who report on issues of gender-based violence?

Drawing strategically on the grounded theory approach, my research sought to utilise “systematic, but flexible, guidelines” to conduct “inductive qualitative inquiry” aimed at developing listening theory and methodology (Charmaz & Bryant 2008: 374). The framework that emerged from the research is grounded in the “specific historical, social and interactional conditions” of its production in an attempt to attain “new theoretical insights” that are developed by engaging with epistemological issues (Charmaz & Bryant 2008: 376).

Research design

The methodologies carried out as part of this research were concerned with the construction of a theoretical and methodological framework for listening otherwise to gender-based violence in the South African context. Before any methods could be applied, I sought ethics approval from the Rhodes University Human Research Ethics Committee. Once the ethics approval was obtained, the research was conducted using grounded theory methodology because this method “analyses qualitative data and constructs theories from the studied data through successive levels of analysis” (Thorner, Perhamus & Charmaz 2015: 406).

Grounded theory methodology facilitated participant selection, and data collection for this research. The data collected includes in-depth interviews, studies of actual cases, academic literature, news interviews and news articles found in the public domain. The data analysis conducted includes open coding, selective coding, and abduction.

This research design was aimed at being “as robust and as defensible as possible, aiming for intersubjectivity on why and how decisions regarding design, sampling and analysis” were taken (Malterud, Siersma & Guarssora 2015: 01). Before any of these methods could be applied, however, a rigorous ethics process was undertaken in accordance with Rhodes University Human Research Ethics Committee’s standards.

Research ethics and considerations

Gender-based violence research is considered to be a sensitive research area (Sikeyiya & Jewkes 2011). According to Sikweyiya and Jewkes (2011), this area of research is particularly sensitive because of its “potential to harm respondents in a way that is different from other areas of community-based study” (p. 1091). Women respondents, for example, may experience psychological distress or have “serious traumatic effects” during an interview process about painful, sad, and triggering events (Sikweyiya & Jewkes 2011: 1091). Clear guidelines for conducting research on gender-based violence thus form a necessary and integral part of the research methodology to ensure minimum risk to the research respondents. According to Preissle (2008), ethics is an important aspect of “all decision making in the research, from problem formulation to presentation of results” (p. 276). Research designs are therefore expected to “have integrity” and “observe the ethical conventions” necessary for particular fields and areas of study (Preissle 2008: 276).

This particular research process commenced after ethical clearance was received from the Rhodes University Human Research Ethics Committee. Although the ethics application process was rigorous, detailed and required months of work to complete, only a few key elements will be highlighted here to illustrate key considerations that have gone into the process. The application required reflection and engagement with particular aspects related to the research design and execution. These include: the research’s interaction with human subjects; participant recruitment; protection of personal information in accordance with Act, 04 2013 (“POPIA”); data management, storage, and use; and risks to participants, social groups, institutions, or communities. On a risk scale of low, medium and high, this research was rated medium. Responding to the question of the risks posed by this research the following excerpt was presented to the ethics committee:

It is [South Africa’s] context that determines the risk factor of the research. The research locates itself within the intervention space of such a big problem that South Africa faces. The research is asking participants to engage with the problem of GBV in a way that is meaningful. This engagement, in something that is violent, can be triggering and potentially harmful to participants’ mental well-being. The prevalence of GBV in South Africa means that one in three women who participate in the research may have themselves experienced GBV or personally know someone who has. This is tricky terrain. The research does not seek to harm the participants but listening and engaging in the face of gender-based violence might require the participants to be consistently engaging with and exposed to a variety of cases where violence has been inflicted on women (Ethics application 2022).

In order to minimise some of the risks associated with this research, various ethical frameworks, reports, and toolkits were consulted to create a best practice guide for the research and the researcher. The Sexual Violence Research Initiative (SVRI 2024) provided a variety of useful resources that were consulted for this research. Responding to the question of the risk mitigation, the following excerpt was presented to the ethics committee:

The research seeks to engage with participants that have already firmly placed themselves in the GBV intervention space. Although this is somewhat helpful, it is important to acknowledge that the context, the ever-presence of violence, and the stories about GBV in the news and in communities, can have a negative effect on people who are exposed to it – even those who have been working in the sector for years. The research aims to take a theoretical approach of engagement. This approach prioritises engagement that focuses on listening and what it looks like to listen in this particular context. Although the context forms the underbelly of the research, looking at and understanding actual cases of GBV that have taken place will not be a research aim or a focus of the engagements with the participants (Ethics Application 2022).

Another important consideration applied to this research was participant informed consent. This was obtained through informed consent documents, and verbally at the beginning of each interview.

Participant selection and sampling

In the initial stages of the research, attempts were made to work directly with gender-based violence organisations and interview participants – facilitators and survivors – within those spaces. This, however, did not materialise given the sensitivity of these spaces. The subsequent sampling techniques used for participant selection in this research were purposive sampling and subsequent snowball sampling. According to Palys (2008) purposive sampling “signifies that [the researcher] sees the sample as a series of strategic choices about whom, where, and how” they do their research (p. 697). The sample, in purposive sampling, is directly tied to the research objectives. This means that the participants in this research were chosen based on who they are, and where they are located within a group (Palys 2008). The objectives of the research were interested in collecting data that would help in the process of constructing a theoretical and methodological framework. This had direct implications on the type of purposive sample that was chosen. The research focused on criterion sampling, which “involved searching for individuals who meet a certain criteria”, and theory-guided sampling, which involves searching for “individuals or cases that embody theoretical constructs” (Palys 2008: 698).

The main eligibility criteria for the purposive sample was that the individual either had experience working in the field of gender-based violence or their life and experience embodied listening and engaging in techniques that empowered voice and prioritised listening in the South African context. The research was interested in individuals who engaged both theoretically and methodologically with gender-based violence and listening. As this is a niche combination the research relied on snowball sampling once the interview process was under way. Snowball sampling takes place when “a small pool of initial informants... nominate other participants who meet the eligibility criteria for a study” (Morgan 2008: 816). The participants who were selected as a result of the snowball method were either focusing on a particular theoretical perspective that was of interest to the research or they formed part of an “extreme or deviant case” sample (Palys 2008: 679).

Extreme or deviant case sampling involves choosing individuals “because they represent the purest or most clear-cut instance of a phenomenon” (Palys 2008: 679). One of the main criteria of the research’s purposive sampling technique was tied to the ethical commitments made during the ethics application stage of the research. Because this research is medium risk, an important consideration for the sample was that every participant be an expert or professional working in the field, with prior knowledge and experience to draw on. Each participant consented to participating in the in-depth interviews and gave permission for their name to be openly used in the research. The participants are listed here to illustrate how their profiles reflect the criterion sampling that has been influenced by the goals of this research. The participants have been listed in the order the interviews took place.

Judy Seidman is a cultural worker and visual artist who has experience facilitating artmaking workshops in various spaces, countries, and political contexts. Seidman, who sees her art and activism rooted in peoples’ liberation struggles, has experience using cultural activism and activist methodologies to counter trauma and explore issues around gender. In her work Seidman builds extensively on visual artmaking techniques that aim to give voice to people who have been historically silenced. Seidman has facilitated art-making workshops with organisations that include Khulumani Support Group, Curriculum Development Project Trust (CDP), and the One in Nine Campaign. Seidman’s work and engagement using activism as methodology to encourage voice made her an interesting individual to learn from. When Seidman was recruited as a participant for the research, she was asked, “How do we listen to voices that usually go unheard?” And, “How can art both do the work of listening to and of being a canvas for sharing these beautiful voices?”

Niren Tolsi is an award-winning journalist and arts practitioner. Tolsi's journalistic interests include social justice, citizen mobilisation and state violence, the constitution and constitutional court, football, and test cricket. Following the Marikana Massacre in 2012, Tolsi embarked on a years-long process of slow journalism that "unveiled the grief, strength and dignity of the families of Marikana with aching clarity" (Saunders 2023). His storytelling, work, and commitment to those left behind after the massacre made him an interesting individual to learn from for this research. His experience reporting on and listening in the face of trauma was good for the criterion sampling. When Tolsi was recruited as a participant, he was asked, "How do we listen beyond our primary needs as media practitioners?" And, "Can we cultivate a 'slow journalism' that dignifies and respects the people whose stories we are telling?"

Kathy Bond-Stewart is a writer and community publisher based in Zimbabwe. Bond-Stewart has experience conducting participatory development training, developing training materials and facilitating community writing workshops that focus on violence against women and girls. In her work, Bond-Stewart has developed community publishing methodologies that emphasise various forms of listening and empowering voice. As a community publisher, Bond-Stewart designs processes that are aimed at raising awareness on social issues. Her community publishing methods, listening practices, and commitment to enhancing people's voices made her an interesting participant. When Bond-Stewart was recruited as a participant, she was asked, "What are various forms of listening that form part of the community publishing methodologies?" And, "What are the roles and processes of a facilitator who is trying to encourage voice within the participants?"

Dr Nechama Brodie is a veteran multimedia journalist and best-selling author. She currently works as a senior lecturer at the University of Witwatersrand's Centre for Journalism. Her research work focuses on fatal violence, public health, misinformation, and data. Dr Brodie has written extensively on femicide, media coverage of femicide, South African crime statistics, violence, and media in South Africa. Her book, *Femicide in South Africa*, has played an instrumental role in this research. Dr Brodie's knowledge about violence, experience as a journalist and academic engagement on gender-based violence and femicide brought engaged and critical ideas to this research. When Dr Brodie was recruited as a participant, she was asked, "In the media section of *Femicide in South Africa* you talk about the 2018 GBV Summit and you mention there has been a failure to listen, what has caused that failure?" And, "Why is listening so significant in that setting?"

Catriona Ida MacLeod is a professor of psychology at Rhodes University where she holds a SARChI Chair of Critical Studies in Sexualities and Reproduction. Professor MacLeod's scholastic contributions have been in the fields of sexual and reproductive health and feminist theory in psychology. In 2016, Professor MacLeod was tasked with facilitating the Sexual Violence Task team following the eruption of the #RURReferenceList protest at Rhodes University. In the process, Professor MacLeod facilitated a participatory listening process, encouraged dialogical communication, and facilitated a process of co-creation of a detailed report aimed at addressing the concerns raised in the protests. Her general field of interest, her writing and publications and her involvement in and experience on the Sexual Violence Task Team added great insight on facilitating a process of listening. In the interview, Professor MacLeod was asked, "What role did listening play in the process of setting up the terms of reference of the task team?" And, "What are the responsibilities of a facilitator in this particular process?"

Amanda Gouws is a Professor of Political Science at Stellenbosch University where she holds a SARChI Chair in Gender Politics. Professor Gouws's areas of interest in Gender Politics include women and citizenship, women's representation, women's movements and mobilisation, and gender-based violence. She has written extensively on a variety of subjects that include gender, sexual violence, activism, and feminist approaches in the South African context. Her general field of interest, her writing and academic and news publications made her valuable in thinking about ideology and discourse. In the interview, Professor Gouws was asked, "You have expressed in interviews and public lectures that the problem solving that the South African government is coming up with is not based on systemic issues, how does that impact the public's understanding of gender-based violence in our country?" And, "What are the implications on how we collectively listen when issues of gender-based violence arise?"

Kopano Ratele is a Professor in the Department of Psychology at Stellenbosch University. Professor Ratele's scholarship revolves around critical men and masculinity studies and critical and cultural African psychology. He has written and engaged extensively on men and masculinities in the intersection with violence, race, sexuality, culture, and love. Professor Ratele's scholarship on men and masculinities form a relevant and crucial part of the engagement on gender-based violence and make him an interesting and necessary participant to engage with. His book *Why Men Hurt Women and Other Reflections on Love Violence and Masculinity* informed crucial parts of the theoretical framework of this thesis. In the

interview, Professor Retele was asked, “Your book talks about a love ethic and loving politics, how do we achieve that as a South African society?” And, “What are some practical steps we can begin to take in the pursuit of a loving politics?”

Pumla Dineo Gqola is a Professor of Literary and Cultural Studies at Nelson Mandela University where she holds a SARChI Chair in African Feminist Imagination. Professor Gqola, an award-winning author, has written extensively on issues of gender, sexual violence, discourse and slavery. Two of her books *Rape: A South African Nightmare* and *Female Fear Factory: Gender and Patriarchy Under Racial Capitalism* have provided crucial insights into the framing of this research’s aims and objectives. One such frame comes from Gqola’s engagement with rape as a language that communicates patriarchal power. A central question that emerged from this understanding of rape is “how would we listen otherwise to rape?” Professor Gqola’s writing on rape and gender-based violence, and the question of “how do we listen otherwise to languages of patriarchal domination” made her a provocative and insightful contributor. In the interview, Professor Gqola was asked, “How do we listen otherwise to rape and the female fear factory in South Africa?” And, “How do we practically implement that listening as a method of communicating back to languages of patriarchal domination?”

Dr Kim Barker is a Pastoral Therapist and Safeguarding Specialist. Dr Barker’s work as a safeguarding consultant involves research and development of resources, training materials, policies and procedures related to safeguarding practices in faith-based communities, gender-based violence programmes and other developing settings. Her PhD work, *Making the Personal Political: Understanding the Impacts of Participation in an Anti-Rape Protest for Women who have Experienced Sexual Violence*, provided great insight into solidarity spaces where listening and speaking-out can take place. Dr Barker’s experience working as a therapist and engaging with anti-rape protest in her scholarly work gave great insight in thinking about the creation of spaces for listening. In the interview, Dr Barker was asked, “What kind of listening takes place in solidarity spaces like the Silent Protest?” And, “How do those spaces handle the process of disclosure?”

Grounded theory methodology

The research design for this study draws its theoretical and methodological underpinnings from grounded theory. Although grounded theory begins with “open-ended, inductive inquiry” it has distinctive characteristics that “include comparative, interactive, and iterative

methods” (Thornberg et al. 2015: 406). According to Thornberg et. al. (2015) the originators of grounded theory, Glaser and Strauss (1967), “imbued the method with strategies to examine, analyse, and conceptualise individuals and collective actions and processes” (p. 406). Glaser and Strauss’s (1967) intention initially was to develop grounded theory for researchers “to construct fresh theories of studied data” (Thornberg et al. 2015: 406). Researchers have however, used grounded theory’s strategies even when they have not aimed to construct theory. Grounded theory has developed immensely since Glaser and Strauss (1967) first conceptualised it. Thornberg et. al. (2015: 407) explain its theoretical development:

The classic or Glaserian version has emphasised an unbiased researcher position, the rejection of epistemology and preconception, and the emergence of concepts and theory by using grounded theory methods (e.g. Glaser 1978, 1998, 2005). The Straussian version has a more technical procedure, using a particular coding paradigm to sort data and codes into a matrix of causal intervening and contextual conditions as well as actions/ interactions and consequences (Corbin & Strauss 2008; Strauss and Corbin 1990, 1998). The constructivist version rooted in pragmatism and relativist epistemology, takes a middle ground between the realist and the post-modernist positions. It assumes that neither data nor theories are discovered but constructed by researchers as a result of their interactions with the field and its participants. Data are therefore seen as co-constructed and always coloured by the researchers’ perspectives (e.g. Charmaz 1995, 2000, 2006).

What makes grounded theory particularly effective for this research design is that it does not limit the research to a particular data gathering methodology but “uses data collection methods that best fit the research problem and the on-going analysis of the data” (Thornberg et. al. 2015: 407). Grounded theory emphasises the specialisation of strategies and methods of analysis. The theory begins this process with a “close coding of data” with the aim of asking “what is happening in these data” (Charmaz and Bryant 2008: 375).

The initial process of coding “invokes short analytic labels in the form of gerunds to identify specific processes and treat them theoretically” (Charmaz and Bryant 2008: 375). The codes and concepts that are established in the initial process of coding act as guides in further collection of data. This process of coding and subsequent categories establishing the next generation of data, is referred to by grounded theorists as theoretical sampling (Thornberg et. al. 2015). Through theoretical sampling, grounded theorists “fill out the analytic properties of their defined categories” and further “develop robust theoretical categories” (Thornberg et. al. 2015: 407). Charmaz and Bryant (2008) explain how theoretical sampling distinguishes grounded theory, making it much more than just a coding system. They write:

Theoretical sampling means that researchers seek and sample data that informs their theoretical categories. Thus, theoretical sampling differs markedly from representational sampling with which it is often confused. Researchers engage in theoretical sampling after they have selected key categories and need to elaborate and or refine them. Such further analytic work may prompt grounded theorists to sample in entirely new empirical areas from those in which they begin their study (Charmaz & Bryant 2008: 375).

Grounded theory lends itself to the process of achieving the aims of this research in various ways. Firstly, the intricate coding system, where “codes are used to compare, sort, and synthesize” large amounts of data, aids the research’s aim to interrogate the codified strategies used in the fight against gender-based violence in South Africa. Through the grounded theory methodology, the codes “voice”, “speak out”, and “break the silence” were interrogated through memo writing, elaboration and identifying the codes’ properties.

Secondly, both the coding system and theoretical sampling aspects of grounded theory aid the research aim to construct a theoretical and methodological framework for “listening otherwise”. The grounded theory process prioritises the understanding of the conditions in which codes arise. What follows is a process of creating comparisons with specific and other codes (Charmaz & Bryant 2008). This research carefully followed these processes in order to develop the concept of listening otherwise from a philosophical construct to a methodological framework.

Data collection methods

This research relied on three types of data collection methods. Firstly, in-depth interviews were conducted with research participants. Following a round of initial coding, a process of theoretical sampling was conducted to collect the second group of data which was specific cases relating to the theoretical categories. The third group of data was popular and academic literature, news interviews and newspaper articles relating to the theoretical categories coded and analysed in previous coding sessions.

In-depth interviews and ‘information power’

In-depth interviews have proved to be a helpful tool for the researcher to get a deep and meaningful understanding of the research participants’ stories, perspectives and ideas that tie them to the research (Tacchi et al. 2003). In-depth or semi-structured interviews were conducted in the first stage of data collection for this research. The interviews, in which the

participants were encouraged to talk in-depth about gender-based violence and listening, lasted between one and one-and-a-half hours each.

The intention for each interview was for it to take place in the form of a face-to-face conversation, but due to participants' time constraints and availability, three of the nine interviews took place over Microsoft Teams and Zoom. The interviews were semi-structured in nature because the participants were encouraged and "free to elaborate or take the interview in new but related directions" (Cook 2008: 422). During the interviews the conversation oscillated around the initial topic of gender-based violence and listening and the participants shared their personal and professional experiences around the topic, while they were "probed of these experiences for further information that would be useful for the analysis" (Cook 2008: 422). The questions during the interviews were open-ended and relied on the responses of the participants for further engagement. Once conducted, the interviews were transcribed manually in preparation for the initial coding of the data.

The sampling technique used for these interviews relied on the "information power" model as conceptualised by Malterud et al. (2015). Information power, which is comprised of five dimensions, determines the appropriate interview sample size. The five dimensions of information power include study aim, sample specificity, use of established theory, quality of dialogue, and analysis strategy (Malterud et al. 2015: 07). "Study aim" refers to the aims of the research. The broader the aim of the study, the larger a sample size needed to obtain sufficient information power (Malterud et al. 2015: 02). "Sample specificity" concerns itself with the information power of the interview participants' experiences, knowledge, or properties. According to Malterud et al. (2015), "a less extensive sample" is needed with participants holding characteristics that are highly specific for the study aim compared with a sample containing participants of "sparse specificity" (p. 03).

The "established theory" dimension is concerned with the level of theoretical background of the study. Larger samples are required for studies that are supported by limited theoretical perspectives. Smaller samples paired with strong theoretical perspectives provide great information power because "theory serves to synthesize existing knowledge as well as extending the sources of knowledge beyond empirical interview data" (Malterud et al. 2015: 03). The "quality of dialogue" dimension assumes that interviews that are conducted with clear communication between the researcher and the participants have information power. A bigger sample is needed if the communication in the interviews is ambiguous or unfocused

(Malterud et al. 2015: 03). Finally, the “analysis strategy” dimension is concerned with the method of analysis that the researcher chooses for the sample.

Malterud et al. (2015) suggest that “an initial approximation of sample size” (p. 07) be made during the planning stages of the research. With that in mind, a range of five to 10 participants were chosen in the proposal stage of this research. After “continuous evaluation” of the information power during the research process the final sample, with efficient information power for the aims of the research, was nine in-depth interviews.

Sampling and applying actual cases

After an initial coding of the in-depth interviews, a few codes and categories determined the next phase of data collection. This method, commonly referred to as theoretical sampling, is the process in which the researcher “decides what data to collect next and where to find them in order to develop [their] theory as it emerges” (Glaser & Strauss 1967: 45). A key category that emerged in the initial coding was “actual cases”, where participants would reflect on the topic of listening and gender-based violence in relation to their experiences in very specific circumstances or in relation to very specific cases that have been reported in the news or exist in the public domain. In an attempt to construct further categories and obtain “data to illuminate [these] categories, fill out their properties, and define their implications” (Thornberg, et al. 2015: 408), the cases highlighted in the interviews were further explored and information pertaining to those cases was collected as data for the research.

Actual cases that emerged from the initial interviews were used as part of the data collected for this research. The particular cases are outlined here but deeper context and analysis are provided about the cases in the chapters that follow. The story of Anene Booysen and the political and news framing around her death emerged as an important case following the interviews. Booysen was a 17-year-old who was raped and murdered in a small South African town in 2013. The Booysen case is explained and analysed in Chapter 4 of this thesis.

Another case that required more investigation and engagement was the 2020 Coko vs S rape case. This is the case, rape accused Loyiso Coko successfully appealed against the conviction and sentence of seven years in prison for raping his girlfriend. Further details and analysis of the Coko vs S case are presented in Chapter 5 of this thesis. The story of Uyinenene Mrwetyana also emerged as a case to further explore and analyse. Mrwetyana was a South African student at the University of Cape Town. In 2019 she was raped and murdered at a post office

by Luyanda Botha, an employee of the post office. Her story and the analysis related to this case is presented in Chapter 6 of this thesis.

The case of the #RUPreferenceList protest that took place at Rhodes University was a case that multiple interviewees raised as important with regards to this research. Following the eruption of the #RUPreferenceList protest in 2016, a Sexual Violence Task Team was assembled, and they conducted a participatory listening engagement in order to inform their work, reports and their recommendations on a way forward. The protest and the work of the task team is detailed and analysed in Chapter 7. Also found in Chapter 7 is the case of the 2018 Presidential Summit Against Gender-based Violence and Femicide. The summit was created as a response to the #TotalShutdown protests that erupted across South Africa. The summit was aimed at bringing together representatives from government, civil society, higher education, and the media to have discussions about the problem of gender-based violence and femicide in South Africa.

The final case that emerged, and is also found in Chapter 7, is the Silent Protest that takes place annually at Rhodes University. The Silent Protest is a movement of protest against the gendered violence, rape and sexual exploitation of women and gender non-conforming people. The protest includes day-long activities that highlight the difficulties in reporting gender-based violence and the silencing of victims and survivors.

The data collected for the cases was found in information sources freely available in the public domain. These include academic literature, news articles and interviews, government reports and scholarly articles. Through the process of firmly embedding the cases in fundamental theoretical debates, the information power of each case was derived using empirical evidence to make “a convincing argument within a scholarly discourse that consists of complimentary and competing theories” (Blatter 2008: 68).

Academic literature, news interviews and newspaper articles

The third set of data used for this research is popular and academic literature. According to Martin (2019) traditional academic literature and popular literature, “particularly journalistic accounts, and published reports and proceedings by investigative bodies and commissions” can be used as datasets similar to interviews and observations (p. 228). Similar to the process of choosing cases in accordance with theoretical sampling, popular and academic literature was used to elaborate on the key categories coded from the in-depth interviews and the cases.

The process of sampling popular and academic literature followed the “four dimensions of literature use”, in accordance with Martin’s (2019) work. The first dimension, which is “scoping the literature”, involves conducting “open-ended reconnaissance of the universe of possible extant literature across disciplines” (Martin 2019: 228). A key characteristic of this stage is finding and making “linguistic and epistemological connections”. The second dimension is “sampling the literature”, which involves conducting “an iterative process through which theoretical sampling and selective sampling” directs the research towards a “greater densification and scale of concept” that are being developed (Martin 2019: 228). In the third dimension “bridging the literature”, the research begins to “describe how the theory is articulated with major related theories” (Martin 2019: 228). This dimension stipulates that the researcher contend with the major related theories “prior to bringing the new theory into the academic conversation” (Martin 2019: 228). The fourth dimension is “confirming the theory”. This dimension is “accomplished through the grounded theory techniques of sorting and resorting memos with the goal of writing a working paper of the emerging theory” (Martin 2019: 228).

Theoretical saturation, which is “the point in the research when all the concepts are well defined and explained” (Corbain & Strauss 2008: 145), was researched after numerous consultations with the interviews, actual cases and popular and academic literature. Although determining theoretical saturation is a “tricky” process, this research found that there was theoretical saturation when “gathering fresh data no longer spark[ed] new theoretical insights, and no longer reveal[ed] new properties to [the] core theoretical properties” (Charmaz 2006: 113).

Data analysis and coding methods

As an integral part of qualitative research, data analysis acts a “stepping stone toward both gathering data and linking one’s findings with higher order concepts (D. van den Hoonaard & C. van den Hoonaard 2008: 186). There are five common features of data analysis that have been conducted in this research within the theoretical and methodological underpinnings of grounded theory. Firstly, the research process has involved “simultaneous data collection and analysis”. Secondly, memo writing has been an integral process during the data collection as well as after. Thirdly, a process of coding has been used for the organisation and sorting of data. The fourth feature of analysis has been the use of “writing as a tool for analysis (D. van den Hoonaard & C. van den Hoonaard 2008: 186). And finally, the process has involved the

“development of concepts and connection of the analysis to literature” in the field of listening and gender-based violence in South Africa (D. van den Hoonaard & C. van den Hoonaard 2008: 186).

Grounded theory, which relies on the conceptual interaction between analysis and data, has guided the methods of analysis used in this research. The research analysis moved flexibly back and forth between different phases of coding (Thornberg et al. 2015: 409). These phases included open and initial coding, focused coding and theoretical coding.

Open/ initial coding

In this initial coding stage, the in-depth interviews were read closely in an attempt to “bring order to and make sense of” the data (Benaquisto 2008: 86). The initial coding was performed by “reading and analysing the data word by word and line by line” then defining actions or events within the data. This process relied on analytical questions conceptualised by Glaser (1978; 1998) and Charmaz (2006). The key questions used for this analysis were: What is happening in the data? What are these data a study of? What category does this incident, statement, or segment of data indicate? What is the participant’s main concern? (Glaser 1978: 57; 1998: 140) What process(es) are at issue here? How will they be defined? How does this process develop? When, why, and how does this process change? What are the consequences of this process? (Charmaz 2006 quoted in Thornberg et al. 2015: 410).

Thornberg et al. (2015) give a detailed explanation of why this process of questioning and analysing is integral to theory generation. They write:

Coding and its analytical questioning help researchers to probe, identify details, and become acquainted with the data, see the familiar in a new light, avoid forcing data into preconceptions, think out of the box, gain distance from their own and their participants’ taken-for-granted assumptions, think abstractly about the data, and develop provisional codes, ideas, and answers to investigate further (Thornberg et al. 2015: 410).

In the initial coding process, representative codes were constructed for each interview transcript. Four interviews were conducted in the first data collection period and five interviews were conducted in the second data collection period. The “constant comparative method” was used to compare the “newly collected data with previously collected data, data with code, and code with code to find similarities and differences” (Thornberg, et al. 2015: 410). The initial coding process of all the interviews allowed the “sorting and clustering of

initial codes, and revisions of codes and constructions of new more elaborated codes by merging or integrating initial codes” that were similar to each other (Thornberg, et al. 2015: 412).

The process of open/initial coding of the interviews

My coding process began with the transcription of the first four interviews that were conducted. These interviews were transcribed manually. In the process I listened to the interviews and transcribed them on a word document. The choice to do manual transcriptions was intentional – to engage with the raw data and start ‘jotting down’ my initial thoughts and impressions of the information. In this stage of coding, I identified seven broad codes that I wrote down in my coding manual. These codes, which I explained as “associated with listening types” include, “trust”, “understanding”, “space”, “creative engagement”, “power dynamics”, “power structures”, and “silence”. Following the transcription stage, I sat with each interview and began the process of initial coding. To do this I printed the interviews with a right indent of 5 centimetres so I would have space, on the interviews, to write, comment and engage with the actions and events within the data. I then read the interviews line by line and used coloured pens and highlighters to explain certain sections, ideas and actions.

To understand this initial data, I kept three key questions in mind. Firstly, I would reflect on the question, *what category does this incident, statement, or segment of data indicate?* With this question in mind, I would either highlight the section and associate it with the seven initial codes presented above or I would create an entirely new code to describe the section of data. The second question was, *what is the participant’s main concern?* This question helped me identify the key categories that the codes in the first question fell under. A few of the categories from my initial coding include “associated with listening”, “associated with gender-based violence”, “associated with empowerment”, “associated with power”, “associated with facilitation”. The third question that I used during this initial coding was *what process(es) are at issue here?* This question helped me sort the data into the category I termed “conflicts and contradictions” and this indicated areas that needed further exploration and engagement in order for me to understand them.

The first four interviews yielded 136 different codes related to actions, theories, problems and examples. These codes included “dealing with difference”, “encouraging voice”, “intervention”, “participation”, “power dynamics”, and “pretend listening”, to name a few. As I engaged with the codes, I realised that some of them were similar and described processes

and ideas that were related to one another. So, at this point I decided to condense the codes into 18 codes that include “definition of listening”, “space and power”, “facilitation skills”, “productive listening”, “justice”, and “patriarchy” to name a few.

With these codes in mind and the connections made through snowball sampling, I set out to do my second stage of interviews. In the second stage of interviews, the coding process started during the interviews where I would make notes using some of the initial codes when an interviewee would say something related to the code. This process was limited because I was trying to concentrate and actively listen during the interviews. Following the interviews, I repeated the coding process and yielded 294 different codes related to actions, theories, problems and examples. I found that this stage of coding had a broader range of codes than the ones from my first interviews. This is because of the questions I used in this interview stage to engage with some of the “conflicts and contradictions” related to the first few interviews I had coded. I condensed these codes to yield 39 codes that included “ideology”, “socialisation”, “patriarchal backlash”, “feminist work”, “difference”, “healing” and “history”, to name a few.

Once I had coded all nine interviews, I began the process of comparing the codes and seeing which codes appeared throughout the dataset and how frequently these codes appeared. This helped me determine how the participants were speaking to similar issues as well as which topics and codes were important to understanding the initial questions this research set out to answer. I have presented a word cloud here as a visual representation of the language, and codes that emerged as important to this research. It is important to note that this word cloud is **not** an analysis method, it is merely a visual aid to help the reader understand the codes I was working with after the initial coding stage of my research process. What emerged from the initial coding process is represented in the word cloud below.

gender-based violence in South Africa (Benaquisto 2008: 87). In this process the focused coding approach guided the process of identifying “codes that index key meanings, actions and processes in the data and across the data” (Thornberg et al. 2015: 412).

The process of focused and theoretical coding

My focused coding process began a month after completing the initial coding of interviews. By the time I began this process, the data I was working with included interviews and contextual information on the cases highlighted by the interviewees. By this point I had sorted the codes in my coding manual and simplified them. I conducted the sorting process by highlighting the key codes and categorising them. I isolated the ones that appeared most frequently in the interviews and the ones that helped me understand in a broad sense what the interview participants were saying. The focused codes that emerged from this process include, “space”, “patriarchal habitus”, “listening”, “challenging power”, “transformational strategies”, and “facilitation”. The next stage in the focused coding process involved going back to the interviews and sorting them into these broad codes. To do this I created a coding table on my computer with three main categories. These include, the focused code and its associated codes, the direct quotes from the interviews, and the key words and theoretical associations related to the quotes. Although the focused codes captured and synthesised the main themes found in the interviews, the process of sorting allowed the smaller codes to explain and elaborate on the bigger codes, which in turn helped explain what was happening in the quotes. It was at this point that I was able to see the correlations that the interviewees were making with regards the cases they had mentioned. Included in the coding table were specific cases that either explained particular ideas or stood as clear examples that can be used to understand specific concepts.

I have included some word clouds here to help the reader understand the broad and specific codes that helped me sort the information in the interviews. Again, it is important to note that the word clouds are **not part of the analysis** methods, they merely serve as visual representations to help the reader understand the specific categories that emerged and were used to sort the data. Space as a code, for example, appeared in various interviews. This word however had various subcodes linked to it. Some interviews talked about physical space as well as conceptual space. Here the word cloud shows the many ways in which the broader category of space was explored by the interview participants. It also guided me when I began to think about space theoretically. Once the coding table was complete, I used the focused

codes to begin to search for academic literature, news interviews and newspaper articles that reflected on gender-based violence and listening in ways that related to these broad categories and their subcategories.

Space	A word cloud for the category 'Space'. The most prominent words are 'space', 'safe-space', 'creating-space', 'physical-space', 'feminist-space', 'space-speaks', 'protest-space', 'dialogical-space', 'solidarity-space', 'space-goals', 'disclosure-spaces', 'creating-coalitions', 'transforming-spaces', 'performance-space', 'misusing-space', 'listening-spaces', 'small-groups', 'time', 'health', 'rurereferencelist', 'rape-crisis', 'wasted-space', 'meeting-space', 'radical-space', 'space-building', 'space-issues', 'trauma-centre', 'silent-protest', 'women-only', 'gbv-summit', 'caring-society', 'space-needs', 'solidarity-spaces', 'public-space', and 'creating-groups'.
Patriarchal habitus	A word cloud for the category 'Patriarchal habitus'. The most prominent words are 'patriarchal-habitus', 'masculinity', 'rape-myths', 'patriarchal-backlash', 'normalising-violence', 'discourse', 'culture', 'public-fear', 'victimising', 'patriarchy', 'moral-compass', 'public-consciousness', 'patriarchal-assumptions', 'ignoring-stakeholders', 'ideological', 'identity', 'individualising-violence', 'campus-culture', 'consent', 'punitive-measures', 'scourge', 'socialisation', 'collective-understanding', 'boxes', 'top-down', 'morphing-patriarchy', and 'moral-compass'.
Listening	A word cloud for the category 'Listening'. The most prominent words are 'listening', 'listening-deeply', 'active-listening', 'visual-listening', 'non-listening', 'listening-carefully', 'sacred-listening', 'political-listening', 'participatory-listening', 'nonproductive-listening', 'listening-symbol', 'listening-deficit', 'general-listening', 'cataphatic-listening', 'intuitive-listening', 'receiving', 'unstructured-listening', 'productive-listening', 'spiritual-listening', 'demonstrating-listening', 'openness', 'counterintuitively', and 'listening-otherwise'.

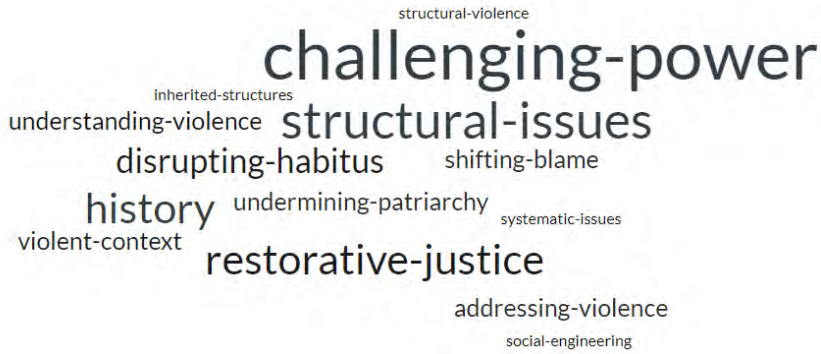
Challenging power	 structural-violence challenging-power inherited-structures understanding-violence structural-issues disrupting-habitus shifting-blame history undermining-patriarchy systematic-issues violent-context restorative-justice addressing-violence social-engineering
Transformational strategies	 crossing-boundaries grassroots-engagement addressing-violence challenging-certainty building-trust art-making community laugh facilitating-healing role-models love speaking-out shifting-shame feminist-work counterintuitive-thinkingbreaking challenging-stigma approach shared-humanity feminist bearing-witness building-intimacy socialisation silence transformational-strategies response unhearing intervention collective-action counterintuitive-thinking imagination consciousness-raising play prioritising-minorities education unseeing co-creation person-centred loving-politics publishing feminist-response task-teams shared-vulnerability
Facilitation	 self-reflexive realistic-expectations understanding-silence encouraging-engagement facilitating-groups mutual-care body-mapping creative-writing listening care feminist collaboration sharing collective-responsibility building-trust voice reflection process encouraging-voice facilitating-diversity co-creation creating-community laugh facilitating-healing play teaching conversation encouraging-listening speaking connectedness support art-making informing building-solidarity demonstrating-listening facilitating-participation role-expectations bottom-up

Table 1.6. Focused Codes and the related process and theoretical codes.

The goal of the next step in the coding process was to determine the theoretical codes that illustrated the “possible relationships between the categories ... developed in the focused coding” (Charmaz 2006: 63). Facilitation, for example, had codes that included, “encouraging voice”, “creative writing”, and “building solidarity”. My goal here was to determine the theoretical codes that tie the ideas together or explain the relationship they may

have with one another. This step was crucial to the process of developing arguments and finding meaning in the data so that in later steps I could “tell an analytic story that has coherence” (Charmaz 2006: 63). Because I had already written a theoretical framework for this research, some theoretical codes were derived from the theoretical framework of this thesis, while other theoretical codes were derived from academic literature relating to the codes. The codes derived from my theoretical framework serve as the “underlying logics that could be found in pre-existing theories”, while the ones derived from other academic literature gave “integrative scope, broad pictures and new perspective[s]” (Thornberg 2012: 89). During this process, the cases, academic literature, news interviews and newspaper articles were collected and coded using the focused codes derived from the interviews. This coding process took place over a long period of time and included returning to the initial interviews for guidance and clarity with regards to the focused codes and their meanings. Once enough information was generated, the written memos, notes, and coding tables were analysed to develop the main arguments up for discussion in this research.

A preliminary look at the results of this research

At the beginning of this chapter, I explained that my thesis and this research are an ongoing conversation about gender-based violence and listening in the South African context. The methods that I have chosen for this research have allowed me to facilitate my own listening process and create a conversation around these topics. As I have explained in previous sections, I decided to interview certain people in order to understand more about this idea of listening in response to gender-based violence. The coding process gave me insight on how to listen to what the interviews were telling me and how to connect each interview with the others. Although my participants did not speak to one another, my coding and analysis became the thread that connected them. Together, the coded interviews, with my theoretical framework and broader literature around this topic spoke to one another and formed arguments and statements about listening and gender-based violence in South Africa. The following table summarises these statements and arguments and presents them in accordance with the focused code they emerged under. Here it is important to note that the arguments are part of the broader conversation that includes, all of the interview participants, the cases, the academic literature, the theoretical framework, the context, and myself, the researcher.

Focused code	Main arguments that emerge
Space	1. The process of listening requires space – if effective or “productive listening” is to take place then the process must be afforded both space and time. 2. The physical make-up of a space (public or private) has the ability to communicate who is empowered, disempowered, and safe within that space. 3. Facilitation is needed in existing spaces that are geared towards listening. 4. Ideological and physical spaces of solidarity have the potential to be harnessed towards “bearing witness” and “listening otherwise”. 5. The current structure of private and public space is influenced by South Africa’s history of violence, oppression, and domination – and that shapes how people engage within these spaces.
Patriarchal-Habitus	1. Media representations alongside government ideology shape the national discourse and “collective understanding” around gender-based violence. 2. The “collective understanding” of gender-based violence determines what the public believes is an appropriate listening response to GBV. 3. Patriarchal culture and rape myths firstly, shape how we understand consent and secondly, lead to cataphatic listening in the judicial process and system.
Listening	1. Listening is a conscious active process that requires capacity, time, space, and facilitation. 2. There are various forms of listening including unstructured listening, visual listening, listening counterintuitively, intuitive listening and these can be utilised at various points in the listening process to achieve specific listening goals. 3. Listening counterintuitively can be used as a feminist approach to listening that is useful in patriarchal societies and contexts. 4. GBV listening should be linked to listening towards achievable outcomes. GBV requires productive listening or goal orientated

	listening, and the goals are determined by the needs and context of a GBV engagement.
Challenging Power	1. Play is the antithesis of violence. 2. Consciousness raising has the ability to reshape the “collective understanding” of GBV and shape an appropriate response to the normalisation of violence.
Transformational Strategies	1. Using restorative justice, with its emphasis on listening, can overcome some of the judicial issues that rape complainants face after reporting. 2. Creating and facilitating spaces for listening is an effective tool in the face of gender-based violence. 3. Creating a caring society has the potential to overcome some of the structural issues that foster GBV. 4. Care societies are built on political love, listening, trust, play and the transformation of public spaces to build public trust and unity.
Facilitation	1. Spaces need to be facilitated. 2. Building trust, empowering voice, and demonstrating listening are important processes in facilitating listening in group settings. 3. Artmaking, creative writing, playing, and collaboration are effective tools to inspire voice and remove the limits on what can be said in a listening engagement. 4. Understanding silence is an important part of listening.

Table 1.7. Arguments that emerged from the focused and theoretical coding stages

The best way to understand Table 1.7. is to think about it as a summary of the ideas that emerged surrounding listening and gender-based violence in South Africa. Because my thesis is an ongoing conversation the chapters that unpack these ideas and arguments contain the analysis, findings and recommendations merged together as a continuous argument. The chapters that follow this one will be presented in an unconventional manner.

I have chosen to present the fundings in this particular way so that the argument is built incrementally and additively. The development of the argument is dependent on the material gleaned from the interviews, the cases, the academic literature and news reports. Rather than present this material in the usual format of one set of data and an analysis, the next set of data and an analysis and the third set of data and analysis, I have used the data I have gathered to

build an argument that works from an analysis of the problem, through to overcoming the challenges and presenting possible methods of listening in this particular situation.

The rest of the thesis is presented in three parts that guide the reader through the argument. Firstly, the analysis presents the challenges of listening in the face of gender-based violence in South Africa. In this section the code “patriarchal habitus” and its accompanying arguments surrounding media representations and government discourses of gender-based violence will be explored. Here the argument that unfolds shows how these representations and discourses have the power to shape the listening habits of the public. The media and the government therefore have immense responsibility in how they frame the issue of gender-based violence. The code “patriarchal habitus” is further explored to build the argument that cataphatic listening normalises violence against women and rape in intimate, private and public spaces in South Africa.

Once this section comes to an end, the argument moves towards overcoming the challenges of listening when confronted with gender-based violence. In this section, the argument pushes for an ethical consideration of the other – through listening and unpacks the concepts surrounding “care ethics”, “rebuilding trust”, “creating space” and “listening”. By this point the argument will have presented possible avenues for overcoming the challenges presented in the previous section.

The final part of the thesis presents the process of facilitating listening in the face of gender-based violence. This section offers up some practical ways in which one can use listening to deal with the issue of gender-based violence, for example in news stories. Throughout these sections the argument will be guided and supported by the critical issues that my interviewees have highlighted as very important if listening otherwise is to be incorporated into the fight against gender-based violence in this country.

Part 2:

The Challenges of listening in face of gender-based violence in South Africa

Chapter 4: Public representations and discourses of GBV

Introduction

Media and government representations and discourses of gender-based violence “play a crucial role in shaping public awareness and opinion with regard to its victims and its perpetrators” (Wolf 2014: 195). Initial, focused and thematic coding of this research’s interviews corroborates this. The codes “ideological boxes”, “discourses” and “consciousness raising” emerged as key thematic codes related to media and government engagement with gender-based violence in the South African context. These concepts were thematically coded to yield one main argument about listening. Media representation alongside government ideology shape the national discourse around gender-based violence and in turn reinforce the public’s understanding of the problem. According to this argument the way these institutions talk about gender-based violence shapes how the public understands, engages with, and listens to instances of gender-based violence. This can have adverse effects on shaping the communal habitus around listening to and engaging with gender-based violence. The use of words like “scourge of violence” and “rapists must rot in jail”, for example, do damage in communicating who the true perpetrators of violence are as well as identifying gender-based violence as a systemic problem in South Africa.

This chapter expands on this argument by beginning with an exploration of the influence of media representations of gender-based violence in South Africa. This is followed by a discussion of the news discourses that create a “collective orientation” to fear. In this section the case of Anene Booysen is explored in-depth to highlight how news representations of her rape and murder shaped the public’s understanding of rape and femicide. The concept of ‘mega-cases’ is then introduced to understand how they affect the public’s understanding of violence. This is then followed by an exploration of government language, discourses and ideology to see how it can reinforce violence. The chapter concludes by posing and answering the question, *how do representations and discourses of violence shape our cultures of listening and response to gender-based violence?* Ultimately, what is argued is that media and government representations and discourses play an integral role in shaping the public’s listening “schema” and “categories” (Lipari 2014: 99) both to understand and respond to

gender-based violence, rape and femicide. These institutions therefore have great power and immense responsibility in the fight against gender-based violence.

The influence of media representations of GBV in South Africa

Media representations of gender-based violence inform and shape how we engage with and respond to gender-based violence in South Africa. According to Aroustamain (2020), media framing of sexual violence, for example, is vital as it has the ability to “influence public perceptions on how people understand certain social problems” (p. 1-2). The media therefore has the ability to “influence an individual’s attitudes, beliefs and attributions of responsibility” with regards to gender-based violence (Aroustamain 2020: 02). In the South African context, the media’s role in influencing public perceptions of gender-based violence is worrying. As argued in the theoretical framework of this research, patriarchal structural gender-based violence has shaped South Africa’s schemata and habitus on listening to cultures, languages and experiences of gender-based violence. What is concerning about the power that the media has with regards to influencing public perception, is that “journalists and editors are shaped by the societies in which they live, and they internalise many of those societal values while simultaneously reflecting and shaping them in their professional endeavours” (Brodie 2020: 186). Journalists and editors are therefore not exempt from being influenced by the patriarchal structural violence that has been normalised in the South African context. This has some potential implications for their coverage and representation of gender-based violence in South Africa.

Buiten and Salo (2007) illustrate the influence of patriarchal structural violence on the media by arguing that news discourses normalise misogyny and gender-based violence. According to Buiten and Salo (2007) news media do this by “side-stepping the highly gendered nature of misogynistic violence in favour of a discourse that tacitly accepts that men commit violent crimes against women” (p. 115). Buiten and Salo (2007) write:

[T]he agency of perpetrators of GBV is often discursively rendered invisible in some media reports... In some cases, these news reports shift away from misogynistic acts of violence by perpetrators towards a problematisation of the spaces and immediate circumstances in which the violence occurs. In other cases, acts of violence by perpetrators are attributed to individual pathology rather than to misogyny fuelled by prevailing gender relations (p.115).

Buiten and Salo's (2007) argument highlights aspects of cultural violence as conceptualised by Galtung (1990) which influence social structures in particular ways. Understood through the theory of cultural violence, Buiten and Salo's (2007) argument asserts that the media acts as a social institution that feeds patriarchal and therefore misogynistic cultural violence by representing "the perpetrator of violence [as] invisible" and legitimatising "the violence so as to make it imperceptible and/or acceptable to the majority of the people" (Alexander 2018: 14).

Brodie (2020; 2021; 2022) explains that added to the influence of internalised social values – like patriarchal structural violence – journalists and editors succumb to other newsroom pressures which also influence which stories of gender-based violence are published and how the victims and perpetrators are represented. Brodie (2020) writes:

Professional news platforms and publications are usually commercial ventures, which means that they need to be profitable or at least sustainable and that means telling stories that your readers believe are more important or interesting, sometimes at the expense of other stories that are perhaps just as important or worthwhile but which, for various reasons, do not appeal to your readers (p. 190).

Pantti (2019) uses the term "calculus of death" to refer to pressures such as the ones highlighted by Brodie (2020). According to Pantti (2019), the 'calculus of death' refers to "routine judgements about the importance and appeal of news stories that are informed by cultural norms, the political context, and organisational resources" (p. 07). The news media, however, act "as knowledge producers" (Buiten and Salo 2007: 117) and "are a primary source of public information about crime and violence" (Brodie 2021: 82). So, the stories they do choose to represent, play an integral role in informing the public about "who matters, whose body matters, who is given the status of legitimate victim, [and] who is feared as a predator" (Brodie 2022: 32). These media frames and representations also "shape" the public's "responses to injustice" and "create a distinction between those lives that are recognised as fully human and 'grieve-able' and those that are not" (Pantti 2019: 06; Butler 2009).

Even with their limitations media representations of gender-based violence inform and shape our collective understanding and "listening habitus" (Lipari 2014: 57) in South Africa. Although "creating visibility and accountability" on issues of gender-based violence "should... constitute part of the responsibility of the press" (Buiten and Salo 2007: 17), available resources and space on the news agenda limits the coverage of these stories. Brodie

(2022) explains that “the majority of cases that appear in the news receive very little coverage” which means that they will appear in an average of one to three news articles (p. 33). A smaller cluster of cases, however, “receive more prominent attention – say, twenty articles or more” (Brodie 2022: 33). With regards to femicide, for example, coverage is limited mainly to “mega cases” which have an impact on the public’s understanding of violence. Mega cases, which Brodie (2020) explains are “murders that receive the most prominent [media] coverage” orient the public because they “eventually come to represent what we consider to be general knowledge about homicide” (Brodie 2020: 188). Mega cases also “drown out news of other murders,” and “court cases for older murders” which can limit understanding of violence and influence the public’s perception and fear of violence (Brodie 2020: 198; Brodie 2021: 82).

The story of Anene Booysen, a 17-year-old who was raped and murdered in a small South African town, is one example of a mega case that has received substantial coverage by both press media and academic scholarship (Brodie 2021). Understanding the framing of this and other stories, similar in narrative, can provide insight into the media discourses that shape the public’s “listening habitus” (Lipari 2014: 57) and response to gender-based violence and femicide in South Africa.

Media discourses that shape the ‘collective emotional orientation to fear’

The concept of “collective emotional orientation to fear” was previously discussed in the theoretical framework of this thesis. According to Gqola (2021), women and vulnerable others in in patriarchal societies receive “prolonged exposure” to the “dangers that await” if they conduct themselves in certain ways (p. 61). Part of the exposure includes “witnessing the treatment of others” who “step out of line” (p. 61). To Gqola (2021) this is the process of reinforcing a collective emotional orientation to fear. This section explores the reportage of the Anene Booysen rape and murder case and how that played a role in the “prolonged exposure” to gruesome acts of violence against women and how that shaped the country’s collective emotional orientation to fear of being raped and murdered.

Many scholars have written on Anene Booysen and the political and news framing of her rape and murder (Gqola, 2015 Watson & Mentor-Lalu 2015; Boonzaier 2017; Frost 2018; Falkof 2019; Brodie 2020; Brodie 2022; Geldenhys 2022). Boonzaier (2017) explains that Anene Booysen’s story, her violation, her death and the way South Africans came to know of her, “through media reports, has much to tell us about the ways in which we choose to understand

gendered violence” (p. 471). Although there is a lot of interest and fascination with Booysen’s story, it is a difficult one – to read, write and come to terms with. The story has been included in this section for the purpose of understanding how media and political discourse shape the public’s understanding of gender-based violence. What has been included here, however, is only a summary of who Booysen was and what happened to her – written in accordance with the few sources that spoke about her in more detail. Unfortunately, because of the limited information available, what is written here cannot fully explain or articulate who Booysen really was.

Anene Booysen was born on 30 October 1995. She lived with her parents in Melkbosstrand until 1998 when social workers were forced to remove Anene and her siblings from their biological parents’ care (Geldenhys 2022). Anene and her brother were placed in the care of a foster mother, Corlia Olivier, when Anene was three years old. The Oliviers moved away from Melkbosstrand with the foster children and took up residence in a small town called Bredasdorp (Geldenhys 2022). The family faced financial difficulties. According to Anene’s foster mother, Anene and her brother “didn’t have school shoes or clothes” (Geldenhys 2022: 42). Anene and her brother both struggled academically. According to Geldenhys (2022), by the age of 15, Anene was already three grades behind her peers when she dropped out of school. Her brother also dropped out of school at an early age. During this time Anene was no longer staying with her foster mother. Geldenhys (2022) explains that there was a point when Anene had a difficult relationship with her foster mother, Corlia, who like Anene’s biological parents, also abused alcohol. Geldenhys (2022) writes:

According to one of Anene’s friends, [Corlia] apparently often entertained male friends and then told Anene to leave the house and find another place to sleep. After one such incident in 2009, 14-year-old Anene refused to return to her foster mother. Anene lived with her friend until 2013 when she decided to move back to her foster mother, after she had also found a job as a cleaner (p. 42).

Boonzaier (2017) quotes Felix (2013) to explain that Booysen’s foster mother thought of her as a ‘good girl’. According to Corlia Olivier, Anene was a “good, quiet girl who helped out at home. She was taken out of school in Grade 7 to work and earn money for the family” (Boonzaier 2017: 476). Olivier explained that Anene had also been a volunteer for Fynbos Wildfire Service. Olivier is quoted as saying “she was a hard worker and did her best to help me” (Boonzaier 2017: 476 quoting Felix 2013).

On 1 February 2013, Anene went out for drinks with some friends at a local pub in Bredasdorp, South Africa. After having some drinks and dancing, Anene left the pub in the company of some friends with whom she had been socialising. Anene was later found at a construction site badly injured and fighting for her life. The security guard who found her, in the early hours of the morning, called for medical help. Anene had been raped and mutilated and had incurred extensive genital injuries. Medical reports show that during the attack Anene had been disembowelled (Watson & Mentor-Lalu 2015; Falkof 2019; Geldenhys 2022). Geldenhys (2022) explains that due to the extent of her injuries, Anene was first transported to Worcester Hospital, a two-hour drive from Bredasdorp and then later to Tygerberg Hospital in Cape Town – which resulted in another hour's drive (p. 44). Anene Booysen finally succumbed to her injuries and passed away at 21:00 on 2 February 2013, after naming one of her attackers (Geldenhys 2022: 44; Watson and Mentor-Lalu 2015: 18).

Mega cases and the framing of violence against women

Anene Booysen's rape and murder received a lot of media attention. According to Brodie (2022), there were "at least 679 local news stories" that are about or mention Booysen published between February 2013 and August 2017 (p. 28). The high amount of media coverage that Booysen's story has received could be attributed to the very brutal nature of her rape and murder. Watson and Mentor-Lalu (2015) quote a 2011 study on media representations of gender-based violence and explain that the media is attracted to stories of sexual violence if the rapes meet "the criteria of being brutal and shocking" (p. 28). The quoted study, conducted by the Tshwaranang Legal Advocacy Centre, also found that the media reports focused solely on the "brutality of the acts" but did nothing to provide a "contextual analysis of gender-based violence" (Watson & Mentor-Lalu 2015: 28).

Watson and Mentor-Lalu (2015) argue that the extensive coverage and media representation of Anene Booysen's story met this criteria. Here one can see how prolonged exposure to the Anene Booysen story, with the emphasis on the brutality of violence enacted upon her, could cause fear among women and shape the collective orientation to fear throughout South Africa. Brodie (2022), however, argues that the violence of Booysen's death is nothing unexpected with regards to South African standards and that "there were other factors which triggered the almost unprecedented media response to Booysen's death" (p. 28). Brodie writes:

Now, one might imagine it would be Anene's young age or the extreme violence meted out against her which resulted in such significant media coverage. But sadly, her murder was not all that exceptional by South African standards. At the end of February 2013, twenty-eight-year-old Thandiswa Qubuda died in a Grahamstown Hospital after being gang-raped and beaten so badly six weeks earlier that she had been left brain damaged. Qubuda was mentioned in just thirteen media reports. The following month, in March 2013, fourteen-year-old Thandeka Madonsela was beaten, disembowelled and murdered in a patch of veld near Soweto. She was mentioned in just sixteen reports (2022: 28).

Brodie (2022) explains that Booysen's exceptional media coverage is a result of her murder being associated with two other mega cases of violence against women. The first case is the gang-rape and murder of university student Jyoti Singh in India and the second is the murder of South African model Reeva Steenkamp, who was shot dead by her celebrity sportsman boyfriend. According to Brodie (2022), the rape-homicide of Jyoti Singh, which took place in December 2012, "amplified coverage of Anene's death because of the similarities in attacks" and the murder of Reeva Steenkamp, which took place less than two weeks after Booysen's murder, "intensified media coverage of Anene because of the differences between the victims" (p. 29).

Brodie's (2022) work shows how "intersecting media coverage" of global occurrences and campaigns can boost the visibility of a local event (p. 29). South African media houses and organisations that covered the Booysen rape-homicide and associated it with the Jyoti rape-homicide did this to invoke the Indian student's experience as a "framework through which to read" the experience of Booysen in Bredasdorp (Brodie 2022: 36). This kind of coverage attempts to convey the problem of rape and femicide not "as an individual event" but as a "societal problem, one which we experienced – and had to fight against – collectively" (Brodie 2022: 36). By framing rape and femicide as a global issue that cuts across race, and class the media might have been attempting to invoke a collective responsibility by attuning the public's "listening habitus" (Lipari 2014: 57) to the issues of rape and femicide.

Although extensive media coverage of Booysen's murder was spurred on by other factors, as Brodie explains, Watson and Mentor-Lalu's (2015) concerns about media representations of sexual violence – and in particular the representation of Booysen's murder – need attention.

Watson and Mentor-Lalu (2015) highlight three main concerns about the media coverage of Anene Booysen's rape and murder. Firstly, as mentioned above, Booysen's murder met the "if it bleeds, it leads" criteria of "being brutal and shocking" enough to get media attention. So, the very graphic details of her rape and murder were published over and over again (Watson

and Mentor-Lalu 2015: 28). Secondly, the brutality of the acts that were reported on received no contextual analysis of gender-based violence. This means that representation of Booysen's rape and murder "focused on violence against women in isolation, failing to look at the broader social context for women in South Africa and for rural young women in particular" (Watson and Mentor-Lalu 2015: 29). Watson and Mentor-Lalu (2015) problematise the lack of interest in and questioning of the "structural roots" of the violence being represented (p. 29). Thirdly, Watson and Mentor-Lalu (2015) express concerns over the displacement of Anene Booysen's story by the "media's obsession with Reeve Steenkamp" (p. 29). Reflecting on the differences in representation of the two women, Watson and Mentor-Lalu (2015) write:

[I]t is clear from the manner in which these two cases were reported that class and race dynamics say much about whose life is deemed of greater value. Beautiful and glamorous, Reeve led the life of an up-and-coming socialite, model and television personality. The media devoted a great deal of attention to her as a person in her own right, with detailed stories about the life she led, her friends and family, her thoughts and views on assorted subjects, what she did on the day before she died, what she ate, and so on. For the media, it seemed that Anene Booysen was interesting only insofar as her body was a site for brutality and for the courtroom dramas that ensued after her death. Her thoughts and views, what she did and said, were deemed inconsequential and certainly not newsworthy (p. 29).

Boonzaier (2017) agrees with Watson and Mentor-Lalu (2015). The media reports on Anene Booysen's death "collectively appear to tell us very little beyond very thin details" (Boonzaier 2017: 477). Boonzaier (2017) highlights two concerns similar to those highlighted above. Firstly, the lived and imagined life of Anene Booysen is absent from media reports about her rape and murder. Instead, the public is "confronted – pornographically and repeatedly – with gruesome details about how she died and the horror of her injuries" (Boonzaier 2017: 477). Secondly, media reports often talk about the social ills of Bredasdorp, the town in which Booysen died, devoid of context that reflects on sexism and misogyny. According to Boonzaier (2017), media reportage on the rapes of Booysen and others like her, in Bredasdorp "are reported as gender-less crimes even when there appears to be an opportunity to reflect on gendered power, it is not taken up" (p. 475).

What is highlighted here is how misogyny and sexism have been normalised to the point that they become invisible in news reports about gender-based violence (Galtung 1990). Instead, other social forces are highlighted as being responsible for the brutality that was acted out against Booysen. Repeated exposure to stories framed in this way may convince the public

that cultures of sexism and misogyny may not play a big role in the acts of rape and murder enacted on women such as Booysen.

These concerns indicate that media reportage of violence, rape, murder and gender-based violence is not necessarily representative of the reality of these instances. Mega cases and less newsworthy murders and attacks are reported according to the news agenda and needs of the newsroom. The framing of these stories is “typically obscure in that [it is] not usually explained to readers/viewers/listeners and highly subjective relying on many factors beyond the simple facts of the story” (Brodie 2022: 29). Therefore, even when there are similarities in the kinds of violence, the reports and stories cannot stand in for other stories of sexual and brutal violence against women. Brodie (2022) explains that one “should be cautious not to confuse the prominent cases as being representative of the whole” (p. 40). The process of universalising experiences of violence, not only misinforms the public about the nature of violence, but also “removes the specific details of individual histories” and “dehumanises” the person who has experienced the violence by turning them into “another statistic” (Watson and Mentor-Lalu 2015: 19).

Another important factor that has been highlighted in this section is that very little effort is put into contextualising gender-based violence and exploring gender-relations and the structural roots of this violence in the South African context. Watson and Mentor-Lalu (2015) explain that the levels of violence and brutality against women, in South Africa, correlates with the “gendered social order at play”, the “hegemonic constructions of masculinity and femininity” and “underlying patriarchal norms” (p. 20). These factors “create the conditions” that allow such brutality to thrive. When media reports leave out this crucial information and context, and do not question the “structural roots of the violence”, the public individualise such stories and fail to see them as a reflection of social norms at play (Watson and Mentor-Lalu 2015: 20).

Understanding the kind of discourse prevalent in media reports of gender-based violence and femicide is an important step to understanding South Africa’s collective “listening habitus” (Lipari 2014: 57) in the face of gender-based violence. As highlighted in previous sections, media representations and frames “shape” the public’s “responses to injustices and horrors” and create a “distinction between the lives that are recognised as fully human and grieveable” (Pantti 2019: 06). Our “collective emotional orientation” or “listening habitus”

therefore relies on these media representations to gain knowledge about and understanding of how this kind of brutal violence is possible in South Africa.

Journalist and arts practitioner Niren Tolsi explains how ‘slow journalism’ may provide the avenues for journalists and media practitioners to reshape the audience’s collective emotional orientation and listening habitus to traumatic stories.

Journalists have stopped seeing because of the digital age in which they exist in. [They] are expected to get stories out very quickly. Even when its traumatic and the people [they] are interviewing are grieving someone they have just lost. I think the fast-paced nature of storytelling in this age doesn’t give journalists the space to even show care or that they may be listening [...] It is important to see that the people you are writing about had lives, had interests and were part of communities and to reflect that in the journalism.

The task [for journalists] is to find the time and find a way to get the audience interested in more than just the gruesome details of the deaths. (Tolsi Interview, 2022).

Here Tolsi reflects on the pressures experienced by journalists in the digital age. Tolsi explains that the turnaround time that journalists have to research and publish a story may not afford them the space and time to show care about the subject they are writing about. Tolsi suggests a turn to ‘slow journalism’ and explains that where it is possible, journalists need to take time with a particular story and return after some time to capture the full lives of those who shared their lives initially as part of a breaking story. Tolsi’s reflection shows that although there may be pressures that journalists and media practitioners face with regards to deadlines and breaking stories, there are some news formats that may be more useful to help audiences better understand certain mega cases. By providing more context and details surrounding the story, audiences are given an opportunity to see beyond the initial gruesome story. If journalists provide follow-up stories, they may even find the space to engage with the gendered nature of some assaults and explain the patriarchal context that leads to femicide and gender-based violence.

How discourse shapes the collective orientation and habitus

In an interview for this research, Professor Amanda Gouws reflects on unhelpful discourses of gender-based violence and problematises the use of the term “scourge of violence” when referring to rape, sexual violence and gender-based violence.

I have written about the use of the term ‘scourge of violence’. The government goes on about ‘the scourge of violence’ all the time. But the question is what does it mean? If you say ‘scourge of violence’ it means, it’s like the COVID pandemic – it’s visited upon us. We don’t know by whom or why. And what we are saying here is that sexual violence has no agents. It’s just something that happens to women. But men are the agents in 95% of the cases. Men are the agents of that violence. So, by using the term ‘scourge of violence’ it also effects how we think about that violence. We then think that it’s just something so unfortunate that happens to all of us – and that’s the normalisation. So, I have been saying that we shouldn’t use the term ‘scourge of violence’. I’ve written it in newspaper articles, and it doesn’t stop. That’s not heard right? (Gouws Interview, 2023).

Here Gouws highlights three important concerns with regards to the term “scourge of violence” and how it could have an impact on South African public responses to gender-based violence. Firstly, that the term “scourge of violence” misinforms the public and redirects public attention away from thinking of gender-based violence as something that requires a perpetrator to a general social issue – similar to naturally occurring pandemics like COVID-19. This means that we begin to imagine it as a perpetrator-less crime and therefore the men, who are the perpetrators in “95%” of the cases, are not held responsible for their actions. Secondly, Gouws highlights how the framing of violence as “just something so unfortunate – that happens to all of us” (Gouws Interview 2023) does the work of normalising the violence and placing it firmly as an expected feature in the public’s “collective emotional orientation” (Gqola 2021: 61). And thirdly, Gouws asserts that the term is mainly used by government officials. A cursory search also indicates that it is a term frequently used in media reports about gender-based violence. This indicates that the discourse of “scourge of violence” is used and endorsed by entities with significant power and influence in determining how the public understands gender-based violence and its context in South Africa.

In their book, *Discourse Analysis as theory and method*, Jørgensen and Phillips (2002) discuss language as an integral part of representation and the construction of reality. According to Jørgensen and Phillips (2002), although reality itself does exist, individuals gain access to that reality through language and “gain meaning through discourse” (p. 09). The discourse then shapes how the individual engages with or responds to “reality” because “different discourses each point to different courses of action as possible and appropriate” (Jørgensen and Phillips 2002: 09). The meanings ascribed to discourse, therefore work to influence how the world changes. To illustrate the relationship between language, discourse, and change, Jørgensen and Phillips (2002) write:

Language... is not merely a channel through which information about underlying mental states and behaviour or facts about the world are communicated. On the contrary, language is a 'machine' that generates, and as a result constitutes, the social world. This also extends to the constitution of social identities and social relations. It means that changes in discourse are a means by which the social world is changed (p. 09).

This interpretation of language is in line with interpretations of discourse found in Fairclough's seminal work *Language and Power*. According to Fairclough (1989) the use of language in the day-to-day context (discourse) has the power to construct reality and influence an individual's world view. Oparinde and Matsha (2021) interpret Fairclough's (1989) argument as "language is power and has the potential to maintain or challenge power relations in society" (p. 02).

With regards to gender-based violence, Oparinde and Matsha (2021) explain that discourses have the potential to reinforce – directly or indirectly – gender-based violence, and that is a threat to society. Understanding the power of words that frame gender-based violence is therefore an important process in eradicating dangerous gender-based violence discourses, with the power to have a negative impact on South African society. In a paper titled: "The public discourse of rape in South Africa: turning women into vulnerable victims", Gouws (2015) explains why discourse is such an important factor to take into consideration. According to Gouws (2015), "the discourse around violence" shapes "how violence is perceived, which solutions are pursued and to what extent there is moral outrage around gender-based violence or not" (p. 66). The discourse can also influence whether gender-based violence is perceived as a "political problem" with its own solutions "found on a political level" (Gouws 2015: 66).

The "scourge of violence" discourse raised by Gouws in the interview is one example of a gender-based violence discourse that threatens society. The three concerns highlighted by Gouws arise because of the meanings attributed to the language of "scourge of violence" and the power these words have in shaping public interpretations, perceptions and understandings of gender-based violence. Gouws (2015) explains the meaning of the word scourge, to highlight how the word can be used to misinform individuals about gender-based violence. Gouws (2015) writes

The meaning of scourge is something that can be attributed to an affliction, a bane or a curse that aims to cause destruction, to ruin or to devastate. It can also be a mortal person who inspires fear or dread... Gender based violence is called a

scourge, not the men perpetrating the violence. I have never heard anyone say that “men are a scourge” or that men visit this scourge upon women. In most cases of rape, men are the perpetrators who inspire fear or dread and who lay to waste women’s lives. Men are enacting the scourge of violence. Using the word scourge to describe gender-based violence means that it is an affliction for which we need to find a “cure”, putting the “cure” back on the level of dealing with a disease. What is needed, are strategies to deal with the brutality of violence visited upon women with impunity. It is not a clinical intervention but an understanding of the context of violence and the consequences for real life women and sometimes men (p. 69).

Similar to the sentiments expressed during the interview for this research, Gouws (2015) highlights the various problems with using the term “scourge” when referring to gender-based violence. By turning gender-based violence into a force with no “perceivable perpetrator” and denying “the agency” (Buiten and Salo 2007: 115) of violent male perpetrators, the discourse inflicts cultural violence (Galtung 1990). Here discursive power is situated in patriarchal ideology and shapes the responses of those who engage with the discourse in particular ways – that have been ascribed by patriarchal structural violence. Falkof (2019) illustrates this relationship by firmly placing the concept of “scourge” of violence within “political” discourse. According to Falkof (2019), “political” discourse, which competes with “feminist” discourse, can be thought of as political because of its “proponents’ involvement in formal political structures featured politicians, union organisers, police, and other state and politically aligned actors” (p. 160). Writing on the reportage about Anene Booysen’s murder, Falkof (2019), explains that “state and other politically aligned actors... decried the scourge of rape and sexual violence as an element of general South African lawlessness without associating it with masculinity and with men” (p. 160). Although the discourse of “scourge” of violence condemns gendered violence, it does so while “evading critique of violent masculinities” and therefore does not fulfil the “need to interrogate violent modes of masculinity within a highly patriarchal society” (Falkof 2019: 161).

When asked why the word “scourge” is a go-to word to describe the levels of rape and sexual violence, Gouws explained that the word is used to give the impression that there is no solution to the problem of gender-based violence.

The word is used because the violence is so pervasive, and there is seemingly no intervention that helps. They want to communicate that it’s everywhere and that we can’t help but accept that it is bound to happen. But I think it makes us deaf to

a whole lot of things and it really gets men off the hook because they are the agents of violence (Gouws Interview 2023).

Here Gouws is attempting to show how this discourse works to sidestep “the highly gendered nature of misogynistic violence” (Buiten and Salo 2007: 115) “get men off the hook” and make the public “deaf” to who the perpetrators are. The political discourse around Anene Booysen’s rape and murder relegates the brutal acts to social ills that we must collectively stand against, but the public is encouraged to ignore the misogynistic structure that facilitates the violence as well as the male perpetrators of it.

Gouws highlights another common phrase used by South African government officials with regards to rape, sexual violence and femicide. Here Gouws reflects on the use of the term “rapists must rot in jail” and highlights that it is not as useful as some officials make it out to be.

When people are in ideological boxes, and my big critique has been of the ANC Women’s League – who is in that nationalism box. They think that punitive measures are the way to deal with sexual violence. And it’s always after it’s already happened, right. And it’s also glamorising certain victims. I was a commissioner for the Commission for Gender Equality at the time that Anene Booysen was raped and killed. And that was my jurisdiction. So, I stayed with that case from her memorial service through the court case. All of it. And the ANC Women’s League was there on the stairs, screaming and shouting that “Rapists should rot in jail”. But how does that contribute to dealing with a very systemic, very serious issue? (Gouws Interview 2023).

In her final remark, Gouws is reflecting on former Minister for Women, Youth and People with Disabilities Lulu Xingwana’s comments made outside a hearing for the case of Anene Booysen’s rape and murder. Gouws questions the phrase “rapists must rot in jail” and highlights how it individualises the problem of violence. Similar to the use of “scourge of violence”, the phrase “rapists must rot in jail” is misleading and gives the public the wrong impression about how to deal with gender-based violence. The phrase “rapists must rot in jail” constitutes a “discourse of incarceration” (Gouws 2016: 409) that falls under a punitive ideology that provides very limited options for dealing with violence. Gouws (Gouws Interview 2023) goes on to explain how the “discourse of incarceration” individualises violence against women and fails to acknowledge that the brutality is a symptom of patriarchal cultural violence.

If your narrative, as the government narrative, is punitive measures; that “rapists must rot in jail” and “make the sentences heavier” – it individualises the violence.

So, there is a perpetrator. We can see him. He can be sentenced to 100 years for that matter. It is a different ideology to say that the violence is everywhere. Then it becomes a collective systemic problem and it's so much more difficult to deal with. So, the problem with the government's narrative is that they think let's individualise it and say it's the bad apples, right? It's not an incredibly systemic problem. But if we accept what the One in Nine Campaign said that only one in nine rapes get reported and the Medical Research Council say it's one in 25 so that's even higher. If you make that extrapolation we have over a million rapes a year, we have more rapes than a country at war – so it's a systemic problem. And it's a collective problem. And so, you know, a narrative about, "rapists must rot in jail" just doesn't contribute anything (Gouws Interview 2023).

Here Gouws problematises the discourse of incarceration because it fails to acknowledge the extent of the problem. If the public understands the issue of gender-based violence as solvable through the incarceration of perpetrators then the public resolves firstly to only deal with the problem after it has occurred (which means the number of rapes, assaults and murders will not decrease) and secondly to not address the problem as a structural and social ill that cannot be resolved through incarceration alone. Both the discourses that Gouws reflects on in the interview have great implications for the public's understanding of gender-based violence, rape, assault and femicide in South Africa. These government discourses alongside those disseminated through media representations of violence present a specific story about the gendered violence prevalent in the South African context and the possible avenues to deal with it.

Firstly, the media's focus on certain victims and their pornographic obsession (Boonzaier 2017) with the physical elements of the victim's violation present a story where understanding the brutality of the specific act of violence is more important than understanding the social context that makes such acts possible. Secondly, the use of language and discourses that invisibilise and individualise the perpetrators of gender-based violence, rape and femicide present a story of violence that either ignores the misogynistic cultural violence imbedded in our society or creates a narrative of a "few bad apples" that can be caught, locked up and left to rot in jail. Thirdly, and most importantly (for this research) both the media representations and the political discourses ignore the gendered structural and systematic elements that facilitate this kind of violence. By ignoring the structural and cultural violence embedded in the acts of violence against women, these discourses and representations normalise the violence – turning it into an expected, unquestioned element in society (Alexander 2018).

How do representations, language and discourses shape our listening?

Gender-based violence scholars, activists and practitioners continually emphasise the need for representations and discourses that take into consideration the “gendered social order at play” and the “underlying patriarchal norms” that facilitate violence and brutality against women in South Africa (Watson and Mentor-Lalu 2015: 20). This is important because the representations and discourses teach the public about gender-based violence, rape and femicide and shape the public’s “collective emotional orientation” (Gqola 2021; 61) and listening habitus (Lipari 2014: 57) with regards to violence.

A central question that emerges here, with regards to listening, is *how does the way the representations and discourses of violence shape our cultures of listening and responses to violence against women, rape, sexual violence and gender-based violence?*

Although Gqola’s (2021) argument about the “collective emotional orientation” relates to the orientation to fear, a similar process of orientation can take place with regards to “listening”, “understanding” or “responding” (Lipari 2014; 180) to gender-based violence. The concept of “collective orientation” (Gqola 2021; 61) concerns itself with a process where the public receives “prolonged exposure” to particular messaging and their response is shaped by that exposure. The public nature of media representations and government discourses creates the foundations for “prolonged exposure” (Gqola 2021; 61) to such messaging. Discourses and representations that “normalise misogyny and gender-based violence” (Buiten and Salo 2007: 115), may fulfil the role of shaping the public’s collective orientation to violence. This collective orientation, therefore, would determine the kind of listening that the public engages in when they are faced with stories, testimonies and engagements that deal with gender-based violence and femicide. An orientation to gender-based violence, rape and femicide that understands it as a “scourge” (Gouws 2015: 69), for example, could be understood as a process where the public is collectively listening “cataphatically”. As discussed in the theoretical framework, cataphatic listening “involves listeners imposing their own pre-existing schema onto what is being said by a speaking other, potentially disrupting the transmission of meaning” (Waks 2007: 87). The framing of violence against women as a “scourge” places it firmly within a linguistic category that determines the “reality” of violence and directs the public to the “different courses of action” that are “possible and appropriate” (Jørgensen and Phillips 2002: 09). In this instance, the public would be using the concept of “scourge” (Gouws 2015) as “schema” (Lipari 2014: 198) that has been constructed

through “prolonged exposure” (Gqola 2021: 61) through prevalent media discourse and government ideology. Using “scourge” as “schema” to listen to or understand gender-based violence may result in the public misunderstanding the misogynistic and sexist nature of gender-based violence and ignoring the mostly male perpetrators of such violence.

In returning to the central question, about the how media and government representations and discourses shape the public culture of listening to violence – it becomes clear that these representations and discourses play an integral role in building and shaping the public’s “schema” and “categories” (Lipari 2014: 99) both to understand (Lipari 2014: 139) and to respond to gender-based violence, rape, and femicide. These institutions, therefore, have great power and immense responsibility in the fight against gender-based violence. The representation, in media, language and discourse, of gender-based violence, rape and femicide as a structural issue that occurs because of patriarchy, misogyny and sexism may be a good starting point for these institutions to begin to reshape the collective orientation to gendered violence in South Africa.

Chapter 5: Patriarchy, cataphatic listening and invisible rapes

Introduction

Patriarchy and androcentrism is entrenched in many societies, cultures, systems, and institutions around the world (Fyn Bruey 2021: 02). Although a few exceptions to the patriarchal and androcentric dynamic do exist, these are not found in the African context (Fyn Bruey 2021). In fact, “in every facet of the [African] continent, male dominance is fierce, violent, aggressive, and unrelenting” (2021: 02). According to Tandrayen-Ragoobur (2021), patriarchy is concerned with achieving “consensus on the lesser value of women and their roles in society” (p. 75). This is achieved through the “mental, social, spiritual, economic, and political structuring of society produced by the gradual institutionalisation of sex-based political relations, created, maintained and reinforced by different institutions” (Tandrayen-Ragoobur 2021: 75). To Tandrayen-Ragoobur, patriarchal culture, “remains one of the biggest barriers to ending violence against women on the African continent” (p.76). According to Malunga (2021) patriarchy facilitates a process “in which men dominate, oppress and exploit women in private and public spaces” (p. 127). She continues:

Patriarchy implies that men hold power in all the important institutions of society and that women are deprived of access to such power (Johannsdottir 2009). Private space patriarchy is based upon household production, with a patriarch controlling women individually and directly in the relatively private spheres of the home. Public space patriarchy, on the other hand, is based on structures other than the household where institutions conventionally regarded as part of the public domain are central in the maintenance of patriarchy (Kambarami 2006).

The concepts of intimate, private and public space patriarchy are of particular interest because they relate to a key theoretical and focused code that emerged in the coding process of this research. The code “patriarchal habitus” emerged as a main theoretical code that encompasses various other codes including, “culture”, “discourse”, “rape myths”, and “normalising violence”. These codes appeared in the interviews and case studies alongside behaviour and engagements that were associated with gender-based violence. Initial and focused coding of the research data indicated that patriarchy is a viciously powerful and active force in South Africa.

The “power” of patriarchy, according to the data, is adaptive and mutates to shape the social relations of any context in which it reigns supreme. Patriarchy in South Africa therefore shapes the cultures and habitus of listening and dictates the power relations associated with which voices are valued and which voices are ignored. The “power” of patriarchy is created and sustained because “the habitus of the dominant tends to pervade the social system, making it difficult for those with an alternative ‘habitus’ (such as females or members of racial minorities) to participate as equal” (de Klerk, Klazinga & McNeill 2011: 115). Here the process of listening otherwise is valuable in that it “interrupt[s] the habitus, the habitual attributions of meaning that language and culture impose on our everyday experiences” (Lipari 2014: 56). Listening otherwise in the face of patriarchy does what de Klerk et al. (2011: 115) refer to as “challenging the status quo” in an attempt to achieve change. Shedding the habitus of patriarchy, however, is not a simple task. To be able to shed the habitus one would have to “begin with the understanding that listening requires an awareness of our habitual categories and a willingness to go beyond them” (Lipari 2014: 98).

With this in mind the focused code “patriarchal habitus” and its various sub-codes are explored to yield three main arguments aligned with “listening otherwise” to confront the structural roots of violence in South Africa. Firstly, the public’s understanding of consent – through patriarchal habitus – mobilises rape myths and leads to invisible rapes taking place. According to this argument rape myths shape the collective understanding of consent, and men are able to freely dominate, oppress and exploit women to the point that even when there is a rape, patriarchal habitus renders it invisible. Secondly, the “no means yes” rape myth is an example of cataphatic listening that, through private and intimate space patriarchy, leads to rape, and through public space patriarchy, leads to criminal injustice. The argument contends that a process of deliberate listening through patriarchal schemata takes place, and it leads to the rape of women and the denial of listening and justice for women who accuse men of rape. The third argument shows how the feminist process of “listening counterintuitively” to patriarchy, alongside “listening otherwise”, has the potential to help South Africans to listen beyond what is prescribed by patriarchal habitus and to reshape society’s collective understanding of consent. What is argued here is that there are ways to counter the cataphatic listening of patriarchy and to overcome the challenges of listening that obscure consent in South Africa.

Exploring inferred consent and invisible rapes

Gqola's (2015; 2021) concept of the female fear factory has been explored in various chapters throughout this thesis. Gqola (2016) explains that rape is an integral part of the female fear factory and is a useful tool for communicating dominance in a patriarchal society. Rape is "not a moment or singular event but rather a language" used to "communicate patriarchal power" in order to "enforce submission and punish defiance" in women (Gqola 2015: 21). With regards to listening, Gqola's argument is that a patriarchal society not only shapes the cataphatic listening of the society dealing with rape, but also uses fear as a tool to reinforce this type of listening in any communication that takes place. The coding process of this research supports this argument and shows that the understanding of consent in the South African context is shaped by rape myths. The way in which consent is understood, through rape myths, allows men to freely dominate, oppress and exploit women to the point that even when there is a rape, patriarchal habitus renders it invisible.

In the theoretical framework of this thesis, it is argued that the 2006 *Zuma vs S* trial is an excellent illustration of how South Africans respond to rape, "why survivors makes certain choices, and the fraught ways in which the legal system responds to and treats certain complainants" (Gqola 2015: 102). This case stands as our society's "collective emotional orientation" to the act of breaking the silence and reporting incidences of rape and sexual assault. A further engagement with the concept of consent – as per the trial – provides interesting insights into how South Africans understand consent and the common-sense understanding of rape accusations in general.

To recap, Zuma was accused of rape by a well-known activist and was later acquitted of raping her when the Judge accepted Zuma's claim that the woman's provocative attire, familiar tone, and the fact that "she did not seek to stop him in any way, nor did she verbalise her reluctance to engage in sex with him" was evidence that he had consensual sex with her (Hassim 2009: 58). Zuma's masculinity was invoked as a justification for his actions and on that basis, he was acquitted of rape. The judicial process and Zuma's performance, however, were aligned with hegemonic masculinity and legitimised "patriarchy to guarantee the dominant position of men by subordinating" the women that had accused a powerful man of rape (Connell 2005: 75-77). Ratele (2016) highlights a range of moments in the rape trial which "draw the links to sexualities and ruling or hegemonic masculinity" (p. 59). One such moment is when Zuma "stated in court [during the rape trial] that he went ahead and had sex, even though no condoms were available, because in his culture a man could be accused of

rape for leaving a woman sexually aroused” (Ratele 2016: 59). Here Zuma expresses a culturally idealised form of masculine character (Connell 1993) and uses a rape-myth as the justification for forcing himself on to his accuser.

As seen in the example above, within the cultures of hegemonic masculinities lie social practices and attitudes that shape private and public space patriarchy and have an impact on the judicial process. Mills (2010), for example, argues that the rape in the Zuma case was “rendered invisible” because the judgment “relied on dominant social attitudes and myths about male and female sexuality” (p. 83). Mills explains that the court inferred consent based on three facts. Firstly, “the complainant slept over the accused’s house”, secondly, “she was inappropriately or provocatively dressed ‘in front of a virile older man’”, and thirdly, “she did not resist enough, and no force was used”. Although the complainant had indisputably said “no” three times, the court still ruled that there was consent. This shows that although she used her voice, it was first negated in an intimate, private space by Zuma and then negated publicly by the judge and the judgment. In both contexts she was not listened to, and no authority was afforded to her voice because Zuma and the judge were hearing her voice through rape myths and a patriarchal habitus. Problematising the rape myths at play in the judgement, Mills (2010) writes:

A number of myths play out in this argument. One of the most insidious is the women complicit myth, namely women ask for it by engaging in provocative or risky behaviour. Another is rape as seduction myth, which holds that a certain level of coercion is a normal part of heterosexual interaction. A third is that because women cannot be relied upon either to know or say what they want when it comes to sex (the “no means yes” myth), consent can be inferred from incidental facts relating to the behaviour of the complainant and the circumstances of the rape (p. 83).

Judgments based on inferred consent, especially if the inference relies on rape myths, have the potential to set dangerous legal precedents. South Africa is already a society with “a high tolerance of the crime of rape as well as the acceptance of rape myths” (Mills 2010: 82). Mills (2010) argues that rape myths – as shown above – are used to “justify coerced sex and are reproduced in legal discourse” (p. 82). According to Mills, these myths influence how the public understands and deals with rape and this influence extends to “various role players in the criminal justice system, up to and including the trial stage”. The issue of consent is central at all stages in determining whether a rape has occurred (Mills 2010: 82). She continues to suggest that adopting a “common-sense” approach to consent similar to that of the Zuma trial

does not “protect and advance women’s rights in a highly unequal society where rape has become normalised and rape myths feature strongly” (p. 84). The “common-sense” approach to consent is dangerous because it relies heavily on “social attitudes, myths, and customs – that tolerate rape” (Kelly 2001: 32; Mills 2010: 84). Mills (2010) further explains that rape falls neatly within South Africa’s context of gender power inequalities and is determined by the “male control of women and notions of male sexual entitlement” which feature in the “dominant social constructions of masculinities in the country” (p. 82).

In their paper titled “South African women’s constructions of sexual consent”, Beare and Boonzaier (2020) find that South African women’s understandings of sexual consent are linked to “patriarchal power structures and gender roles” (p. 335). This argument highlights that the manner in which women understand sexual consent relies heavily on the discourses around gender and sexuality that dominate the social context (Beare & Boonzaier 2020). These discourses also play a role in shaping the “social attitudes, myths and customs” that Mills problematises and therefore construct a concept of consent that can be dangerous for women. Beres (2018) explains that the law’s focus on consent or proving consent is not adequate when attempting to prevent rape or sexual assault. Beres (2018) writes:

A consent-focused model [to prevent rape or sexual assault] is inadequate not only because it is too low a standard of consent, but also because it fails to address the ways in which sexual behaviour is socially constructed. It is the social context that can appear to muddy the waters between what may be considered consensual and what may be considered harmful (p. 703).

What these scholars point out is that consent is socially constructed. The social constructions of consent are influenced by gender norms, patriarchal habitus and stereotypes about men and women’s sexual behaviours. Mills (2010) highlights that law enforcement personnel and role players, including “police, prosecutors, magistrates, and judges” are influenced by the social constructions of consent to the point where they may infer consent where it is clear that there is not any. What Beare and Boonzaier (2020) point out is that these constructions of consent are not only informed by patriarchal discourses, but they are also adopted by women and “result in uneven access to power in heteronormative encounters” (p. 330). This in turn “affects how consent is communicated and interpreted” (Beare & Boonzaier 2020: 330). The emphasis on the understanding of consent, the communication of it and the interpretation of it firstly by those primarily involved in the sexual encounter and secondly by the public and the judicial system indicate that there is an aspect of listening involved in the process of giving

and interpretation of consent. Listening therefore takes place during the sexual encounter on an intimate level and if the sexual encounter involves coercion, listening takes place in the process of reporting the rape or sexual assault and finally listening takes place at the trial stage.

Listening, however, takes place in various forms, as argued in the theoretical framework of this thesis. Cataphatic listening, for example, when engaging with issues of consent can prove to justify coerced sex and therefore infer consent where there isn't any – “rendering the rape invisible” (Mills 2010: 83). Mills (2010), for example, explains that “police are particularly prone to believing that women lie easily about rape and that where there are no signs of violence it is unlikely that rape has occurred” (p. 83). Here the cataphatic listening takes place in the form of the police “imposing their own pre-existing schema on to what is being said by the [complainant], potentially disrupting the transmission of meaning” (Waks 2007: 85). The “pre-existing schema” in her example aligns with rape myths and patriarchal constructions of consent. The rape myth at play is the “idea that rape is not really rape unless it involves force or violence” (Mills 2010: 82). Mills (2010) explains that added to the cataphatic listening of the police, is the fact that “the nature of the relationship with the accused affects police willingness to accept and investigate rape reported by women against their former boyfriends” (p. 83). So, the police therefore choose whether to listen, through their “willingness to accept and investigate” and even if they do choose to accept the case, their “pre-existing schema” – which suggests that women are untrustworthy, and rapes are violent and perpetrated by strangers – has an effect on whether the rape is validated or not. Listening otherwise has the potential to overcome the cataphatic listening engagement that involves “inferring consent” based on gender norms and patriarchal habitus. In a situation where the court relies on testimony alone, the process of listening otherwise can determine whether a rape is validated or not.

The “no means yes” myth: exploring cataphatic listening and inferred consent

As mentioned in the previous section, cataphatic listening and its reliance on popular rape myths has the ability to render rape invisible by inferring consent where there isn't any. Not only do rape myths erase rapes that take place, but they also do the “dangerous work” of “embolden[ing] perpetrators and retraumatiz[ing] victims and survivors” (Gqola 2015: 143). One such myth – the “no means yes” myth – is particularly effective because it asserts that

“because women cannot be relied upon either to know or say what they want when it comes to sex, consent can be inferred from incidental facts relating to the behaviour of the complainant and the circumstances of the rape” (Mills 2010: 83). An argument that emerged from the coding process of this research is that the “no means yes” myth is a prime example of cataphatic listening that through private space patriarchy leads to rape and through public space patriarchy leads to criminal injustice. This argument contends that a process of deliberate listening through patriarchal schemata takes place, and it leads to the rape of women and the denial of listening and justice for women who accuse men of rape.

The process of cataphatic listening when engaging with rape complaints is a particularly concerning form of “patriarchal structural violence” (Storkey 2015). This form of violence begins during the rape and continues to violate the victim when they report the violation at police stations and during court proceedings. Here the private space involves engagements within the intimate relationship of two people and forms the initial space where rape myths and cataphatic listening operate to violate women. What follows is the public engagement, where rape myths and cataphatic listening have an impact on the process of reporting the rape and the judicial process that follows. This section reflects on the cataphatic listening perpetrated in another highly publicised rape case in South Africa and explores the myths, cultures and ideologies that justify coercive sexual engagements to render rape invisible.

In an interview for this research, Gouws reflects on the *Coko vs S* rape case that caught public attention and brought the concept of consent and listening into public discussions.

There is the case that Judge Ngcukaitobi was the judge in. And it was about consent because the girl said she’ll cuddle, and they could kiss but she doesn’t want to have penetrative sex. And then in the end, he did penetrate her. And then she made the rape case. And Judge Ngcukaitobi said it’s not rape. So, there was a whole discussion about how one listens to a woman. When does no mean no? And even if there’s just silence, does it necessarily mean consent? So, it’s also in the listening between two parties involved in sexual intercourse (Gouws Interview 2023).

Here Gouws is referring to the case where acting Judge Tembeka Nqckaitobi and Judge Nyameko Gqamana handed down judgment in an appeal against a conviction of rape in the Eastern Cape High Court. According to a Daily Maverick news article written by Sheena Swemmer, the judges found that the previous sentence of seven years’ incarceration for rape

was “unduly harsh, ignores interests of society, and induces a sense of shock” (Daily Maverick 2021). Explaining the specifics of the case Swemmer writes:

The case dealt with a young woman who reported her former partner ignored her explicit wishes not to engage in penetrative sexual intercourse and raped her. The accused admitted in evidence before the court that “sexual intercourse was not part of the plans for the evening” and that the woman has previously discussed with him that she did not feel ready for intercourse. Yet, he admitted to the court that due to the “foreplay and the body language of the complainant”, he believed that “she was a willing participant”. The judges set out the various times the victim both tacitly and actively said no, such as when the accused took off her pants and she said “no, I do not want to have sex with you” and when he penetrated her and she said that she was crying and trying to push him off of her, Yet “he wouldn’t stop and he just carried on shoving it in and out and kept saying sorry in my ear.” (Daily Maverick 2021)

This case was particularly intriguing to the public because the complainant had previously won the rape case and the decision to overturn the judgment came after a previous judge had ruled that a rape had occurred. Swemmer argues that two issues emerge from the “problematic” Judge Nqckaitobi and Judge Gqamana judgment. Firstly, the case centres around rape culture and rape stereotypes, namely that “women must be threatened or forced in order for a rape to be considered legitimate”. The second issue raised is “if one consents to one type of sexual encounter, then one consents to everything” (Daily Maverick 2021). The second issue raised by Swemmer emerged as the common reading of the judgment, that “consent to foreplay gives consent to penetration” (eNCA 2021^a).

The accused, however, appealed on the basis that he did not know that there wasn’t consent at the time of the sexual intercourse. To clarify on the legal judgment, criminal law specialist Dr James Grant explained that “the defence that was being raised was as to whether the accused person knew that there was no consent” (eNCA 2021^a). That means that even though the first judgment showed that there was a rape that occurred, Judge Nqckaitobi’s and Judge Gqamana’s decision was based on “the reasonable possibility that [the accused] was mistaken that there was consent” (eNCA 2021^a). According to Grant, with regards to this rape case, “if one is mistaken or at least, and this is all the court has to find, that there is reasonable possibility that the accused was mistaken, then he has a valid defence against a conviction of rape” (eNCA 2021^a). What is highlighted by Grant is that the judges found that although a rape has taken place, the misunderstanding on the part of the rapist means that the rape was accidental, and the accused cannot be held responsible for his actions.

In the interview Gouws initially introduced the case to raise questions about listening. She highlights that this case shows “how one listens to a woman”, asks the question “when does no mean no?” and emphasises that the case is about the “listening between two people involved in sexual intercourse”. Understanding the case through a listening perspective brings into question the kind of listening taking place both during the sexual intercourse and later during the court proceedings. Gouws’s question “when does no mean no?” is important because the case shows that even after the complainant both “tacitly and actively said no” (Daily Maverick 2021) the accused was still let off for potentially misunderstanding her non-consent.

This raises two interesting points with regards to listening that will be explored in detail below. Firstly, during the sexual intercourse, cataphatic listening takes place between the complainant and the accused. This means that during the process and the time leading up to it, everything that the complainant says or does to express non-consent is translated by the accused through a process of cataphatic listening. What the accused then hears is in line with his own categories which leads to him raping his partner and “misunderstanding” her cries and her saying “no”. Secondly, there is a legal precedent that supports cataphatic listening and we see that in the Nqckaitobi and Gqamana judgment. This means that although the complainant clearly did not express consent and a rape has taken place, the accused does not necessarily have to take responsibility for the rape – if they can argue that they were not listening properly and therefore did not understand that the engagement was not consensual.

The first point of cataphatic listening takes place on an intimate level between the complainant and the accused. Gouws illustrates this by translating what the complainant says into a possible gender stereotype that the accused could have used to misinterpret what was being said.

So, this woman has said to the man that, “I want to cuddle. We can kiss. You can touch me. I don’t want penetrative sex.” What was heard is that you just want this now but eventually you’ll give in, and I will do it. And then the other part of the hearing was, so why were you there? If you want to kiss and cuddle and be touched, then you must face the whole situation. So, it is about hearing what she said, not hearing the gender stereotype and not hearing that maybe she is playing hard to get. It’s very different and I think that’s the thing. How do we listen to women on an individual level? (Gouws Interview 2023).

Here Gouws asks, “how do we listen to women on an individual level?” She is aware that the kind of listening taking place is cataphatic, meaning that it is based on “pre-existing”

categories, schema, rape myths and gender stereotypes that prescribe a generalised response to what a woman says as opposed to what she means. The complainant in the *Coko vs S* case clearly indicated that she did not want penetrative sex. The accused who claims to have had conversations with the complainant and understood she was not ready for that kind of sexual engagement was later confused about the meaning of the complainant's words indicating that she did not want penetrative sex. In the trial, the accused explained that "sexual intercourse was not part of the plans for the evening" and that the woman has previously discussed with him that she did not feel ready for intercourse (Daily Maverick 2021). Yet, he admitted to the court that due to the 'foreplay and the body language of the complainant', he believed that "she was a willing participant" (Daily Maverick 2021). Gouws is showing that the process of listening between the partners was shaped by the accused's underlying beliefs which adhere to three rape myths and stereotypes, namely that "consent to foreplay means consent to penetration", that "no means yes" (Mills 2010: 83) and that "accidental rape is possible when women play hard to get" (Gqola 2015: 150). With these stereotypes in mind, what the accused will hear will be confusing because it goes against what his intimate partner is actually saying – that she consents to only certain sexual activities excluding penetration.

Because the "no means yes" myth is often justified by the idea that "good girls often say no when they mean yes" (Mills 2010: 83), Gouws argues that the accused could easily have translated the complainant's words to convince himself that "maybe she is playing hard to get" which erases her objection and infers consent regardless of what she has actually said. Gqola (2015) explains that the rape-myth attached to "woman playing hard to get" that Gouws highlights here, "is a patriarchal construct that enables rape culture" (p. 150). Gqola (2015) writes:

For as long as it is taken for granted that women are playing hard to get when they turn down men's heterosexual advances, they can be pursued in a courtship process/process of heterosexual chase that ultimately changes the refusal into acquiescence (p. 150).

Here Gqola (2015) highlights that the myth "women play hard to get" gives perpetrators an opportunity to continue with advances even after they have experienced reluctance and protest from the women they are pursuing. The rape myth "women play hard to get" has gained its popularity through being firmly embedded in our cultures by media through films, books, stories, songs, music videos and other popular media. Robin Thicke's 2013 song "Blurred lines", for example, clearly illustrates how the idea of being wooed and courted rests

on a good girl playing hard to get but actually wanting the male to pursue her. In the song the lyrics “you’re a good girl, I know you want it”, and “I hate these blurred lines, I know you want it” are repeated over and over to indicate that the woman being pursued is saying no when she actually means yes. The release of the song and video prompted “renewed discussion about how women are presented in popular culture and how these images promote rape culture” (Phillips, 2017: 59). Ryan (2010) believes that rape myths, such as the ones highlighted here, “can be used as guidelines or instructions for the perpetration of sexual aggression” (p. 04). When the “no means yes” or “women play hard to get” myth is mobilised, for example, the blame for the assault or rape is put on to the victim and reinforces “men’s beliefs that the perpetrator was merely responding to a woman’s sexual invitations” (Franuik, Seefeldt & Vandello 2008: 791). These myths actively work against women being able to say no and being listened to. The myths also reward men for the efforts they put into “getting” a woman.

In an eNCA interview, gender specialist Lisa Vetton provides insight into the cause of the cataphatic listening between intimate partners that usually results in coerced sex and rape. Vetton argues that we live in a society that routinely encourages men to ignore when women say, ‘I do not want to have sex’ (eNCA 2021^b). Vetton explains:

So, she had told him twice “I don’t want to have penetrative sex with you” – he didn’t listen to that. He pushed on. And then claimed that she was giving him mixed signals and that he should continue. There is no recognition of the fact that he ignored what she had told him. Now put in the position where she was confused as to know what to do – which is what she says. She is also not somebody who is sexually experienced who would necessarily know what to do when somebody is behaving in this way. Women are simply not socialised, when men ignore their no, to punch them hard in the face. And then to tell them “If you continue with this, I am going to hit you so hard that you won’t know what your name is.” That is not how women are socialised. They are socialised into being acquiescent and compliant. And it becomes even more difficult when you don’t know what to do. So, I think that there is a real problem here in that the law is undergirding and reinforcing men’s perception that even if women say no – they can continue to push on and then claim, “Oh well she was giving me mixed signals.” Whereas actually it was you who was confusing her – and you need to take responsibility for that (eNCA^b 2021).

Here Vetton highlights three important points. Firstly, she reiterates Gouws’s reflection that the accused did not listen to the complainant. Vetton argues that although the accused claims to have been confused by the mixed signals of the complainant, he was the one who was confusing her and put her in a position where she did not know what to do. Secondly, she

explains that the response of the complainant is shaped by a society that socialises women to be “acquiescent and compliant” even when faced with danger. This socialisation requires women to “sexually comply because rejection is not part of the normalised sexual script upon which sexual encounters are based” (Beare & Boonzaier 2020: 330). Here Vetton highlights how the normalised sexual script does not encourage women to threaten men, undermine their self-esteem or embarrass them with public accusations of sexual assault and rape. And thirdly, Vetton problematises the law’s “undergirding and reinforcing” of the “no means yes” myth. Similar to the point raised earlier, about the law encouraging and supporting cataphatic listening, Vetton believes that this case shows the encouragement of men continuing with coercive sexual encounters, even when women do not consent and later claiming that they were receiving mixed signals.

Vetton’s third point removes us from the intimate listening engagement between the boyfriend and the girlfriend and takes us to the public domain where “public space patriarchy” (Malunga 2021: 127) is evident and a cataphatic listening engagement takes place through adhering to a different rape myth and stereotype. Similar to the myth used to render the rape in the *Zuma vs S* trial invisible (Mills 2010), Swemmer (Daily Maverick 2021) explains that the prominent myth at play in this judgement is the “women must be threatened or forced in order for a rape to be considered legitimate” myth (Mills, 2010: 83).

This illustrates a process of cataphatic listening taking place in the judicial process. The outcome of this judgment illustrates how this and other rape myths “have real effects” (Gqola 2015: 146). We see here how the myth has “implications for who is held accountable/responsible” and the image that is created for what counts as a legitimate rape (Gqola 2015: 146). By relying on rape myths to shape its categories and schema, this listening process is inherently patriarchal and exerts a form of patriarchal structural violence over the complainant. Furthermore, Swemmer explains that the judges found that the previous sentence of seven years’ incarceration for rape was “unduly harsh, ignores the interests of society and induces as sense of shock” (Daily Maverick 2021). What is interesting here is that the judges are concerned with “the interests of society” and deem a seven-year sentence for rape as “unduly harsh”. Gqola (2021) provides insights that could possibly explain why the judges expressed these sentiments in the interest of society. Gqola (2021) explains that patriarchy “casts women as liars... and conditions all of us to see the world through male eyes” (p. 86). This process, that Gqola equates to Mulvey’s (2001) “male

gaze”, views anything that is “hostile to patriarchy” as “strange, abnormal, and illegitimate” (2021: 87). Gqola (2021) writes:

When we realise that rape is constitutive of patriarchy – which is to say there is not patriarchy without rape – it makes sense that seeing the world through male eyes renders those who speak against rape illegitimate... Rape victims and survivors are rendered illegitimate through unrapeability, the manufacture of female fear, and customised legal requirements that demand that they not only fall into the category of the ideal rape victim but also that the rapist should similarly fit the fantasy of the monstrous rapist (p. 87).

Understood through Gqola’s framing the judges’ sentiments that the sentence was “unduly harsh, ignores the interests of society and induces a sense of shock”, may indicate that the judges sense “hostility” to a patriarchal system. The “society” they are interested in upholding routinely renders victims and survivors of rape as illegitimate. And a sentence such as this one, without a “monstrous rapist” or an “ideal victim”, induces a sense of shock in that society. The “male eyes” in this instance view this case from a patriarchal perspective and although a rape has taken place, the onus to prove that her non-consent was in fact non-consent is placed on the victim and the perpetrator is allowed off the hook.

Fortunately, this “problematic” (Swemmer 2021) judgment was overturned in April 2024. Three years after the Nqckukaitobi and Gqamana judgment, the Supreme Court of Appeal (SCA) found that “the high court erred in acquitting Coko”, the accused (Daily Maverick, 2024). According to the Supreme Court of Appeals, the High Court’s decision created “perverse incentive to unscrupulous persons taking advantage of their victims” and had an impact on the “speedy realisation of the constitutional objective of gender equality which is one of the foundational values of our constitutional order” (Daily Maverick 2024 quoting SAFLI 2024). The judgment stated:

In addition, [the high court judgment] would also entrench patriarchal attitudes, stereotypes, and mindsets that the rights of women and children, in particular, to their dignity and physical integrity count for little and therefore can be gratuitously violated with impunity (Daily Maverick 2024, quoting SAFLI 2024).

The Supreme Court of Appeals judgment has taken the patriarchal habitus along with its “attitudes, stereotypes and mindsets” into consideration and decided that the Nqckukaitobi and Gqamana judgment was not aligned with South Africa’s constitutional objective of gender equality. These attitudes, stereotypes and mindsets are aligned with rape culture because they perpetuate “social, cultural and structural discourses and practices in which sexual violence is

eroticised, minimised and trivialised” (Powel & Henry 2014). By overturning the high court judgment shaped by patriarchal habitus, the Supreme Court of appeals is not allowing “the habitus of the dominant” to “pervade the social system” and providing “those with an alternative habitus to participate as equal” (de Klerk et al. 2011: 115).

This process is akin to shedding the habitus and providing space for another habitus to emerge. With regards to shedding the habitus and listening, a turn to listening otherwise and listening counterintuitively has the potential to provide those with an alternative habitus to patriarchy, to participate as equal.

Listening counterintuitively and shedding the patriarchal habitus in South Africa

In her interview Professor Pumla Gqola was asked to reflect on the concept of “listening otherwise” in relation to her work, writing and experience fighting against gender-based violence in South Africa. In her book *Female Fear Factory: Gender and Patriarchy Under Racial Capitalism*, Gqola (2021) presents the idea of a “fluency” in the female fear factory. Gqola (2021) explains that specific logic around gender is taught in patriarchal societies and our fluency in that logic “requires exposure through repetition of messages, warning inducements, explicit statements” and “interpreting and clustering signs” into “meaningful thought units” (p. 73). This exposure normalises the environment to anyone it renders female and eventually controls those who become fluent in its language (Gqola 2021). When asked, in the interview, about whether one can suspend the habitus and fluency learned in patriarchal societies to listen otherwise, Gqola explained that instead of listening otherwise a more targeted approach to counter patriarchy in the South African context may be to listen counterintuitively.

I don’t know if we can listen completely outside of the fluency of the female fear factory, because we are socialised into it in very specific ways. I don’t think we can listen outside of the fluencies in the same way that we can’t live outside of patriarchal society completely – well maybe we can, I don’t know... We haven’t figured it out yet. We are trying to – that’s why we are trying to end the patriarchal logic and the patriarchal structure. So, I think that what we can do though is not to try existing as though these systems and these ways of hearing and listening don’t exist, but to work against them. So, to listen I suppose counterintuitively and to actively assume counterintuitive listening (Gqola Interview 2023).

Here Gqola explains how in a patriarchal society, one cannot suspend or listen outside of the “fluencies” or “categories” (Waks 2017; Gqola 2021) that are prevalent in that society. Understanding the cultural influence of patriarchy could provide possible explanations for this inability, for those existing within the culture, to suspend the fluency or categories. Cultures that are normalised by the system of patriarchy, like any other culture, “provide symbols and ideas” that people use to “construct their realities” (Johnson 2004: 29). For Gqola (2015) these realities are shaped around the language of the female fear factory which communicates patriarchal power in order to “enforce submission and punish defiance” in women and those rendered female (p. 21). In the interview, Gqola asserts that the fluency and language of patriarchy is so dominant that one could only listen “outside” of patriarchy’s fluency if it were ended. Since the system of patriarchy still prevails, Gqola offers up an alternative means of listening to overcome the barriers of attempting to listen “outside” of patriarchal categories while using their language to “regulate behaviour, structure thinking and solve problems” (O’Neal, Plumert & Peterson 2016: 257). Gqola offers up listening counterintuitively when engaging with gender-based violence as a form of listening that goes against the grain of patriarchal habitus and categories.

I think that by definition listening counterintuitively has to be a perpetually evolving process. So, to listen counterintuitively is to try to work against, not outside of – because there is no “outside of” – unless we move across time. So, I think the impetus is to think against logical ways of listening. And by that, I mean various things; I mean we are trained to think about women as perpetual liars, to think about women’s narrative, women’s stories, women’s experience as unimportant, as untrue, as unreliable, as improperly emotional, as devoid of logic and all of those things. So, we are socialised into that system that – every time a women, speaks we listen with a question mark. So, we say things like: did it really happen? Is she telling us the right version? Is her interpretation reliable? So, I think listening counterintuitively is to not take that as a starting point. Not to assume, not to move from the assumption that when people say they have been violated, that they are lying. And not to assume that they are unreliable. And I think that’s part of what lies behind the feminist response often, to say: we believe you. I think the feminist impetus is to believe – to start from that position (Gqola Interview 2023).

Here Gqola introduces listening counterintuitively as a process that relies on the schemas, habitus, languages, and fluency of patriarchy but instead of acting in line with patriarchal habitus, one acts counterintuitively – in ways that are in line with feminist thought and engagement. This approach to listening strategically prioritises a form of cataphatic listening, which “involves the use of [feminist] preconfigured categories” (Waks 2017: 85). Gqola

highlights two important factors about the process of listening counterintuitively. Firstly, that the process is an ever “evolving” process and secondly that one must act against the training and the logic of listening that has been instructed by the system of patriarchal domination. Here the use of cataphatic listening is strategic in that it understands that patriarchal habitus comes equipped with its own forms of listening, and listening counterintuitively directly acts against the logic and training of the patriarchal habitus.

Gqola insists on explaining that listening counterintuitively is an ever-changing process because she wants to emphasise the kind of response that will be effective against a system of domination that is also adaptive and ever-changing. Speaking in the interview, about the evolving nature of patriarchy, Gouws equates it to a creature with regenerative abilities – able to morph and survive even when people fight it.

Patriarchy morphs and changes when it is challenged. The minute you fight one aspect it transforms, and it morphs into something else. So, if you chip away at it here, it grows another tentacle there. It's really difficult (Gouws Interview 2023).

It is this understanding of patriarchy as a structure that morphs and responds, that influences Gqola to prefer the cataphatic listening counterintuitively over the open-ended listening otherwise. Gqola explains that from the position of listening “outside” of the schemas, categories, fluencies, and languages of patriarchal domination, one might miss an important form of patriarchal backlash, or “tentacle regrowth” and fail to listen effectively in a way that fights against the domination. A failure that could lead to one listening in line with patriarchy’s habitual expectations.

I think listening otherwise is wonderful, I guess my problem with the argument just across critical, theoretical and liberatory work is, that we can do this thing of engaging “outside” of. I am not convinced that we can do that. This is the society we exist in and so we may not be able to remove ourselves. Obviously to be feminist is already to live in an adversarial relationship with patriarchy. But we don’t live outside patriarchy... I suppose my preference is doing it counterintuitively – because I think it’s important to always keep an eye on it and then to always be mindful of the ways in which we are constantly structured by these systems. And so, for me the counterintuitive is influenced by people like Hall who talks about the need to think about these things as processes. Or someone like Spivak, who says “as soon as we think in freeing ways if we take seriously the thing we are fighting, we have to recognise this thing isn’t going to sit and watch us – it responds”. And so, it’s this constant awareness that patriarchy adapts. Even if we find this wonderful feminist strategy, patriarchy is not going to sit and be like “oh, very nice” and just continue to do what it did before, it’s going to respond. This means we have to constantly update our

strategies or at least be aware of the ways in which patriarchy is engaging (Gqola Interview 2023).

Here we see that Gqola's preference for listening counterintuitively in response to the languages, fluencies and cultures of patriarchal domination is useful because it possesses the ability to morph and change as patriarchy does. The main concern presented here is with the changing and responding nature of patriarchy and therefore an appropriate listening response is one that has a constant and consistent awareness of the expectations of the culture that shapes the listening habitus. Listening counterintuitively is therefore a response that is not satisfied with its own "completeness" (Nyamnjoh 2017; 10) and refuses to adopt certainty and closed understanding.

I think listening counterintuitively is also according the space to do the work of listening. And so structurally you make the place, you make the space – to literally make room for people to be able to speak about things. So not just to speak about the experience but also do the variety of things that come with those experiences. If we listen without a question mark and we make the space in a variety of ways, we must also understand that we will be challenged. So, patriarchy's big thing is absolute certainty. But absolute certainty is a trap. One of things that patriarchy says is "we can tell who's telling the truth". So, we must understand that even as we listen counterintuitively, part of listening counterintuitively is that we recognise that what we hear will challenge us. That the behaviour of those we listen to and believe and take seriously and all of these things, will challenge us. And so, to resist them may be human – may be patriarchal, but also may be partly the human desire to fix everything (Gqola Interview 2023).

Although Gqola makes a clear distinction between the process of listening otherwise and the process of listening counterintuitively there are some useful commonalities that the two processes of listening share with regards to listening in the face of gender-based violence. Firstly, both approaches to listening require the listening subject to have an awareness of the contextual categories, schemas and languages that shape certain spaces and how people engage within those spaces. Secondly, as highlighted above, both processes invite the listener to create "the space to do the work of listening". Where these approaches differ, with regards to creating a listening space, is that one space is "of emptiness and unknowing" (Lipari 2014: 98) while the other is feminist and equipped with categories, schemas, and languages that are counterintuitive to patriarchal domination. These listening spaces, however, are both "open" in that they resist "certainty" and "the insatiable appetite for the familiar" (Lipari 2014: 99-102). Listening otherwise proposes that the listener creates a hospitable dwelling place and offer to host others with a resistance of "certainty, categorisation" and "the imperatives for

natural flow” (Lipari 2014: 99). Listening counterintuitively accords the space to do the work of listening, with openness that does not insist on questioning what the woman says.

Listening counterintuitively understands that “certainty is a trap” (Gqola Interview 2023).

Thirdly, both approaches to listening understand that what one hears will challenge them and they encourage listening despite that fact. Gqola explains that the process of listening counterintuitively challenges the listener and there is a resistance that follows that challenge (Gqola Interview 2023). Whether the resistance is human instinct or patriarchal habitus, one must continue to make the space for listening even when it is difficult. Lipari (2014) highlights the process of bearing witness and showing compassion to make a similar argument for the process of listening otherwise. Here the process of listening otherwise, while bearing witness, asks the listener to “not turn away from the suffering [of others] but to look at it unflinchingly” (Lipari 2014: 186). This kind of listening would ask that one listens “without resorting to what is easy,” and “make space for the difficult, the different, and the radically strange” (Lipari 2014: 187).

Listening counterintuitively provides a great avenue for listening in the South African context considering the fact the “[t]he incidence of gender-based violence continues to rise at alarming proportions” and “unequal power relations between men and women in society and at home lie at the heart of this violence” (Plaatjies Van Huffel 2011: 06). The approach to listening serves as a powerful tool to listen effectively within a context where “the dehumanising effects of patriarchal structures” have altered the collective listening habitus in accordance with its structures of “racism, sexism and colonialist imperialism” (Plaatjies Van Huffel 2011: 07). In the face of such adversity the process of listening counterintuitively begins to do the work of shedding the habitus of the “narratives of normalisation surrounding sexual violence” and overcome the dehumanisation and “complex forms of othering” and violence in the South African context (Moffett 2006: 131).

The context of rape and “public space patriarchy” (Malunga 2021) highlighted in the examples provided in this chapter, indicates that there is a need for this form of listening to undo the work of rape myths and rape culture. Left unchecked, the patriarchal habitus of hegemonic masculinity in the South African context has the potential to provide “perverse incentive to unscrupulous persons [to take] advantage of their victims” (SAFLI 2024).

As seen in the *Coko vs S* case a process of listening counterintuitively may have had an impact on the behaviour of the accused in the intimate space where the rape took place. If the

accused had applied the principles of listening counterintuitively, not only would he have believed his girlfriend when she said she did not want to engage in penetrative sex, but the accused would not have been confused about whether there was consent or not. He would understand that dominant rape myths are the ones responsible for his confusion and instead of acting from a place of confusion, he would have communicated with his partner and given authority to her voice and her “no”. A similar process of listening counterintuitively may have had an impact on the Nqckukaitobi and Gqamana judgment. Had they considered dominant rape myths and patriarchal culture as factors that confuse men into misunderstanding consent, they might have found that the complainant’s communication of non-consent was clear, and that the accused merely ignored it because he belongs to a society that tells men to ignore women when they say no.

Listening counterintuitively is effective in this context because it offers cataphatic listening with feminist “preconfigured” (Waks 2007: 85) categories that understand the South African context and are able to respond to its patriarchal habitus. With regards to both the intimate and public spaces where the patriarchal habitus is so ingrained in the social practices and attitudes, beginning with a process of listening counterintuitively could make way for listening that is concerned with “empowerment” of women and providing a space that “reverses authoritative normative social arrangements that silence and/or refuse to listen to the voices of the oppressed” (Lipari 2014: 201).

Where listening counterintuitively falls short, however, is in its ability to engage with the other. Lipari argues that “people, typically those with the most power, stop listening and monologue takes the place of dialogue” (2014: 198). Whenever there is any form of cataphatic listening, even with more progressive categories such as the feminism, true dialogue cannot take place. “Speakers and listeners presume to know and understand” everything and “take positions and refuse to budge” (Lipari 2014: 198). Listening otherwise provides the framework for people to engage “across difference” (Dreher 2009) and provide the opportunity to listeners, to “keep an ear out for the places of silence, erasure, and misrecognition” (Lipari 2014: 203).

It’s clear that both forms of listening have an important role to play in the process of listening in the face of gender-based violence in South Africa. They are needed in intimate, private and public spaces where patriarchal habitus is present and consuming. Instead of relying on one

form while abandoning the other, both listening counterintuitively and listening otherwise could do the important work of shedding the patriarchal habitus in the South African context.

Considerations for journalists to avoid cataphatic listening

In chapter four, the thesis presented an argument about the possible ways in which the media and journalists can shape the listening habitus of their audiences and the public in general. The choices journalists and editors make when framing particular news stories have lasting effects on the assumptions and attitudes of the people who engage with the news stories. If the news organisation listens to and represents gender-based violence stories in a way that is cataphatic, for example, then there is a promotion of that kind of listening and the audience enters a different habitus predisposed to a different kind of reception.

In cases such as the *Coko vs S* trial and the *Zuma vs S* trial, the choices made when representing the cases to the public play a vital role in the public's approach to and understanding of rape in the South African context. Here the media has a moral obligation to consider the "ethics of listening as a normative framework" which can "treat [gender-based violence victims] with dignity" by "taking their stories seriously" (Wasserman 2013: 77). If journalists are to take the stories of gender-based violence victims, survivors and complainants seriously, they are to view and represent them "as dignified human beings regardless of their social standing" (Wasserman 2013: 78). This requires an understanding of their social standing and the norms, cultures and stereotypes that may further perpetuate that social standing.

When an ethics of listening is the normative framework for journalists, the stories that represent rape, gender-based violence and femicide should prioritise processes of listening otherwise. This means that the stories themselves should include reference to and reflection on the context and normalised cultures of patriarchy and violence against women. The audience should always be reminded that these cases and occurrences do not happen in isolation from social norms. In both the *Coko vs S* case and the *Zuma vs S* case, the men accused of rape were unable to recognise the complainants' nonconsent. A normative framework underpinned by an ethics of listening otherwise would guide the journalists reporting on such cases to go beyond just explaining the legal frameworks and outcomes of the cases. Here the stories would include information that explains how it is possible that a person who says no to sexual advances can be 'misunderstood' to be saying yes. If the journalists themselves cannot make such an argument, they are ethically obligated to consult

sources with the expertise and knowledge to contextualise such cases. Statistics alone cannot explain or contextualise stories about gender-based violence. The audience should be continuously reminded of the myths, cultures and practices that lead to cataphatic listening between men and women and which operate in places like court rooms. This means that the reports should not only focus on what has happened but also on the culture of violence and misogyny that allows men to routinely dismiss the voices of women in the country.

Part 3:

Overcoming the challenges of listening in the face of GBV in South Africa

Chapter 6: An ethical consideration of the other

Introduction

Lipari draws on philosophers Levinas, Schrag and Hyde to engage with the concepts of response and responsibility towards the other, through listening. These concepts, Lipari argues, are “woven into the centre of dialogic ethics” (2014: 178). Lipari writes:

For the philosopher Emanuel Levinas, the self’s responsibility to respond to the face of the other is infinite, unlimited. To Calvin Schrag, “the language of morality is the language of responsiveness and responsibility and if there is to be talk of ‘an ethics’ in all this it will need to be an ethics of a fitting response”. For Michael Hyde, too, “the language of morality is the language of responsiveness and responsibility” (2014: 178).

Lipari (2014) argues that although it is not explicitly mentioned in each of these expressions, “a hidden but presupposed prior action of listening” is “quietly embedded in these observations about the ethical response” to the other (p. 178).

At the heart of this chapter is the exploration of “an ethical response” to the other – by way of listening (Lipari 2014: 178). This ethical response to the other is a complicated process that requires disorientating encounters with otherness – an encounter “with something that does not fit neatly into our categories of understanding” (Trenor 2006: 03). In his book, *Aspects of Alterity*, Brian Trenor explains that the question of otherness “asks us to consider what it means for someone to be other than the self” and more importantly how one “should respond to the arrival of the other” (2006: 02- 03). Explaining the issues faced in encounters with the other, Trenor (2006) highlights that when confronted with something unknown, people “tend to relate to it by asking [themselves] where and how it ‘fits’ among other things [they] already know” (p. 04). Trenor problematises how “[o]therness is thought in juxtaposition to, or in the terms of the same” and argues that people only consider otherness when it is “other-than-the-same” (2006: 04). The goal in this thinking, he explains, “is to convert something unknown... into something known” (Trenor 2006: 04).

The ethical responsibility highlighted by Levinas, Schrag and Hyde suggests that an encounter with otherness should not lead to the conversion of something unknown into something known. Instead, one has the responsibility to allow the other to exist outside of the

“ego’s self-interested efforts” (Burggraeve 1999: 32). “Responsibility for the other” emerges when a person puts into question “the ego’s self-interested effort of existing” (Burggraeve 1999: 32). Explaining Levinas’s ethical phenomenon Burggraeve writes:

This responsibility consists in the first place in taking care not to violate or destroy (‘kill’) the other in his otherness, which is to say not to reduce the other to his countenance, but instead to recognise, respect and do justice to him in his otherness (1999: 32).

For Lipari (2014), this response entails “listening otherwise” – “that is attend, observe, attune and in doing so receive the otherness of the other” (p. 178). Initial, focused and thematic coding of the research interviews show that there are examples to learn from, where there has been interesting and engaged ethical considerations of the other. The codes “public trust”, “loving politics”, “play”, and “imagination” and “justice” emerged as key thematic codes related to engaging with otherness in the South African context. These concepts were thematically organised to yield the three main arguments presented in this chapter.

Firstly, if we are interested in engaging in ways that provide an ethical consideration of the other, we have to strive towards a caring society. According to this argument, a caring society is possible through a loving politics, convivial relationships and listening otherwise. The second argument that emerged is that social play is an integral part of a caring society. Women, however, do not and, at times, cannot trust men to know how to participate in safe play. According to this argument, building trust is one of the major priorities of a care society and a milestone to pursue if we want to make space for honest and ethical considerations of the other. The third argument presented in this chapter is that embedded in examples of restorative justice processes are lessons to learn from in the pursuit of a caring society. According to this argument, the process of restorative justice has the potential to create spaces for listening, sharing voice, and the kind of healing of psychological injury that allows people to rebuild trust and participate in a caring society.

Engaging in the pursuit of a caring society

Discussed in the theoretical framework of this thesis is the idea of compassion preceding understanding, for an ethical engagement to take place. This idea, in which compassion is not limited only to those deserving of it, is what Lipari (2014: 179) argues is at the heart of ethical communicative action. The compassion before understanding response “involves openness towards a radical other, a willingness to listen, and a concern for the others’

suffering” (Lipari 2014: 180). As mentioned in the theoretical framework, Lipari (2014) presents the example of Buddhist monk Thich Nhat Hanh’s response to 9/11 and the question “what would you say to Bin Laden?”. To this the monk replied, “[t]he first thing I would do is listen. I would try to understand the suffering that led him to violence” (Reynolds (2002) quoting Simkinson 2001; Lipari 2014: 179). Here one can see how a compassion preceding understanding response has the ability to engage with alterity – “difference, otherness and strangeness” – to hear what the other has to say even when the alterity exceeds one’s “knowledge, experience and understanding” (Lipari 2014: 180).

In his interview, Professor Kopano Ratele provides an interesting illustration, similar to that of Lipari (2014), on the process of engaging with alterity. Ratele however, understands this process as being intertwined with the concept of love.

There’s a person that I was quite surprised about in thinking about love. The Archbishop writes a letter to Vorster. I think this might use the word love – I might be mistaken. But his letter is really one of the moments where he embodies the stuff around love. So even if you're really angry at someone. Really, really angry – you can still be loving. So, after that I started to pay attention to people who think that the struggle is not just a structural one as in the way we are talking about it, but it is a moral struggle. That’s an important thing. So, by moral we talk about the virtues. This means that if really to struggle is a moral activity, then you have to strengthen the spirit, the love. Tutu takes it from the Christian God. The structures were bad. Apartheid was terrible. People didn’t have to suffer like that, but he enters with this idea of “we can’t be hateful” (Ratele Interview 2023).

Here Ratele refers to the letter that Archbishop Desmond Tutu wrote in 1976 to then Prime Minister BJ Vorster “urging him to end the apartheid system of racial segregation” (Anguiano 2018: 01). Through Ratele’s engagement with the letter, but more importantly the “virtue” behind the writing of the letter, he begins to imagine a society where the structures may be bad, but the response is a loving response and the idea around it is that “we cannot be hateful”. Archbishop Desmond Tutu’s letter may not use the word love but the letter’s appeal to the “shared humanity” (Anguiano 2018: 01) between Tutu and Vorster highlights the Archbishop’s appeal for conviviality between the two – in order to enter into dialogue.

Although the contexts are different, and Ratele attributes Archbishop Desmond Tutu’s response to love, this example illustrates Lipari’s (2014) compassion preceding understanding response. In a caring society, the act of writing the letter, despite the alterity and otherness of the other would be met with an equal openness and engagement from Prime Minister BJ Vorster. The Archbishop’s letter points towards an interest in and embracing of engagement

that encourages individuals to become aware of their own incompleteness and allow for that reality to challenge them to be “openminded and open-ended” in the way they claim and articulate identity, being and belonging (Nyamnjoh 2017: 10). Here the process of alterity is embraced as an act of conviviality, and openness towards a radical other. The Archbishop writes the letter to Vorster as a “warning of the potential widespread violence in the near future”, to enter into dialogue and engage otherwise to the prescribed habitus of the apartheid system (Anguiano 2018: 01). In the letter the Archbishop indicates that he is concerned that there will be more “violence in the near future”, and highlights that both he and Vorster “share the same interests for preserving peace and prosperity for all South Africans” (Anguiano 2018: 01). These words articulate the Archbishop’s “concern for others’ suffering”. His compassion is not limited only to the South Africans who suffer under the apartheid regime, but also to those who enforce it and have the power to stop the suffering (Lipari 2014: 179).

In the interview, Ratele argues that this compassion preceding understanding response is an engagement of love. He explains that when we think of “love” as not only a personal, but a social and political force – in the way that Archbishop Desmond Tutu did – it has the potential to create a caring society.

When I am thinking about love, I am putting it at the centre as both the subjective and personal as well as social in the political sense. It means that you can create a caring society. And to get to that you have to hear what the individuals you are talking to are saying about the stuff that hurts them and the fears that they have without psychologising it. So how do we do this. We arrange. We support each other to get to be a little bit more attentive and understanding and caring of each other (Ratele Interview 2023).

To Ratele, to love in the social sense is to “hear what the individuals you are talking to are saying about the stuff that hurts them... without psychologising it”. Essentially this process of love requires one firstly to listen to suffering as a response, and secondly, to listen openly without insisting on imposing meaning on it. When we psychologise what we hear, we do the work of insisting on understanding, which is to “create a wall around possibility and limit the living creativity of our learning and being” (Lipari 2014: 139). Insisting on understanding, as argued in the theoretical framework, limits the listener’s ability to hear anything outside of the schemas, and categories within ones conceptual frameworks. On the contrary, Ratele’s call to “listen without psychologising” (Ratele Interview 2023) can be seen as a call to embrace misunderstanding and therefore conviviality. Conviviality, which “is the recognition

and provision for the fact or reality of being incomplete” does the work of encouraging the listener to become aware of their own incompleteness and allow for that reality to make them “openminded and open-ended” in the way they engage with identity, being and belonging (Nyamnjoh 2017: 10). The love that Ratele describes is social in nature, and as illustrated in the Archbishop’s letter, is open to engaging with the radical other. Ratele’s idea of a social love through listening “without psychologising” is akin to Lipari’s concept of listening otherwise because it asks that we “preserve our sense of vulnerability of all beings, of the sense that everyone suffers without insisting that our sense of the other be rationally comprehensible or even imaginable to us” (Lipari 2014: 184).

A return to Ratele’s engagement with the Archbishop’s letter can further explain how the love he describes forms an appropriate moral response within a society in struggle. Ratele says that “the struggle is not just a structural one in the way we are talking about it, but it is a moral struggle” (Ratele Interview 2023). Ratele argues that an appropriate response “if the struggle is a moral activity” would be to “strengthen the spirit”, which he believes is a strengthening of the love. Here he is talking about love and the actions of love as a means to an end. To Ratele, the practice of love is how we can begin to build a caring society (Ratele Interview 2023).

As highlighted in the explanations above, Ratele shows that love is a moral action that can lead to a caring society in two ways. Firstly, by emphasising love as being the centre, of the self and the social, Ratele highlights the convivial nature of love towards a caring society and shows that a love for the self (personal) is “incomplete” without a social love which is a love of the other – the radically strange. Secondly, Ratele shows that love as listening forms an integral part of engagement in a caring society. Through the process of listening to what others “are saying about stuff that hurts them... without psychologising it” (Ratele Interview 2023) one practices care by listening outside of the “schemas, categories and the dualistic thinking of the conceptual mind” (Lipari 2014: 183). Here the process of listening is not restricted to understanding the other. Love as understood by Ratele, therefore, serves as an appropriate moral response, to a society in struggle if the intention is to transform that society into a caring society.

Care ethics and listening to build a caring society

In her paper titled “The language of care ethics” Nel Noddings does the work of explaining the caring relations between carer and the cared-for in accordance with care ethics. According

to Noddings (2012), care ethics begins its thinking in relation and is premised around the attentiveness of the carer to the needs of the cared for. Noddings writes:

In an encounter, the carer is attentive; she or he listens and is receptive to the needs of the cared for. (For convenience, in what follows, I will refer to the carer as “she” and the cared for as “he”). Typically, on detecting an expressed need, the carer “feels with” the cared-for and experiences motivational displacement; that is the motive energy is directed temporarily away from her own projects and towards those of the cared-for. Then she must think what to do. She must respond. She responds positively to the need if she has the resources to do so and if doing so will not hurt others in the web of care (2012: 53).

Understood through the perspective of Noddings (2012) care ethics, both examples from Lipari (2014) and Ratele’s interview serve as interesting examples to highlight how compassion, love, and listening allow for something radical and unimaginable to emerge – even from a place of suffering. In the examples, Buddhist monk Thich Nhat Hanh and Archbishop Desmond Tutu symbolise the carers, and Bin Laden and BJ Vorster symbolise the cared-for. In the act, the carers believe that creating space to listen to and “feel with” the cared-for is the best “response” to the needs of the cared-for. Drawing on an “ethical caring” framework both carers respond from a perspective that asks, “what would we do if we were at our caring best or if this other were not so difficult” (Noddings 2012: 54).

What is remarkable about both instances of caring is that the “motivational displacement” that results from the act of care does not deter the carers from caring. Here compassion precedes understanding and both carers are interested in creating space to engage with “what the cared-for is going through” (Noddings 2012: 54). The receptive attention of the carers allows them to “put aside [their] own projects and listen” (Noddings 2012: 54). Through these examples, we see what is possible when care and listening is not reserved only for the deserving few.

From Lipari’s (2014) perspective, the care process highlighted by Noddings (2012) relies on the “motivational displacement” to fully engage with alterity and host the other. Motivational displacement, which is the motive energy [being] directed away from [the carer’s] own projects and towards those of the cared-for” (Noddings 2012: 153) allows the carer to remove themselves enough to be able to bear witness and listen “without objectification or appropriation, but with a kind of awareness that makes space for the unthinkable, the unimaginable; the other” (Lipari 2014: 186). When the motive energy is directed away from the carer’s own projects and to that of the cared-for, the carer renounces “conviction” and

“certainty” and they allow themselves to truly listen – to listen otherwise. Lipari (2014) writes:

When we bear witness and listen otherwise, we listen from a space of unknowing, loss of control, loss of ideas, and concepts; an opening to what is, not shrinking away, being there. And it is from this place that the ethical response emerges. Bearing witness gives rise to a listening without resorting to what is easy, what I already know, or what we have in common (p. 187).

Listening otherwise as an ethical response, therefore, lends itself to the process of building the caring society envisioned by Ratele. Ratele’s idea of a caring society starts with love but is characterised by listening (Ratele Interview, 2023). The way that we listen, whether “monological” (Dobson 2014: 67), “cataphatic” (Waks 2007) or “otherwise” (Lipari, 2014), can determine whether the listening response is an ethical response or not. If the caring society is built on listening otherwise, carers can rest assured that they “listen for, and make space for the difficult, the different, and the radically strange” and not only limit that care to those who resemble the carer or the typically cared-for (Lipari 2014: 187).

Although compassion, love and listening serve as great foundations of a caring society, these approaches alone cannot reshape the violent and patriarchal habitus that exists in South Africa. On-the-ground and interpersonal efforts should be made alongside the pursuit of a caring society to begin to shed the dangerous and violent habitus that normalises gender-based violence in South Africa.

Understanding the role of play and trust in a caring society

In the interview Ratele expanded on the concept of love towards a caring society. According to him, playing, physical touch and public trust are important processes of expressing love in a caring society.

This thing of love must be, in my calculation, playful. We must laugh together. We must run around. You know all of that. Because violence is the antithesis of play. That’s exactly the point. Play is the antidote to violence (Ratele Interview 2023).

Here Ratele highlights the role of social play and asserts that it is the “antithesis of violence”. Although it is not immediately clear how play can be the antithesis of violence, research and scholarship shows that “play” performs a number of functions for social relationships. Baxter

(1992) highlights six functions of play, that can provide useful insight to the kind of “play” that Ratele highlights in the interview. Baxter (1992: 337) writes:

First, play is thought to be an index of intimacy, constituting evidence to the parties that their relationship is one of synchrony, closeness, and intimacy (Bendix, 1987; Betcher, 1981, 1988; Oring, 1984). Second, play is posited to function as a successful moderator of conflict and tensions, allowing the relationship parties to manage sensitive or conflictual issues without fear of jeopardizing the underlying relational stability (Bendix, 1987; Betcher, 1981, 1988). Third, play is hypothesized as a “low risk” or safe communication strategy that allows parties to undertake a variety of actions that might otherwise prove embarrassing to the parties, such as playfully declaring one’s emotional attachment to the other in order to test for reciprocated emotions (Betcher, 1981, 1988). Fourth, play is viewed as a creative outlet for individual expression, allowing parties to celebrate their individual qualities while simultaneously embedded in an interdependent relationship (Betcher, 1981, 1988). Fifth, play is thought to enhance communication between relational partners, providing them with a richer repertoire by which to construct meaning (Betcher, 1981, 1988). Finally play is thought to promote relational intimacy in addition to merely representing it (Betcher, 1981, 1988).

Here Baxter (1992) highlights that play has the ability to both represent and promote relational intimacy, moderate conflict and tensions, safely communicate feelings of care and vulnerability, facilitate individual creative expression, and enhance communication between relational partners. These functions of play lend themselves neatly to Ratele’s idea in that they view play as a process that stimulates positive engagement and care towards a relational other. Betcher’s (1998) second and third functions of play, which involve conflict management and ‘safe’ communication, illustrate how play is the antithesis of violence by prioritising a caring engagement over a conflictual one. Ratele, however also shares a personal anecdote that highlights the relational constraints that has an impact on people’s ability to play and relate to others through a process of playing.

I had a conversation with a close friend of mine a long time ago about men and women playing. And she said, “Kopano, I don’t want to play with men.” And I said okay, but what do you mean? She said, “Men would say that they are playing when they are twisting your arm. And they would hurt you. Men don’t know how to play.” Let me just say this – if black woman and black men don’t play then we are really gone. We are finished. A society that doesn’t play cannot become a caring society. If kids can’t play or at some point, they are made to forget what play does; if I have a friend and I can touch her face and she can’t touch my face in a playful way or just touch my arm, we are in trouble. It’s such a basic thing but, women don’t – and find that they can’t trust men to know the difference between playing and hurting each other (Ratele Interview 2023).

Ratele's experience highlights two concerns that arise with regards to playing and physical touch in the South African context. Firstly, although trust forms an integral part of physical engagement between men and women, women don't trust men to know how to touch them without hurting them. And secondly, the lack of trust between women and men extends past the relational sphere into public space and society in general. Ratele's assertion that "a society that does not play cannot become a caring society" (Ratele Interview 2023) indicates how the role of play forms an integral part of the relational engagements, like intimacy and communication, which move away from violence to care and listening to the other.

Trust, as highlighted by Ratele's anecdote, forms an integral part of the process of play. Bekoff (2001) explains the element of trust during the process of play by highlighting that mammals engage in social play "by seeking out play and expressing joy as they run about and wrestle, chase, and bite others" (p. 03). The engagement in social play relies on "action patterns that are also used in other contexts such as predatory behaviour, anti-predatory behaviour, and mating" (Bekoff 2001: 03). So, trust becomes an important marker to ensure that playing, which can include wrestling, chasing and, biting, is removed from reality and severed from life's serious aims. Bekoff explains that there may be a chance of the behaviour patterns of play being misinterpreted and to ensure that this does not take place "individuals need to tell other 'I want to play', 'this is still play, no matter what I am going to do to you', or 'this is play regardless of what I just did to you' (Bekoff 2001: 03). This process entails an "innocence" and "ingeniousness" that facilitates an engagement where "individuals must cooperate with one another" and "negotiate agreements to play" (Bekoff 1995; Bekoff 2001: 03). To Bekoff (2001), "playtime is generally safe time – transgressions and mistakes are often forgiven, and apologies are accepted by others" (p. 04).

Ratele's anecdote indicates that women don't agree with the sentiment that "playtime is generally safe time" Bekoff (2001: 04). Ratele's friend's response, that "men would say that they are playing when they are twisting your arm" shows a lack of co-operation and negotiation in the agreements of the social play between her and the men she attempts to play with. So much so that the woman in the anecdote believes that the men attempting to play with her have a completely distorted idea of what it is to play – with her. She asserts that men don't know how to play and for that reason she does not want to play with them. Here we see how a lack of trust hinders the woman's desire to participate in the social play engagement with men as relational others. We also see how the lack of trust has an impact on the ability of the relational partners to promote relational intimacy, moderate conflict and tensions, safely

communicate feelings of care and vulnerability and enhance communication through the process of play. This is an indication of a “finished” society (Ratele Interview 2023).

In his book, *The play of man: Teasing and love-play*, Karl Groos highlights two elements of the psychological criteria that are regarded as essential to the process of play. The first element is play’s pleasurableness, and the second element is “the actual severance from life’s serious aims” (Groos 1976: 121). These elements, particularly the second one, can help to provide insight into the challenges of play, highlighted in Ratele’s anecdote. From the anecdote and considering South Africa’s context of violence and prevalence of gender-based violence, one can assume that safety is a major concern for Ratele’s friend. Safety, therefore, constitutes one of her “life’s serious aims” (Groos 1976: 121). If she cannot trust that the “play time” is “safe time” then she cannot psychologically meet the criteria of play or allow herself to perceive “transgressions and mistakes” (Bekoff 2001: 04) as part of the play. Her ability to play and feel safe, is therefore hindered by the context and history of violence against women in South Africa.

Historical boundaries, play and imagination in South Africa

Ratele, who is aware of the conflict faced by many women in South Africa, believes that the inability of South Africans to play is a product of the country’s history of oppression. He argues that playing and the ability to play has been a casualty of the history of violence in South Africa.

We are here because of our history. A history that refuses play. Play is about crossing boundaries knowing that it is safe to do so. That’s play. Play is inventing something that is not there. I mean children are great at that. Play is about imagination. So, if you don’t have all of that – and our history is a refusal of the imagination, of inventiveness, of crossing boundaries. So, there’s a history of constrain, of control, of domination, of refusal for inventiveness and it’s in the law. It’s in the way that spaces are arranged. So, by saying ‘you can’t play here’, you have already limited play. You can’t walk here; you can’t build a house here. So, all of that is a refusal of freedom. A refusal of a playful life for people who naturally – even without realising it – are playing. So, you are creating this society of buffers. That you can play – but you can only play here. And you can only play this way. And so, in that moment you are really limiting our society. The moment that you do that with any group, you are changing its natural direction of development. This is where we are. So, when we say colonialism and apartheid, we mean that you are doing social engineering. And the effects of it is what we have right now (Ratele Interview 2023).

Here Ratele argues that the structure of South Africa's history, including the system of apartheid and colonialism before that, have both limited and changed the country's "natural development". According to Ratele, this history "is a refusal of the imagination, of inventiveness" and "of crossing boundaries". He explains that this has had a direct impact on the ability of South Africans to play with – and essentially trust – each other (Ratele Interview 2023).

What Ratele highlights about play can be related to a previous section of this thesis. In Chapter 1, there is a section that explores the physical and mental boundaries that shape present day interactions and engagements of South Africans. The "boundaries" that Ratele refers to, for example, relate to the spatial and social control that the apartheid government had over the "black underclass" (Maylam 1995: 29). Maylam explains that this control extended beyond housing, towards with whom the "black underclass" associated and engaged as well as the kind of activities in which they were legally allowed to participate (1995: 29). To Ratele, this control created boundaries of what people thought playing was, who they imagined themselves playing with and where they were to play, if they were to play at all.

Added to this is patriarchal ideology, which Reuther (1983) describes as the "whole structure of father-ruled society: aristocracy over serfs, masters over slaves, kings over subjects, racial overlords over colonised people" (p. 61). This ideology has had a great impact on the relationship between South African men and women and how relational intimacy, conflict, and tensions are articulated within these relationships. Reflecting on boundaries, Moffet (2006), for example, explains that there are men who "believe that by resorting to sexual violence, they are participating in a socially approved project to keep women within certain boundaries and categories" (p.140). Play cannot coexist with such control and domination because the parties involved in the social play are not afforded equal opportunity to "negotiate [the] agreements to play" (Bekoff 2001: 04).

This further explains Ratele's friend's response to the idea of playing with men. She is aware of the boundaries articulated by patriarchy and how hurting women's bodies has historically been linked to controlling behaviours aimed at limiting women's autonomy. To agree to play with men and sever herself "from life's serious aim" of safety, Ratele's friend would need assurance that she can trust the person she is playing with. Building trust, therefore, forms an integral part of working towards a caring society.

How can we build trust where there is so much violence?

To build trust in a violent society is a difficult process – especially if the violence is used “as a way of reinforcing hierarchies or maintaining gender protocols” (Storkey 2015: 175).

Although playing has so much potential in a society like South Africa – it cannot exist without the guarantee that the process is safe for all those involved. Having discussed Ratele’s first concern with regards to playing and physical touch in the South African context, a closer look at the second concern can provide insight into how trust affects men and women’s relational and social play capabilities. The concern, highlighted previously, is that the lack of trust between men and women extends past the intimate relational sphere and into public spaces in society. According to Ratele, our ability to trust and to trust in public spaces directly affects our ability to practice love towards a caring society (Ratele Interview, 2023).

Here is a simple example that you might know that shows us how public trust is shaped. So Uyinene Mrwetyana goes to a post office. It’s a public place. And it’s an ordinary day. You could just imagine in any other situation you are just walking in there and somebody says come back later. So, you trust them, and you come back later. And they violate and they kill you. So, trust of public places and public trust becomes part of this thing of love and a caring society. And in that moment when an incident between two people happens, it means all the women get scared, and begin not to trust public spaces (Ratele Interview, 2023).

Here Ratele is referring to one of South Africa’s femicide mega cases where South African student Uyinene Mrwetyana was raped and murdered at a post office by one of its employees (Buiten & Naidoo 2020). This example highlights the difficulties South African women may have trusting strangers and public spaces. Mrwetyana was raped, strangled, and bludgeoned to death after attempting to pick up a parcel at the post office. Her murderer, Luyanda Botha, told her that the package was not ready and to return later in the day to retrieve it (Adebayo 2019). Trusting him, Mrwetyana returned after the post office was closed and Botha proceeded to lock her in, violate and kill her. He later drove her body to a field, doused it in petrol and set it alight (Adebayo 2019).

Ratele explains how cases like this one lead to public distrust by saying “when an incident between two people happens, it means all the women get scared” (Ratele Interview 2023). The Mrwetyana case became a major news story and received a great deal of media attention, including her funeral being televised and the formation of the #AmINext Movement. Similar to the mega cases highlighted in Chapter 4 of this thesis, Mrwetyana’s case and the media representations of it, shaped and informed South Africa’s “collective emotional orientation to

fear” (Gqola 2021) so much so that her death “sparked a movement” in which “women took to the streets asking, ‘Am I Next?’” (Adebayo 2019).

The fear that Ratele refers to in the interview falls neatly into what Gqola (2015; 2021) calls the female fear factory. As explained in the theoretical framework, this factory acts as an effective reminder that women “are not safe and their bodies are not entirely theirs” (Gqola 2015: 79). Rape, and in this case murder too, acts as an exercise of power that achieves multiple goals. Firstly, Botha’s violation “communicates that [he] has power over the woman who is the target of his attention” and secondly as Ratele highlights, the rape and murder teaches “women who witness it about their vulnerability either through reminding them of their own previous fear” or showing the women that they could be next (Gqola 2015: 19).

While love, care, play and trust might be possible to work towards conceptually, there are serious safety concerns for women with regards to their participation in the pursuit of a caring society. Besides the structural boundaries created through a violent history of constraint and domination there are real physical, life-threatening patriarchal schemas and categories that we need to overcome before we can expect women to trust, play and participate in the kind of caring and listening articulated in this chapter. Listening otherwise may be the place to start, if we are to work towards a society that has people who can love and play with and trust one another. What this holistic listening method offers is an extending of an ear and an open mind so that even those who have learned only to be violent when engaging with women can reimagine themselves outside of those dangerous and limiting categories.

The following section engages with the concept of restorative justice to see if there are lessons to learn from it in building a care society with the capacity to afford women the space to trust, play and participate without the fear of violation and death.

Rebuilding trust through dialogue: The restorative justice approach

In her interview Professor Catriona MacLeod speaks about the work done by the Rhodes University Sexual Violence Task Team (is further elaborated on in Chapter 7) and introduces the concept of restorative justice as a means and strategy to deal with rape and sexual violence on university campuses.

You have got to provide a variety of avenues for people in terms of justice. [In the task team report] we spoke about a different form of justice which is called Restorative Justice. Basically, what that focuses on, and we see here why listening is so important, is what the complainant wants out of the process. So, we ask, what do they want? And we are very clear that it has to be complainant

centred. Because they know what they need in that space you don't know for them. And this is for me, one of the big arguments that we've had in the university because a lot of people here say, "no, no rape is a terrible crime, and you must have the full force of the law come and bear upon them". Which is fine, some people may want that, but others don't. Others are not in the space where they want that kind of strong arm or even feel they can go through that kind of process. What some want is a restorative justice process (MacLeod Interview 2023)

Here MacLeod highlights that there are more options for justice than those that fall under a punitive ideology. As Gouws highlights, in Chapter 4 of this thesis, the idea that "rape is a terrible crime" that should be punished "by the full force of the law" (MacLeod Interview 2023) forms part of a "discourse of incarceration" (Gouws 2016: 409) which provides very limited options for justice and dealing with violence (Gouws Interview 2023). In a similar vein, MacLeod argues that those intervening in such matters need to "provide a variety of avenues" for justice. The complainant-centred avenue for justice that MacLeod offers is particularly effective in cases where the victim does not have the capacity to pursue a drawn-out legal battle. MacLeod further explains how this process engages the perpetrator and provides space for them to talk and reflect on the harm they have caused.

Through restorative justice, the perpetrator has to acknowledge that they have caused harm and acknowledge how they have caused harm. In the process they apologise and speak through how they are going to do things differently now that they know that they have caused harm. They must express what it means now that they understand this harm, and there has got to be some kind of recompense. So, there's a whole process. It's a fairly complicated process of setting up a meeting between the perpetrator and the survivor and it has got to be very carefully facilitated (MacLeod Interview 2023).

The process that MacLeod describes "offers an alternative framework in which the owners of the conflict themselves, the offenders, victims and communities are empowered to resolve their own conflict" (Mawhinney 2015: 23). As MacLeod explains, restorative justice facilitates a process where "offenders are encouraged to accept accountability for the harm they caused... show remorse and offer an apology" (Mawhinney 2015: 24). Unlike the punitive retributive justice, which "emphasises punishment as a means of righting wrongs" restorative justice is a "dialogical triad between the victim, offender and the community, all of whom 'own' the conflict" (Mawhinney 2015: 23). The restorative justice approach has been used in the South African context by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission in an attempt to reconcile with apartheid's many violations. Understanding its successes and

shortcomings may be useful when engaging with the aftermath of rape and gender-based violence and trying to find ways to heal individually and collectively.

In the restorative justice process, dialogue and community engagement are critical resources for engagement and healing. Mawhinney (2015) argues that it is through dialogue that the complainant and the perpetrator of violence “are given a voice to express their views and emotions and together with the community, establish a shared understanding of the harm the offence has done and the values its violated” (p. 24). Listening, as MacLeod initially explains, is incredibly important. Delving further into the role of community in restorative justice, Mawhinney writes:

The precise role of the community will vary, but it is clear that communities need a mechanism to recover from the psychological injury caused by the conflict; “that mechanism involves rituals of forgiveness and release from anger”. Community involvement is a critical pillar of the restorative justice triad because empowering local communities to respond to their own conflicts and meet the needs of the offender and victim to heal the psychological injury and anger created by the conflict helps nurture responsible stewardship of conflict resolution processes (2015: 24).

By emphasising the community elements of restorative justice, Mawhinney (2015) illustrates how issues that arise from violence where there is a clear perpetrator and victim are not individual conflicts. These are conflicts that destroy community psychology and community values, and it is important that the community is one of the voices that are prioritised when the restorative justice is taking place.

Restorative justice therefore lends itself neatly to the practices and values associated with a caring society and listening otherwise. Similar to the care ethics introduced by Noddings (2012), the restorative justice process promotes listening, where all the parties involved are “receptive to the needs” of those being cared for (p. 53). In the process, the community is included to shape the direction of the “emotional displacement” (Noddings 2012: 53) so that all the participants determine their response in relation to needs of the complainant and perpetrator and the collective need to “heal the psychological injury” (Mawhinney 2015: 24). Here, if the private and public trust is broken, the process encourages dialogical reflection and listening, to understand the actions that lead to the conflict and how the trust can be restored. A punitive resolution, although potentially causing the perpetrator to rot in jail, may not involve a process of listening, considering the other, rebuilding trust or healing the individual and communal injury.

In the interview, MacLeod shared an anecdote about a restorative justice proceeding that her colleague facilitated. Her anecdote highlights the importance of dialogue, listening and reflection in cases of sexual violence and rape, where perpetrators have not come to terms with the harm they have caused.

There is one example of a student who asked for the restorative justice process. It was before [this kind of process] was a formalised methodology at the University. A colleague of mine facilitated the process and the complainant put together a statement around her understanding of the incident. And what the perpetrator thought was that they just had a good time. During the process the complainant did not want to read her statement out loud. So, the colleague who was facilitating this said, “she’s not in the space to read it, but she has written it out and I will read it to you”. And he said it was absolutely remarkable how as he read out, you could just see person’s [accused] face change. His face changed to show a realisation of what he did. He hadn’t been seeing it in that way but as he heard her testimony, he completely changed his whole psyche. He was like, “did I rape this person?” (MacLeod Interview 2023).

The example shared by MacLeod points to the nature of restorative justice’s process and its ability to empower voice in people who have experienced sexual violence or rape. MacLeod’s final remark shows that the perpetrator was provided with an opportunity to listen to the story from the perspective of the person he violated. This illustrates how the process has created a “space” for the voice of the person who has been harmed “to be heard clearly and treated seriously” (Hudson 1998; Goodmark 2018: 375). Through her statement, the complainant’s voice is centralised and her lived experience “shapes the restorative conversation by defining the harm and the needs that arise from that harm” (Goodmark 2018: 375). The perpetrator, who has never seen the events from the perspective of the complainant, is given an opportunity to listen. He is placed in a position where he can listen outside of the “categories and schemas” (Lipari 2014: 98) that fit “neatly into his understanding” (Trenor 2006: 03). If he was understanding the sexual engagement through patriarchal habitus, the categories of rape myths or any other schema that render rape invisible, the restorative process would have given him the opportunity to listen otherwise. He is given a chance to consider the other as an ‘other’ and not impose his own meaning to the experience of her sexual assault. The question “did I rape this person”, arises from a reflective process that may not have taken place if this had been a retributive justice or punitive process.

MacLeod emphasises how the listening and dialogue of restorative justice create space for an engagement that is not adversarial in nature and provides options for people to engage with

their experience of violation even if they do not have sufficient evidence to prove that it has taken place.

[The complainant] said look I don't want to go through a whole case where it becomes like he-said-she-said. Because retributive justice is adversarial; so, you're there and I am here, and we are fighting for our position to be the position on this. Whereas restorative justice is about dialogue and it's about getting to a space where the perpetrator just says "I understand what I did, and I understand that this is wrong and I'm very sorry that this was done" ... Restorative justice is about taking it away from adversarial engagement and creating a space where people who do not wish to – or who do not have the evidence to go to court – can have an alternative space. A space in which there can be some form of justice and in which, if they wish to have it, they can have a perpetrator listening to their version of events and understanding what's happening. That's a different kind of listening (MacLeod Interview 2023).

Retributive justice, which “emphasizes punishment as a means of righting wrongs” (Mawhinney 2015: 23), may not be an option for everyone who experiences gender-based violence, rape or sexual assault. MacLeod's example highlights the potential of pursuing other forms of justice and prioritising listening, complainant centring, and dialogue in the process of engaging with gender-based violence, rape and sexual assault. The community involvement aspect of restorative justice illustrates the potential for this process to aid entire communities when dealing with issues of gender-based violence, femicide and assault. These processes, alongside the development of a caring society, require the creation of space to apply thought, critical engagement and facilitate listening with the potential to build trust and healing. The chapters that follow explore space, and the critical facilitation of spaces that are conducive to listening in order to begin to understand conceptually how to build a caring society in the South African context.

The ethics of listening in journalism practice

In chapter five, the idea of an ethics of listening as a normative framework for journalism was explored. Journalists reporting on gender-based violence, femicide and issues surrounding it are encouraged to consider listening otherwise as a normative framework in order to help their audiences, the public and themselves move away from viewing each gender-based violence story as an isolated event. A move away from cataphatic listening would allow the journalists to contextualise each story with information about gender norms and prevalent cultures of violence that lead to and normalise violence against women in South Africa. This section also argued that the process of listening otherwise in journalism means consulting

with experts to get a deeper story within the story. This process is one that humanises and dignifies victims and survivors of gender-based violence regardless of their social standing.

It is also important to understand that journalists practicing this ethics of listening are engaging in an ethical consideration of the other. In their work, *Listening and the ambiguities of voice in South African journalism*, Garman and Malila (2017: 03) write:

Active listening for journalists would move beyond simply representing a community of people or acting as the “voice of the voiceless”, but instead providing a space where a community can speak out and receive attention... The media can “open up as space where we can hear others with whom we may on something profoundly disagree but with whom we may share at least a commitment to the greater value... of living together” (Couldry 2006: 140). It is an acknowledgment of the “other” and a willingness to stop speaking only in terms we ourselves prefer and know best in order to open up a space where we can hear others.

The media and journalists have the power to create the space for unpacking and exploring historical relationships and the boundaries they have imposed and rebuilding trust through dialogue. Garman and Malila (2017) refer to that space, and highlight that, through listening, journalists can go beyond the process of representing other voices to create a platform for those voices to emerge as they are and as the “other”. Here the process of listening is also a process of creating space for other and othered voices to emerge. What this means practically is that journalists would be creating a continuous space within the news agenda to engage on the topic of gender-based violence in South Africa. It means consulting with activists, survivors, experts and the various people who have something to say about gender, gender-based violence and South Africa’s histories of oppression and violence. It means listening to these others and “listening to their stories – their narratives about their everyday lives, their struggles but also their victories, their pain but also their pleasures” (Wasserman 2013: 78). Wasserman (2013: 79) writes

Listening as an ethical imperative for journalists is a... radical project. It entails a subversion of the very foundational assumptions about journalists as “gatekeepers” by turning them into “gate openers” who decentralise the power structure inherent in media production and involve news subjects as equal partners in the production process. For the media, this would entail a significant departure from the professional ideology of control and dissemination of information into a much more interactive, reciprocal relationship with citizens.

In embracing an ethics of listening, the media and journalists share the power with citizens and all those with a voice and a stake in the fight against gender-based violence. This process

is done with the intention of giving attention to the stories of people who “might otherwise not be heard because they find themselves too often in the shadows of the public sphere” (Wasserman 2013: 80). This process would then begin the process of the ethical consideration of the “other” through journalism and media representation. To continue the process, journalism and media practitioners would need to relinquish control, be prepared to have their assumptions challenged, accept that what emerges may be more complex and incomprehensible than initially imagined, and that they may play a role in the problems they seek to understand (Wasserman 2013). It is not an easy endeavour, but one that journalists and media practitioners should consider pursuing if they are to afford the “other” their human dignity.

Chapter 7: Space and listening

Introduction

Interviews conducted in the research indicated that the concept of space was an important factor in the process of listening to and engaging with gender-based violence in South Africa. Multiple interviewees engaged with space as a “polemical place where a wrong can be addressed and equality can be demonstrated” (Dikeç 2011: 171). Further initial, focused and thematic coding revealed that the concepts, “creating space”, “misusing space”, and “solidarity space”, were important concepts to consider when thinking about listening and gender-based violence. These concepts were further coded to yield three arguments about space and its ability to host listening.

Firstly, that the physical make-up of a space, for example the set-up of a room, has the capacity to communicate who is empowered, disempowered, and safe or unsafe within that space. Physical space, according to this argument, communicates power and can reinforce the social relations that determine “which voices are undervalued and ignored” (Dreher 2009: 445).

Secondly, there are already spaces geared towards listening to gender-based violence in South Africa but these spaces do not provide enough time and resources to cater to the many needs of South Africans dealing with gender-based violence. These spaces are usually taken over by participants needing to disclose their experience of gender-based violence, leaving the multitude of goals of the space unfulfilled. According to this argument, instead of facilitating a process of listening towards multiple achievable outcomes, these spaces “are not big enough” and end up only prioritising certain voices to facilitate a partial listening process.

And thirdly, there are spaces that act as “ideological spaces of solidarity”. These solidarity spaces have the potential to be harnessed towards bearing witness and listening otherwise. According to this argument spaces that have been created with the intention of responding to the social needs of those who have experienced gender-based violence, including protest spaces, crisis lines, and think spaces, can also function to host disclosure and fulfil the need of bearing witness. Understanding how these spaces operate can provide insight into how to better listen, facilitate disclosure and respond to gender-based violence on a national scale.

The production of spaces that can host listening

As mentioned in the theoretical framework of this thesis, listening otherwise requires one to suspend the habitus and to “listen beyond the schemas, categories, and dualistic thinking of the conceptual mind” (Lipari 2014: 98). Lipari (2014) suggests that to begin this process, the person attempting to listen would have to listen “from a space of emptiness and unknowing” (Lipari 2014: 98). A central question that arises from this suggestion is – can such a space “of emptiness and unknowing” exist organically or be created? And, more importantly, how would one begin to make way for such a space?

The understanding of space, therefore, plays an important role in the process of understanding how to listen otherwise. Massey (2009) proposes three characteristics to conceptualise space. Firstly, that space is the product of relations, which also includes the absence of relations. An important consideration of this characteristic is that space is a product. Space is “produced through the establishment or refusal of relations” (Massey 2009: 17). Space is therefore social in its very nature “where social is taken to mean more than the individual, rather than simply human” (Hinchliffe 2007; Massey 2009: 17). The second characteristic that Massey (2009) proposes is that space and multiplicity are mutually constitutive. This means that there could be no space as a dimension without multiplicity and no multiplicity without space as a dimension. Multiplicity here, is thought of in the sense of the “coexistence of more than one thing” (Massey 2009: 17). The third proposition is that “space is always in the process of being made” (Massey 2009: 17). Massey argues that relations are always in the process of being “made, or unmade, or remade” and therefore the production of space is a social and political task (Massey 2009: 17).

Massey’s (2009) three characteristics conceptualise space as a dimension that can engage in the social and political because it is alive and temporally subject to change. Massey writes:

This particular conceptualisation [forces] on to the agenda certain political questions. If time is the dimension of succession and change, space is the dimension of contemporaneous multiplicity. For that reason... it is the dimension that poses to us the most fundamental of social political questions: How are we going to live together? It is space as a dimension that offers up the challenge, the pleasure, and the responsibility of existences of others, and our relationship to them (2009: 18).

Understanding the qualities of space and the production of space surrounding gender-based violence plays an integral role in understanding how this space can be “made, or unmade, or

remade” (Massey 2009: 17) into a space that is more caring, convivial (Nyamnjoh 2017) or receptive to listening otherwise.

Physical spaces matter: Exploring space, power and empowerment

Space is critical to the ways in which security is perceived (Henry & Higate 2009). Pain (1997) explains how temporal and spatial dimensions can shape perceptions of insecurity. The change from day to night, for example, can result in “changes in feelings of security” because of the “significance of darkness as a cue for danger” (p. 238). Valentine (1989), argues that gender inequality is responsible for the spatiality of women’s fear of violent crime, and explains that there is a spatial expression of patriarchy which results in women feeling more afraid in particular environments (Valentine 1989; Pain 1997: 231). What follows from the fear is the reproduction of “traditional notions about women’s roles in the spaces which are considered appropriate for them to use” (Pain 1997: 231). Gqola’s (2015; 2021) conception of the *Female fear factory* provides a similar explanation of how gendered violence, in private and public spaces, manufactures, normalises, and sustains female fear in the South African context.

Contrary to South Africa’s legislation, which promotes women’s empowerment, the actions and discourses taking place in intimate, private and public spaces in the country communicate that women are not empowered or safe in the streets or their homes (Gqola 2015). “Truly empowered” women, Gqola argues, are not consistently nursing the “haunting fear of rape, sexual harassment, smash and grabs, and other violent intrusions in their spaces, bodies and psyches” (Gqola 2015: 65). Gqola writes:

We know that today women do not feel safe in the streets and homes of South Africa, that women’s bodies are seen as accessible for consumption, touching, raping, kidnapping, commenting on, grabbing, twisting, beating, burning, maiming – and control; that women are denied the very freedom that the constitution protects. And the problem is often made into women’s responsibility (2015: 73).

Valentine (1990) explains that one of the coping strategies of women’s fear of violent crimes is that they use cumulative first- and second-hand information sources and develop mental images of where violence occurs, to avoid it (p. 289). “Women’s collective definition and avoidance of these contexts therefore creates social norms about women’s appropriate use of

space” and turns safety matters into a women’s responsibility (Valentine 1990: 289; Gqola 2015).

The South African police, for example, turn safety matters into a women’s responsibility by encouraging women to stay vigilant, to avoid travelling alone and to dress conservatively when using private and public transport. Gqola (2015) explains that not only do these warnings not work, but they are also dangerous because they “communicate unequivocally that South African public spaces do not belong to the women who live in [the] country” (p. 74). Gqola (2015) believes that the warnings falsely communicate that women can be safe, if they make themselves seem safe. According to this communication, as a woman, you can be safe if you “stay at home, participate in the cult of femininity, give in to unwanted sexual advances, surrender many choices, [and] make yourself as quiet, small and as invisible as possible” (Gqola 2015: 74).

With regards to space, Soja (1989: 78) argues that “place emerges as a particular form of space that is created through acts of naming as well as the distinctive activities and imaginings associated with particular social spaces” (Henry & Higate 2009: 53). According to this understanding of place, South Africa’s colonial history, apartheid past and deeply patriarchal present has socially transformed the country from a “raw space” into a very dangerous place, particularly for women and vulnerable others. As previously explained, the contemporary space and production of space surrounding gender-based violence in South Africa is shaped by patriarchy. This means that the spaces where patriarchy reigns supreme disempower, violate and silence women and vulnerable others.

Patriarchal spaces, as argued in previous chapters, normalise certain behaviours including cataphatic listening in the face of gender-based violence. Physical space, and the make-up of it, therefore, communicate who is being empowered to live freely and speak out, as well as whether certain voices will be listened to and heard. Interviews conducted as part of the research support this claim and indicate that, even with regards listening, the physical make-up of a dialogical space, for example the set-up of a room, has the ability to communicate who is empowered, disempowered and safe within that space. Thematic analysis of the interviews highlights that the ability to make, or unmake, or remake a space (Massey 2009) conducive to listening requires special attention to and understanding of how the physical space communicates power and reinforces social relations. University spaces, for example, act as interesting case studies to learn from about space because they are a microcosm of

broader society. How power, social relations, and listening operate in South African university spaces may reveal lessons and point to strategies that can be applied to the rest of the country.

Student activism and the remaking of university spaces

Although South African university spaces are expected to be protected spaces, with dedicated security staff and access control (Singh, Mundaly & Singh-Pillay 2015), research has shown that gendered violence is widespread on many university campuses (Graziano 2004; Chetty 2008; Collins et al. 2009; Clowes et al. 2009; De Klerk et al. 2007; Botha et al. 2013; Gouws 2018; MacLeod et al. 2018). This violence curtails and restricts the movements and activities of women and vulnerable others on university campus spaces (Singh et al. 2015). University campuses therefore also exhibit the habitus highlighted by Valentine (1990) and Gqola (2015; 2020) of a spatial expression of patriarchy where women and vulnerable others are less safe and feel more afraid in particular environments. According to Gqola's argument with regards the *Female Fear Factory*, unsafe university spaces communicate that women and vulnerable others do not belong on university campuses (Gqola 2020).

Although there have been sustained reports of gendered violence on university campuses, "the history of sexual violence has rarely been publicly discussed or raised by the South African government" (Pilane 2016; Boshonga & Khuzwayo 2017: 37). Bashonga and Khuzwayo (2017) highlight how student protests such as #RURetentionList and #RapeAtJunction were "instrumental in bringing to the public view the occurrence of sexual violations on campuses and student discontent with management responses and existing policy related to the matter" (p. 37). The protests, however, were met with resistance because they, in their very nature, went against the years long university culture and habitus which undervalued women. Writing about the culture of Rhodes University, for example, De Klerk et al. (2011) explain how the culture of undervaluing women produced a space that was unprepared and unable to engage with incidences of rape and gendered violence outside of a patriarchal habitus. De Klerk et al. (2007) write:

Rape has been responded to differently by various sectors of the university, with students (typically female) consistently complaining about gender inequality, sexism and sexual harassment over the years, and 'official' responses (almost exclusively male) being reactive, resistant, and aiming to preserve the habitus of 100 years, and the culture of machismo, which viewed women as potential conquests, objectified and dehumanised them, perpetuating sexism and gender-

violence and enabling rape, framed within a context of patriarchy, gender role constructions and gender inequalities (p. 116).

The #RURReferencelist and #RapeAtJunction protests against gendered violence have stood out particularly because of their attempt to “unmake” the university spaces shaped by rape culture, patriarchy and oppression and highlight the “spatial expression of patriarchy” (Valentine 1990: 289) on university campuses. These protests follow along the line of and have been linked to other ‘Fallist’ protests at various South African universities (Boshonga & Khuzwayo 2017: 37). The ‘Fallist’ campaigns, which were initiated by UCT’s #RhodesMustFall, could be understood as a “collective project of resistance by the social minority” to highlight “the experiences of racism, classism, and subjugation of ‘invisible’ people” (Bosch 2017; Boshonga & Khuzwayo 2017: 37). As a project to “unmake”, “remake” (Massey 2009: 17) and transform the university space, ‘Fallism’ depicted “young, predominantly black people’s struggles against various forms of colonial, racial and gendered oppression in post-apartheid South Africa” (Boshonga & Khuzwayo 2017: 37). Through the use of hashtag activism and protest, students confronted university cultures of domination and oppression that “made” the space unsafe and uncomfortable for certain students in order to “remake” the space (Massey 2009: 17).

Returning to listening, it becomes clear that the process of listening “from a space of emptiness and unknowing” (Lipari 2014: 98) is a process of shedding the habitus of the gendered power relations embedded in the history and policies of the university space. Various sexual violence task teams, responding to the protests taking place on university campuses, provide valuable examples of how one could begin to stimulate and mediate a process of shedding the habitus and listening in the face of gender-based violence in the South African context.

The Sexual Violence Task Team, set up at Rhodes University, provides a good example of the process of “unmaking” the university dialogical space and “remaking” it into one more conducive to egalitarian communication. This task team fulfilled this process in three ways. Firstly, the task team encouraged a participatory communication process of engagement. Secondly, the task team mediated and redistributed power to stimulate egalitarian dialogical communication. Thirdly the task team carefully constructed their physical spaces to demonstrate listening in the participatory process.

Reshaping the physical space through participatory communication practices

During the #RUPreferencelist protests, where protesters adopted the motto “We will not be silenced”, students from Rhodes University “voiced concerns about how their experiences of sexual violence had not changed significantly” even after 10 years of having the Silent Protest take place on the university campus (MacLeod, Böhmke, Mavuso, Barker & Chiweshe 2018: 86). The #RUPreferencelist referred to a list of the names of 11 alleged rapists who were students at Rhodes University when the list was first published on social media in April 2016 (Gouws 2018). Women students who published the list in protest against the normalisation of gender-based violence and rape culture on campus, highlighted how they had to share public spaces with the perpetrators and the university management was doing nothing to help them feel safe. Gouws writes:

Women students claimed that these men were well-known for their sexual violation of women students, but no action was taken against them. [The men] sat in their classes, walked the streets with them and kept on harassing them... [The protesters] accused the university of trivialising rape by pointing out that it has stronger punishments for plagiarism than rape (2018: 04).

Two of the demands of the protesting students were that the university revise its policies on gender-based violence and appoint a task team to investigate sexual violence in the university (Gouws 2018). During the span of the protest, engagements between the student protestors and management was contentious. Although the students had communicated their violation and listed the alleged perpetrators, the management indicated that they would “only act when the alleged perpetrators were found guilty in a court of law” (Gouws 04: 2018). The protesters also accused the management of victimising them, “walking out of talks about gender-based violence and portraying [the protesters] as hooligans” (Gouws 2018: 04).

Professor MacLeod was tasked by Rhodes University Vice Chancellor Dr Sizwe Mabizela to facilitate the Sexual Violence Task Team following the eruption of the #RUPreferencelist protests. Functioning from April 2016 to December 2016, the task team maintained a stance of participation and transformation (MacLeod et al. 2018), a stance that this research views as aiding the process of “remaking” (Massey 2009) the university space into one more conducive to listening and dialogical participation. In an interview for this research, MacLeod explained how the needs of the protesters guided the Sexual Violence Task Team to prioritise listening from the onset.

When the Vice Chancellor asked me to set up a sexual violence task team my first response was well, it depends on who sets the terms of reference. Because part of what was happening [at the time] is that the protestors were saying that actually the university is not listening. Which is part of what sparked the whole [protest]. And so, to set up a task team that had a terms of reference imposed upon – just didn't seem right. So that's why we set up this participatory process to listen to what people wanted to have as the terms of reference, what they wanted to see this task team actually doing (MacLeod Interview 2023).

In the past, Rhodes University has mobilised task teams and imbizos (discussion forums) in response to student protest (De Klerk et al. 2007; MacLeod et al. 2018). The university's reliance on the setting of task teams as a mode of engagement with discontented students, however, has caused mistrust among protesting students. This is partly because students question the task teams' efficacy as a "method for creating necessary change" and because of how past task team "reports have either not been sufficiently publicised, or recommendations not (visibly) acted upon" (MacLeod et al. 2018: 88). This points to the top-down nature of a university strategy which is out of touch with the student population and their needs. The Sexual Violence Task Team's emphasis on participation at the onset serves as a process of shedding the top-down habitus that has guided and shaped past task teams in the university.

The sexual violence task team landed up being quite an interesting body. Not a body that is usual in the University environment, because usually task teams are set up by senate or management and then their terms of reference are all set by people in authority (MacLeod Interview 2023).

The Sexual Violence Task Team initially set up three meetings where students and staff members from the university could meet and participate in discussions of the terms of reference for the task team. Before these meetings, a small committee of students, deans and management was asked to put together proposed terms of reference for the task team. The proposals were later presented at a general university meeting where the student and staff members could give input and engage with the terms of reference (MacLeod et al. 2018: 86).

After the three meetings were held, a prefinal version of the terms was circulated via email for students and staff members to engage with and comment on (MacLeod et al. 2018).

Participation and egalitarian engagement were encouraged throughout the process of determining the terms of reference for the task team. In the task team's process, participatory communication – aligned with a deliberative democratic theory – emphasised "collective decision-making with the participation of all who [would] be affected by the decision or their representatives" (Elster 1998: 08).

The process encouraged engagement where all the stakeholders in the communication were “free and [had] equal access to the means to express their viewpoints, feelings and experiences” (Bordenave 1994: 43). The habitus of top-down task team establishment, with “a terms of reference imposed upon” (MacLeod Interview 2023) it by authority, was shed to make way for the “redistribution of power” through “ownership and participation in the decision-making process” (Dagron 2009: 460). The task team’s ideological shift in top-down habitus required physical communication to symbolise the redistribution of power. The task team had an awareness of how the physical space of engagement was able to communicate power so the process of demonstrating listening became a tool to alter physical spaces and remake them into more egalitarian ones.

Demonstrating listening in participatory processes

The task team meetings were held in various venues on the university campus. In the interview, MacLeod explained that the task team had to be very careful about the space they set up because the physical set up of a space has the ability to reproduce power relations and communicate “which voices are undervalued and ignored” (Dreher 2009: 445).

One of the ways the team tried to shape the space towards listening was to put up a screen and take down every speaker’s contribution while projecting it back to all those present in the meeting. MacLeod juxtaposes this process with another meeting that took place on campus – where the physical space was not taken into consideration and ultimately proved to be the downfall of the engagement (MacLeod Interview 2023). Without a mediator, the meeting quickly fell apart as the dialogue between the students and management was started on unequal footing.

[The task team meetings were] quite different to the time where the Senate and the students tried to meet. They tried to have the meeting in Barrett lecture theatre and then it had to move to the Great Hall. And it all just disappeared into a complete mess essentially, that particular meeting. Part of the problem with that was the location. So, you have this situation where you go to the Great Hall and there is this stage and then you have the people from management sitting on a stage, elevated above. So that is not dialogical. What I mean is that it does not foster a particular kind of space where listening can happen in an egalitarian type of environment. You can’t just, by changing the shape of the room, disappear all power relations. Of course not, but it does give a message around your attempt to be egalitarian and to be present to listen. Your geographers will tell you space is important. It communicates a lot. And that space was always going to go in a bad direction (MacLeod Interview 2023).

The physical space in this instance communicated that the management group, who sat elevated on a stage overlooking the crowd of protesting students, was more empowered than the students with whom they were in communication. MacLeod's emphasis on the meeting falling apart shows how un conducive the unequal power relations of the two groups attempting to engage in a dialogical process were. MacLeod explains that although she and other members of the Sexual Violence Task Team were present at the meeting between management and the students, they chose not to be on stage as it "did not feel right to have that stage" (MacLeod Interview 2023). The space was so far from egalitarian that even an attempt to mediate the process proved to be futile.

I did at one stage, go up to try and mediate something, but that didn't work. It was a complete disaster that whole meeting (MacLeod Interview 2023).

Here there are clear power differences between the stakeholders and therefore the stakeholders in the process of listening are not treated equally. The rush to find a big enough venue was prioritised over the process of considering how the inherent power dynamics between management and the students could affect the engagement. The stakeholders representing management were given a platform that was physically elevated above the students. They were given chairs and a microphone, and the students seated and standing in the auditorium looking up at the people they are supposed to be in dialogue with. There was no attempt to understand how power and the structure of a space could have an impact on the dialogical process.

MacLeod explains the process of demonstrating listening plays an important role in communicating that each voice and contribution is valued. Where the physical make-up of the space could not be altered to communicate the dialogical ideal, the task team used the process of demonstrating listening to make up for the power differences in three significant ways. Firstly, the task team demonstrated listening by writing everyone's reflections and engagement into a document and secondly, the document was literally reflected back to the audience in real time to ensure that there was clarity and understanding as to what each contributor was saying. The third way that the task team demonstrated listening was to remain open to and non-judgmental of what each contributor brought forward in the meetings.

Reflecting back is what demonstrated the listening. It is not simply just being there and nodding. We were demonstrating that the listening is going towards

something. So, what that does as reflecting back – is that it helps undo any misunderstandings. As we were writing on the board and projecting through the data projector, I was typing. We were asking, “is that what you mean?”. And then there was a chance for them to nuance it and say “yeah, but not quite – a little bit more like that”, or “no, you’ve actually misunderstood”. So that reflection is part of an important process because of how easy it is to misunderstand. How easy it is for somebody to, when you’re talking, assume that the person sees the thing in the same way as you do. Because you’re in your body and your space and your lens and you take that for granted and maybe the person sitting on the opposite side is not in that same kind of lens space. The chances of misunderstanding are actually quite large. And also, to be non-judgmental because what was important in those particular meetings was to listen to what people say and to not say “well actually you’re wrong or whatever” but rather to say “yes, I hear you” (MacLeod Interview 2023).

Prioritising an understanding of a physical space, how history has shaped it and the habitus that determines which voices are valued in that space is an important step towards listening. This step requires attention to the ideology shaping the relations in a space and the physical structure of a space. Who gets to be on stage, who gets a microphone and whose voice gets reflected back to the audience and the policy, for example, are all features of mediating physical space to promote dialogical communication and listening. Lessons from the Sexual Violence Task Team indicate that promoting dialogical participation and demonstrating listening are possible ways to remake contentious spaces into dialogical ones.

The space exists but it’s not sufficient: providing space for testimony while working towards policy development

The second argument that emerged from interviews is that where there are already spaces geared towards listening to gender-based violence in South Africa, the multitude of needs shapes what is prioritised in the space and sometimes renders the spaces counterproductive. According to this argument, instead of facilitating a process of listening towards achievable outcomes, these spaces “are not big enough” and end up only prioritising certain voices to facilitate a partial listening, usually to disclosure and the loudest voices. The Presidential Summit Against Gender-based Violence and Femicide serves as an interesting case study to illustrate this argument. The summit, set up as a space to listen to issues of gender-based violence, provides lessons about the facilitation of spaces that are conducive to listening.

Annual summits against gender-based violence and femicide: A new horizon for spaces of listening

In 2018, the South African government organised the first Presidential Summit against Gender-based Violence and Femicide. The summit, considered a historical turning point, was aimed at bringing government, civil society, and social movements together to constructively work towards the common goal of “eradicating gender-based violence and femicide in South Africa” (Department of Justice 2023). The summit was organised following the #TotalShutdown and intersectional women’s march against gender-based violence which was organised by an alliance of feminist and gender activists (Reddy 2018). During the countrywide march, a memorandum of demands was presented to the government in various cities (Reddy 2018). The memorandum, which included 24 demands “for every year that the government has neglected womxn” (End GBVF Collective 2018) called for a gender summit and “a review to answer why there has been such policy failure to tame the scourge of violence” (Kassa 2021: 34).

Themes derived from the 2018 Presidential Summit Against Gender-Based Violence and Femicide Declaration indicate that the summit was hosted to engage in a process of organisational listening as conceptualised by Macnamara (2016). The government’s response to #TotalShutDown, to host an annual gender summit, is akin “recognition” (Macnamara 2016), where the government has given “recognition to others as people or groups with legitimate rights to speak and be treated with respect” (p. 151). Following the “recognition” of the marching feminist and gender activists’ right to speak, the government provided a physical space to host listening where they could “acknowledge”, “pay attention to”, “interpret and construct meaning” of, “understand”, and “give consideration” to the voices of those attending the summit. This would then guide their methods in the final step of the organisational listening process, which would be to “respond in an appropriate manner after consideration has been given” (Macnamara 2016: 151).

The summit’s potential as a space to host listening in the face of gender-based violence was considered a historical turning point because it was the first time this kind of response was implemented in South Africa. Dr Nechama Brodie, initially invited to the 2018 summit to facilitate and run a panel on representation and the media, reflects on her experiences of attending the summit to highlight that the facilitation of such spaces is a complex process that placed in the wrong hands can be counterproductive.

Too many needs, not enough space: the shortcomings of facilitating a listening space

In her book, *Femicide in South Africa*, Brodie (2020) explains how the space around gender-based violence is contentious, and often expected to host multiple voices and processes within a limited timeframe, with little to no mediation in the process. In a chapter titled “Fuck the Hashtag”, Brodie (2020) writes about the harrowing experience of attending the 2018 National Summit Against Gender-based Violence and Femicide. Writing about a breakaway session on gender-based violence and the media, Brodie explains how the process of abandoning the original agenda of the session led to the hosting of a messy and traumatising session, with no space to address the role of the media in the fight against gender-based violence and femicide in South Africa (Brodie 2020). Although Brodie had been initially invited to host and moderate the session, she received communication two days before the summit that one representative from the government and another from an activist organisation would take over her responsibilities. Brodie (2020) explains that the session ended up being one that facilitated disclosure and testimony rather than doing what it originally intended, to facilitate a session on media representation. Brodie writes:

The media session took place shortly after the large opening session, where President Ramaphosa had been in attendance and where silent protesters had held up bloody underwear and a survivor had stripped naked to show the president the scars on her body following a brutal attack. Women were crying, sobbing, shouting. Emotions were extremely high. The media group was a total mess. Within minutes of starting, any resemblance to the original agenda was abandoned as more survivors – obviously those who had not been picked to go on stage in the previous session – felt the need to stand up and give their testimonies, even though they had no relation to the session that was supposed to be taking place. People wanted a space to be heard, and they wanted the opportunity to speak their pain in public. I understand this was necessary for many women, individually and collectively, but it also meant that any proposed discussion around the role of media was quickly drowned out by anger and memory (Brodie 2020: 204-205)

Here, Brodie (2020) highlights how a space originally set up to host dialogue about media and gender-based violence was quickly usurped by a deeper need for the participants to disclose their experiences to authority. This highlights three main concerns with regards to spaces that facilitate listening in the face of gender-based violence. Firstly, in this summit, and other spaces created with similar intentions, there is not enough time and space provided to host the disclosure of experiences of gender-based violence. And where space is provided,

only a few speakers are afforded the opportunity to share their pain and experiences and have the public and figures of authority bear witness to their pain and suffering.

Secondly, because of the limited time provided for the process of disclosure and the process of listening for the sake of bearing witness, spaces like the summit with multiple goals of engagement are highly likely to be taken over and turned into spaces where survivors, victims, and activists against gender-based violence speak out about their experiences and request citizens and the government to bear witness to their pain. And thirdly, unfacilitated, this process has the potential to deter the original agenda of proceedings, and solely serve the process of disclosure and bearing witness at the expense of fulfilling any other goals the space might have with regards to the fight against gender-based violence.

The process highlighted by Brodie's (2020) concerns, of summits being turned solely into testimony and disclosure spaces, can be triggering, "overwhelming and physically and emotionally traumatic" for guests, speakers and researchers attending the sessions (Brodie, 2020: 205). The frustration of this kind of process, Brodie (2020) argues, lies in the space not following its goals and facilitating the kind of dialogue that could lead to "practical and pragmatic initiatives that might improve the situation" (p. 206). There is no accounting for what the space was meant to be and if or whether it was derailed to meet other outcomes or not. Reflecting on her experience at the summit, Brodie writes:

[W]hat I saw, on that day, was millions of rands being spent on people venting emotion... And the government, in turn, being able to say: yes, we did it, we listened to you the way you asked us to. We have ticked a box you asked us to tick. But of course, it also meant they weren't really required to do anything about it beyond provide a platform for the spectacle (2020: 206).

Brodie's frustration highlights a few needs with regards to facilitating spaces for listening in the face of gender-based violence in South Africa. Firstly, there is need to have clear goals of what the listening engagement hopes to achieve and secondly there is a need for a designated moderator, who will carefully steer the engagement in the direction of its goals. Although listening for the sake of hosting testimony is an important process, Brodie argues that listening towards achievable outcomes should also be prioritised too if they are on the agenda.

Contentions between bearing witness and listening towards achievable outcomes

In her interview, Brodie expands on the frustration highlighted in *Femicide in South Africa* and problematises the kind of participation and engagement that takes place in these spaces. Brodie argues that these spaces tend to be counterproductive because of the way that they are set-up, facilitated and whose voices are prioritised in the engagements. Brodie explains that although the engagement happens, mainly in the form of participation, there is no assurance that every stakeholder will get to participate or that the “listening” engagement will lead to a process of pursuing real achievable outcomes.

What the government, I think is doing and I actually think it's strategic is they are using participation as a veneer. They're using it as a facade to say, “well, we have heard from everybody” ... The hearing part is such a mess. It is this giant mess where it's like the Tower of Babel. You can't hear anything sometimes. And everybody's got slightly different and completely unwavering points on their agenda. So, it would be impossible to make everyone happy. The art of diplomacy and of politics would say let's practically look at what actually needs to be done, what are the requests that are coming through, what is practical to do. And then use the art of negotiation and compromise to work towards a solution. But the government's not doing that. All the governments doing, on the one hand is saying, “Oh well, we've listened to all of you” and they cannot feasibly do what everybody's asking them to do. And then on the other hand, is when they decide to develop policy, they have their own systems. When they develop policy, their network and their process does not happen at a summit like this. So, when they have policy development meetings the dialogue structure is completely different (Brodie Interview 2022).

Brodie explains that the government ticks the box to indicate that they have listened even though the process usually ends with “people shouting at each other” where power determines who speaks (Brodie Interview 2023). By referring to participation as a veneer, Brodie problematises the government's approach to facilitating these spaces. What this argument points to, is a common struggle that organisations face when attempting to conduct a listening process. Macnamara (2018) explains that organisations often struggle to listen because they do not have the necessary resources and competencies to listen to multiple stakeholders. Brodie's reflection indicates that the listening project undertaken in the form of the summit was lacking in a few resources. Here we see how “time” and “hesitations related to digressing from the original goals” were factors hindering the process of listening during the summit (Sahay 2023: 13).

The listening process also points to a lack in the necessary facilitation “competencies” (Macnamara 2018) to host the multitude of voices coming from people working in the various sectors to fight gender-based violence. Although the government, in this example, has ticked the box of having listened, the kind of listening they have done has only managed to listen to a few stakeholders. While listening alone might be enough for those with testimonies that need witnessing, Brodie highlights that a more “appropriate response” (Macnamara 2016: 151) is needed in terms of media, academic and policy engagement when it comes to summits that host discussions about gender-based violence and femicide in South Africa.

Brodie’s critique of the summit also highlights the need for continuous spaces for people to talk about their experiences of gender-based violence and have others listen to their suffering and bear witness to their testimony. Although the summit did provide some time for this, the time allotted to bearing witness to testimonies was not enough. Listening for the sake of bearing witness plays an integral part in gender-based violence engagement because bearing witness acts to validate “someone’s evidence or testimony of some traumatic experience” (Bacharach 2023: 2). The role of the testimony, at this kind of summit, not only served to validate people’s experience in a public way (Bacharach 2023), but also served to implicate the president and hold people in authority responsible for the justice system that has continually failed victims of gender-based violence and femicide.

Spaces created to host dialogue and discussion around gender-based violence and femicide are excellent spaces to learn from about listening. These spaces provide platforms for engagement that is not easily achieved in any other sphere as they aim to bring together government, civil society, social movements, academics, media and citizens, among other stakeholders. Owing to the magnitude of such a listening engagement, they need to be equipped with the resources to both host and facilitate the multitude of voices and stakeholders. Lessons from the 2018 Presidential Gender-based Violence and Femicide Summit indicate that, although valuable, the provision of a space is not enough. The goals of a listening space have to be clear, and the proceedings facilitated carefully, to ensure that the listening goes towards achievable outcomes. With regard to testimony, spaces where authority is present are spaces where authority is forced to bear witness to the suffering brought on by a broken justice system. Providing both the space and the time for these testimonies is the appropriate and ethical response (Lipari 2014: 178) to the suffering of these people.

A turn to ideological spaces of solidarity: learning to provide mutual care through listening and bearing witness

The third argument that emerged from interviews conducted for this research is that ideological spaces of solidarity have the potential to be harnessed towards bearing witness and listening otherwise. According to this argument spaces that have been created with the intention to respond to the social needs of gender-based violence, including protest spaces, crisis lines and think spaces, can also function to host disclosure and fulfil the need of bearing witness. Understanding how these spaces operate can provide insight into how to better facilitate disclosure on a national scale – like in the form of gender summits (as discussed in the previous section). The Silent Protest is an example of an ideological space of solidarity. Drawing on the protest as a case study provides learning opportunities about the creation of solidarity spaces, and about using ritual and listening as methods to support people who need to share their experiences of gender-based violence and sexual assault.

Understanding the Silent Protest as an ideological space of solidarity

The Silent Protest is a day-long demonstration against rape, sexual violence and the victimisation of women and vulnerable others (Padmanabhanunni & Edwards 2016). The protest is aimed at “generating awareness around rape, unite women victimised through rape, and encourage women to break the silence” (Padmanabhanunni & Edwards 2016: 818).

The Silent Protest first took place in 2007 when Larissa Klazinga (then employed as a Hall Administrator in the Rhodes University Residence System) in collaboration with One-in-Nine and campus student organisations organised the first protest on the Rhodes University campus (Barker 2022). The first Silent Protest was inspired by a previous year’s protest at the Grahamstown High Court where a “group of nine women stood at the front of the crowd, eight with their mouths taped shut with clear tape to visually represent the eight out of nine women who would not report their sexual assault” (Barker 2022: 03). Barker (2022) writes

[The silent] protest was held shortly before Freedom Day in April and aimed to highlight the ways in which women in South Africa are far from being “free”. Klazinga wanted to find a way of visually representing this lack of freedom and, following the symbolism used at the previous year’s protest, felt that black gaffer tape placed across protestors’ mouths would offer a powerful, unsettling and provocative visual symbol (Barker 2022: 04)

The Silent Protest demonstration is divided into three phases which include the morning briefing and taping ceremony, the afternoon “Die-In” ceremony and the evening “Breaking the Silence” ceremony.

Firstly, in the morning session participants gather in a university hall where they are informed about the support mechanisms and services available to them. They are given t-shirts with specific slogans written on them. The t-shirts include slogans such as “Solidarity with the women who speak out,” “Sexual Violence = Silence,” or “Rape Survivor” (Padmanabhanunni & Edwards 2016; Barker 2022). Participants are then given the option to have their mouth duct-taped shut to “symbolise the significant numbers of women who do not disclose their rape” and fast in solidarity with them (Padmanabhanunni & Edwards 2016: 09). The morning briefing ends with a march through the university administration building before protestors return to their daily routines.

In the afternoon ceremony, referred to as the “Die-In”, the participants are invited to lie on the ground absolutely still to represent the loss of life that occurs in some cases of rape and sexual assault (Padmanabhanunni & Edwards 2016). In this afternoon ceremony, participants lie in silence for an hour to the accompaniment of background music and speeches (Baker 2022). The evening ceremony, which is referred to as the “Breaking the Silence” ceremony, takes place after the silent protestors march across town to the cathedral in the City Square. In this ceremony, participants are invited to share their personal stories of victimisation and reflect on their experience of the protest (Padmanabhanunni & Edwards 2016).

With only 80 women volunteers in 2007, the Silent Protest grew over the years – so much so that in 2013 more than 1 500 people participated in the protest (Padmanabhanunni & Edwards 2016). The Silent Protest has made great strides to “make” (Massey 2009) the space for awareness raising on gender-based violence in the university setting. Similar to other women’s movements, the Silent Protest highlights the prevalence of rape and sexual violence and provides a space of solidarity where “the complex power-dynamics” and “discourses which serve to silence women” are interrogated (Barker 2022: 04). This space created by the Silent Protest evolved with the needs of its growing participants, making it a space of “true solidarity” (Gaztambide-Fernandez 2022). In its first five years the protest space “evolved in response to feedback and dialogue as well as changes in the socio-political context” (Barker 2022: 04). The need for a space for disclosure, for example, was one of the motivations

behind the “remaking” (Massey 2009) of the “Breaking the Silence” event from one of reflections to one of disclosure.

One of the things that used to happen with the Silent Protest is that after the day of “Taping of the mouth” and the “Die-In”, they would go to the Cathedral, and they would eat. There would be people and there was an open mic, and you could come and tell your experience of the day. It was meant to be the sharing of the experience of the day but what it would inevitably land up being is people talking about their own experiences of sexual violence (MacLeod Interview 2023).

Here MacLeod explains that the original plan for the “Break the Silence” ceremony, at the end of the day of protesting silently, was that protesters reflect on their experiences of the day. This space, however, was replaced by the needs of the participants to disclose their suffering and be witnessed publicly. By evolving to allow for the “Breaking the Silence” ceremony to be a disclosure ceremony, the space evolved into a solidarity space guided by listening and witnessing.

The Silent Protest created space for people to say, “this has happened to me,” “this is not great” and to be listened to and witnessed and believed. And to understand that – I am not alone in this, here is this other person, here is their similar experience. So that solidarity, that space of solidarity and space of being listened to by people who you know will not judge you, will respect you, will believe you; people who are with you in this journey that you are on, is extremely important (MacLeod Interview 2023).

Brodie’s experience of the gender summit highlighted the persistent need for spaces that engage with gender-based violence to have time and space set aside specifically to host disclosure. Interviews conducted for this research indicate that the process of fulfilling that need, and providing time and space for disclosure, is a show of solidarity and can be an empowering act. By creating the platform and allowing space and time for disclosure, the Silent Protest highlights the empowering aspect of solidarity. In this process, solidarity is communicated through “making” (Massey 2009) space to host and understand the other, while getting participants “involved and activated” in the listening and witnessing while “relating to others and their needs” (Aramapatzi 2017: 2157).

Even before participants get to the *stage* where they are able to “break the silence” they have extended the Silent Protest space throughout the university campus; this includes the university administration block, into the lecture theatres and dining halls and through the town all the way to the cathedral, located in the City Square (a public space outside the university). The physical space created through the visibility of the t-shirts, taped mouths and

marchers is vast and wide. Through the day of ceremonies, the protest produces (Massey 2009) a space that communicates against the grain of the habitus of university campuses. By highlighting that patriarchal structures silence women and vulnerable others, the physical space surrounding the protest is transformed to communicate differently about who is empowered to speak out and how their voices will be listened to.

Throughout the day and with each ceremony, there is a transformation in the “social norms about women’s appropriate use of space” (Valentine 1990: 289). This allows the public spaces occupied by the protest to emerge as spaces that counter the usual “spatial expression of patriarchy” (Pain 1997: 231). Before the “Breaking the Silence” ceremony, the protest space has already emerged as a space of solidarity, as MacLeod explains. This important space has highlighted and made visible the issue of gender-based violence on and off the university campus and has primed anyone who engages with the protest (whether participating or spectating) to listen and engage against the habitus. The process of “breaking the silence” in a space of solidarity, where participants and spectators are primed to listen against the habitus is potentially safer and more productive than in any other South African space or setting. As argued in the theoretical framework of this research, victims of violence are continually encouraged to “break the silence”, but when they do, patriarchal structural violence and rape culture ensures that their actions are met with backlash, shaming, inaction, apathy, and betrayal from the public and the justice system (Gqola 2015). “Breaking the silence” during the Silent Protest yields different results.

Spaces of solidarity, similar to the one produced by the Silent Protest, have the potential to safely host testimony and disclosure because they open up the space and make the familiar strange. Gqola, who writes about making the fluency in the Female Fear Factory strange, turns to Macharia (2016) who encourages the unlearning of the logic of fluencies by “asking questions about the fluencies we need to give up... to enter into a new conversation differently” and “interrupt our participation” through a refusal “to occupy the roles prescribed under it” (Gqola 2021: 84-85).

As a space of solidarity, the Silent Protest makes the roles of victims of rape and gender-based violence visible and questions the habitus and fluencies that positions them in this way. This process, of making the familiar strange, challenges the cataphatic listening that takes place in spaces that engage with gender-based violence. By creating an “awareness of the habitual categories” of gender-based violence, including the silencing of victims and

survivors, it provides an opportunity for participants and spectators of the protest to “move beyond them” (Lipari 2014: 98). The final invitation of the protest space, to “break the silence” attempts to create an empowering space of solidarity, that invites and hosts voices that have been othered to engage in a listening process that can be open and healing. The Silent Protest leans heavily on the other public rituals performed as part the day-long activities to prepare participants and spectators and build their capacity to host, listen to and really bear witness to the voices and suffering of others.

Public ritual and creating spaces that facilitate listening: a process of building solidarity and bearing witness

Interviews conducted for this research indicate that public ritual provides a strong tool to build solidarity and in turn facilitates spaces where bearing witness and listening otherwise take place. The Silent Protest, for example, facilitates various public rituals that stimulate group solidarity and facilitate bearing witness. Through its various ceremonies, the Silent Protest “represents a form of public ritual that combines features of cathartic drama and Christian confession” (Padmanabhanunni & Edwards 2016: 818). The process of ritualisation is utilised to “generate solidarity among participants and promote personal and social transition through the arousal of strong emotion” (Koss-Chioino 2006; Padmanabhanunni & Edwards 2016: 818).

In her PHD thesis, *Making the Personal Political: Understanding the Impacts of Participation in an Anti-Rape Protest for Women who have Experienced Sexual Violence*, Barker (2022) reflects on her first experience of the Silent Protest in 2011, when she attended the evening “Breaking the Silence” ceremony. Barker (2022) explains that she knew very little about the protest but attended the evening event to show “solidarity” to a friend who had been asked to speak at the event. Having arrived shortly before the crowd of silent protestors made their way to the Cathedral, Barker (2022) recalls seeing “people walking with arms around one another in solidarity and caring” (p. 07). Barker watched as friends hugged and “communicated with their eyes” because many of their mouths were taped (Barker 2022: 07). When the event officially began, the organiser “invited all those who were taped up to break the silence, not by removing their own tape but by removing someone else’s” (Barker 2022: 07). At the instruction, Barker turned to the student next to her and carefully removed the tape. Reflecting on that moving moment, Barker writes:

I removed the tape as gently as I could, and tears were very close to the surface. I

felt an overwhelming gratitude and awe for the courage it had taken to fast not only food and water for a day, but speech as well. I could not find words for this and could only whisper ‘thank you. Well done’. As the chant gradually swelled in volume as more and more voices were added – ‘Stop the war on women’s bodies’ – I realised why I was there (2022: 7-8).

Barker, who works as a pastoral therapist, explains that the experience of attending the event captured her curiosity and attention in two ways. Firstly, she was struck by the sense of solidarity and community in the space and secondly, she was curious about how the process of disclosure seemed to be doing the work of many months of therapy. Barker’s experiences led her to the assumption that an aspect of the Silent Protest could be responsible for potentially “diminishing the sense of guilt and shame” she had encountered in therapy “during conversations with women who had experienced sexual violation, and which often silenced and isolated women” (Barker 2022: 08). According to Barker (2022), the space hosted a “community in action” working towards healing with no professional in sight, doing work that would take “months and months of individual therapy” to accomplish (p. 08).

The process that Barker (2022) experienced, of a community in action, listening, speaking and working towards healing, can be understood using Kurasawa’s (2009) conception of bearing witness. According to Kurasawa (2009), the process of bearing witness is a “web of transnational testimonial practices structured around 5 dialectically related tasks and perils” (p. 95). These five practices include: “giving voice to mass suffering against silence; interpretation against incomprehension; the cultivation of empathy against indifference, remembrance against forgetting; and prevention against repeating” (Kurasawa 2009: 95). Understood through this framework, the Silent Protest facilitates a process of bearing witness through its various ceremonies, to give voices to mass suffering, understanding through interpretation, to cultivate empathy in participants and spectators, to engrain the experiences of women and vulnerable others into a collective memory and stimulate engagement that works to prevent gender-based violence.

Kurasawa’s (2009) framing of bearing witness highlights the dialectical counterparts to show how the tasks are opposed but need each other to engage towards positive change. The Silent Protest for example, uses silence, silencing and the representation of silence to work against the habitual and systematic silencing of women, vulnerable others and communities.

Although silence is used as a means to stimulate bearing witness, what emerges – as Barker (2022) explains – is an overwhelming sense of community, empathy and voice. The “Die-in”

ceremony and “Breaking the silence” ceremonies serve as strong symbols to shape collective memory against forgetting and prevention against repeating. Kurasawa (2009) also places great emphasis on the “public character” of bearing witness. According to Kurasawa (2009) bearing witness “exists as patterned sets of social action performed in national and transnational public spaces” (p. 96). The Silent Protest facilitates bearing witness by claiming numerous public spaces for marching, demonstrating, and speaking to stimulate “cycles of address and answer, and of recognition between two testimonial parties undertaken through diverse means of communication” (Kurasawa 2009: 96).

Aimed at generating awareness around rape and gender-based violence, the Silent Protest relies on a process of bearing witness. This is evidenced by the protest’s public activities and symbolism. The process of bearing witness, however, goes further than just raising awareness. Here the process of bearing witness, especially in the way that it happens in the evening ceremony, “moves individuals from a personal act of ‘seeing’ to the adoption of a public stance by which they become part of a collective working through trauma together” (Zelizer 2003: 86). In an interview for this research, Barker expands on her experience attending the “Breaking the Silence” event in 2011 and confirms that the space produced by the act of bearing witness was a communal healing space.

So, sitting there that evening and witnessing young women and hearing them saying things like “for the first time I realise that it wasn’t my fault,” or “this is the first time I’ve told anybody about it,” or “this is the first time I’m speaking about it.” I felt a very, very palpable sense of community, of care, of holding. The Cathedral was packed. There were people everywhere and there was just a sense of holding of the stories. In that moment. It felt like something really positive was happening. There were no professionals around. It was people who cared enough to give up a day of having their mouths taped shut and consciously creating this community that was offering this listening and healing space (Barker Interview 2023).

By allowing for the process of bearing witness, the “Breaking the Silence” ceremony “serves a unifying function, transforming the individual act of witnessing into a collective one in which a community can acknowledge an event” (Bacharach 2023: 154). Barker highlights that the space, created by the Silent Protest, provides for a “holding” of stories and facilitates a sense of community and communal engagement that allows for vulnerability and sharing (Barker Interview 2023). The “holding” of stories that Barker highlights is similar to Lipari’s (2014) understanding of bearing witness “which is to not turn away from the suffering [of others] but to look at it unflinchingly” (Lipari 2014: 186). According to Lipari (2014), when

one bears witness, one listens “without resorting to what is easy,” and “make space for the difficult, the different, and the radically strange” (2014: 187).

This thesis has mentioned time and time again that our listening habitus is shaped by our social conditioning and our places and relations in the social world (Lipari 2014: 57). Social conditioning in South African spaces teaches women and vulnerable others where they belong, what to do and when to be silent. What Lipari (2014) emphasises about bearing witness, is that it is a process of listening, even when it is against social conditioning, when it is difficult, and the voices seem radically strange, means the world to the other. The ceremonies of the Silent Protest highlight social conditioning and relations of gender-based violence and asks participants and spectators to bear witness to the suffering and collectively work through the trauma together. Through its rituals and ceremonies, it prepares participants and spectators to bear witness and facilitates a process where they are later (in the evening ceremony) potentially open to listening otherwise.

Listening otherwise, as mentioned previously, encourages one to both “listen beyond schemas, categories and the dualistic thinking of the conceptual mind” (2014: 99) and to become a hospitable dwelling place offered to host others with a resistance of “certainty, closure, categorisation, the imperatives for natural flow and [the] insatiable appetite for the familiar” (2014: 102). Barker explains that each ceremony of the Silent Protest prepares the participant to engage with gender-based violence differently to what patriarchal habitus has normalised and in turn makes them able to receive the disclosure of testimony.

If you think about the Silent Protest, you’ve got a cohort of people who are first of all, committed to activism around gender-based violence. You’ve got to be pretty committed to tape your mouth for a whole day and not have food and not have drink. Then you are going through a series of experiences. I mean the marches, the Die-in, the input, the speeches, that have you reflecting about gender-based violence. Have you perhaps been challenging some of your thinking? You are in silence because you’re taped, so you are thinking about it. The Silent Protest as a process prepares this group of people to receive disclosure. So, when you are sitting in the cathedral in the evening and the ‘Breaking the Silence’ event happens people have almost been prepared to listen – and be fully present. Well, I mean as much as one can be. I think there’s some dissociation as well because it gets overwhelming, but as fully present as they can be to support and to hear those who want to speak out (Barker Interview 2023).

The process that Barker highlights is similar to listening otherwise particularly with regard to gender-based violence because the day-long activities prepare the participants and spectators to begin to “reflect about gender-based violence” (Barker Interview 2023). As Barker

explains, participants get a chance to interrogate or “challenge” their thinking and open themselves to “support” and “hear those who want to speak out” (Barker Interview 2023). This openness is similar to listening otherwise because of the emphasis is on being “fully present, mindful and patiently aware” (Lipari 2014:185). The silence is used as a tool to empty one’s thoughts and patterns of habitus and opens the self in a way where one is able to host the other.

Many spaces of solidarity have emerged in the fight against gender-based violence in South Africa. The Silent Protest is only one example of a space that has been produced through public protest, demonstration, and engagement. Lessons from the Silent Protest indicate that spaces of solidarity possess the ability to transform public spaces into spaces that are conducive to listening. Through a process of public ritual, individuals can begin to work together and form communities where they bear witness, facilitate healing and create long-lasting spaces of solidarity. Existing spaces of solidarity can inform how we create public spaces geared towards listening – including listening in spaces like the Presidential Summit Against Gender-based Violence and Femicide – for example. The lessons, however, only teach us about listening to disclosure and bearing witness which indicates that more exploration is needed to determine the best practices for facilitating listening towards achievable outcomes.

Journalists and editors creating the space for listening

In chapter six, the idea of embracing an ethics of listening in journalism practices was revisited. This idea was equated to the idea of an ethical consideration of the other. When the media and journalists listen to the other, they relinquish control, create a space for their assumptions to be challenged, accept that what emerges may be more complex than what they had previously imagined and accept accountability for their own role in the problems they seek to understand. It is not an easy task, but journalists and media practitioners should embrace an ethics of listening and have an ethical consideration of the other because this affords those who have been silenced and kept out of the public sphere an opportunity to share their own voices. In this process journalists and media practitioners are not merely acting as the voice of the voiceless or gatekeepers, but they are affording the space for the voices of the others to emerge as they are and as an “other” in a process that is more akin to gate opening.

Affording the space, however, is complex and may take on various forms. This process of journalists creating space for listening in the face of gender-based violence is complex and requires deep thought and consideration of factors such as power dynamics, access to diverse voices, and proper facilitation. Garman and Malila (2017) for example highlight that it is not common for journalists in newsrooms to pursue processes particularly aimed at listening to their readers. They write:

Where listening has become imbedded in a journalism operation it is usually driven by one individual who has the power and authority to make it happen and who is keenly aware of the political nuances of a local situation... The impulse is a social justice one – to take responsibility for redressing the inequalities of the democratic present. Here social media tools, in addition to the dialogues and other spaces created are very helpful for enabling listening (Garman and Malila 2017: 13).

Garman and Malila (2017) have come to this conclusion after engaging with news organisations, journalists and editors who have created listening spaces. Here we see that journalism operations with listening embedded in them usually require the initiative of at least one person in the newsroom with the power and the desire “to understand a local situation” and “build a strong relationship of loyalty” with the audience (p. 13). One example of a news organisation that manages to do this work of listening is *Zithethele*, a community newspaper based in Gqeberha (formerly Port Elizabeth). According to Garman and Malila (2017) *Zithethele* listens through community dialogues in which the journalists sit with and listen to community members and their problems. The newspaper organises experts and specialists to answer questions or respond to the participants grievances, problems and challenges. *Zithethele* invites councillors and government officials to afford them the opportunity to listen and pay attention to the issues raised in the dialogues. The listening operation is facilitated and mediated by community and church leaders. This process then feeds the journalism produced by the paper. The stories that are published are attuned to the voices that emerged through the space created and the dialogue that took place.

Although the example presented here does not engage specifically with matters related to gender-based violence, it is a useful example of a journalistic listening process to learn from. Firstly, a space is created and made accessible to interested community members, secondly the mode of communication is deliberately dialogical and therefore encourages the expression of voice; thirdly, those with the power to listen and explain as well as listen and affect policy are asked to be present at the listening operation. Fourthly, the process is

facilitated and mediated by leaders in the community and not the newspaper itself. Here the newspaper has relinquished control and provided the space for the community members' voices to guide the process. The final process the newspaper uses, of ensuring that the dialogues feed the news agenda, is very significant. This is an illustration how to "involve news subjects as equal partners in the production process" (Wasserman 2013: 79). This example also provides the steps and attitudes that news organisations and journalists could take to understand the local ideas, grievances, and challenges regarding gender-based violence. Where the resources for a physical space are not available, journalists and media practitioners can consider facilitating similar dialogues on social and media platforms.

Part 4:

Facilitating listening in the face of GBV in South Africa

Chapter 8: Critical Facilitation

Introduction

A central question raised in the previous chapter asks can a space “of emptiness and unknowing” (Lipari 2014: 98) exist organically or be created? And more importantly how would one begin to make way for such a space? Lessons from the Rhodes University Sexual Violence Task Team indicate that although the space for listening, as Lipari (2014) imagines it, may not exist organically, through a careful and critical process of facilitation, ordinary spaces aimed at engagement can be “unmade” and “remade” (Masey 2009: 17) into spaces that promote dialogical participation and ethical listening responses.

As previously discussed, the members of the Sexual Violence Task Team acted as mediators in a contentious space and then facilitated a process of communication and engagement that eventually led to the development of a comprehensive report. The role of MacLeod and her colleagues in the task team was aligned with Bens’s (2005) conception of a facilitator where the facilitator “contributes structure and process to interactions so groups are able to function effectively and make high quality decisions” (p. XVI). What the example of the Sexual Violence Task Team, and other cases unpacked in the previous chapter indicate, is that facilitation, and more importantly critical facilitation, is an integral part of listening in the face of gender-based violence in South Africa. Furthermore, initial, focused, and thematic coding of the research interviews and data indicate that the process of critical facilitation plays an integral role in managing listening spaces that are geared towards specific goals and achievable outcomes.

Facilitation of listening in the face of gender-based violence, according to the research data, is aligned with Gregory and Romm’s (2001) conception of critical facilitation, in which facilitators utilise the process of critical self-reflection to ensure that they do not “direct the discussion only in terms of some predefined ideas, experiences, or values” (p. 465). The concepts of “facilitation”, “space” and “listening” were coded and yielded the four arguments about facilitating spaces and the processes of listening otherwise in the face of gender-based violence. Firstly, the facilitator has to both understand and be committed to meeting the needs and goals of the listening space. According to this argument, the facilitator has to understand the context that shapes the listening engagement and have a clear indication of the goals of the interaction and how the context could alter or derail the process of listening towards

achievable outcomes. Secondly, the process of listening in the face of gender-based violence may require the engagement of multiple stakeholders each with their own goals and interests, facilitators of such an engagement should be attuned to “listening across difference” (Dreher 2009) and where necessary be able to mediate a process where participants are able to do the same. Therefore, the facilitator has to have an awareness and understanding of the power structures that shape the power dynamics within the group and be able to listen beyond what these structures dictate. Thirdly, the facilitator’s role should be attuned to both the facilitation of listening and the empowerment of voice to host conducive dialogical communicative spaces. In this argument the facilitator has to find ways to build trust, demonstrate listening, and encourage collective responsibility among participants and ensure that the space remains safe and open to host a robust process of listening and speaking. And fourthly, the facilitator of a process of listening towards achievable outcomes, has to be critically self-reflexive and be able to take critique. The facilitator must therefore have humility and not be defensive in order to listen to others’ understandings and critiques.

Facilitating listening toward achievable outcomes: a participator action research method for ‘creating space’

A facilitator’s role, according to Auvine et al. (2002) is to ensure “that members of a group can accomplish their goals for the meeting” (p. 54). The process of ensuring that the goals are met involves the facilitator trusting each member of the group with “shared responsibility”, making sure that each member has an “opportunity to contribute to a discussion” and ensuring that “the agenda serves the group’s purpose” (Auvine et al. 2002: 54). Auvine et al. (2002) reiterate and emphasise that although a facilitator can fulfil various roles working within a group, the main role of the facilitator is “determined by the group’s purpose for coming together” (p. 54). What this highlights is the importance of goal setting before any process of facilitation is to take place. The coding process of this research revealed that the process of “creating space” was an integral part of the process of listening in the face of gender-based violence in South Africa. What the example of the Rhodes University Sexual Violence Task Team illustrated, was that the facilitation was an important and necessary part of “remaking” contentious spaces into ones that are conducive to listening.

A key argument that emerged with regards to listening is that the facilitator has to both understand and be committed to meeting the needs and goals of the listening space. And where a listening space does not organically exist, the facilitator has to create the space and

steer it in the direction of listening towards achievable outcomes. The Sexual Violence Task Team example also shows that in cases where the listening spaces do not exist organically to begin with, facilitators of a listening process can create the space. The facilitators working on the task team understood the context that shaped the listening engagement. Because of this understanding they collaboratively sought the terms of reference for the task team and gained a clear idea of the goals of the listening engagement and how the context could alter or derail the process of listening towards achievable outcomes. The example of the 2018 Presidential Summit against Gender-based Violence and Femicide highlights the facilitation needs of spaces that already exist and are aimed at being listening spaces. In her reflection on the space Brodie highlighted that the listening space should have been geared towards achievable outcomes and have clear goals so that the agenda could not be derailed. Brodie also highlighted that the space needed better facilitation and processes to ensure that the goals of the engagement were actually met. What the example of the summit highlights is that spaces that are created with the goal of listening towards specific achievable outcomes are similar to research inquiries that involve human subjects. Both the listening space and the research inquiries are created with specific goals in mind, rely on action and dialogue and require critical planning, and evaluation to ensure the engagement's goals and objectives are met. Chevalier and Buckles (2019) propose a participatory action research (PAR) methodology that can both work in the context of creating a space for listening towards achievable outcomes as well as creating a PAR research inquiry.

The method, referred to as process design, concerns itself with defining the context, setting goals, identifying stakeholders, identifying specific questions, selecting tools, and planning the documentation process (Chevalier and Buckles 2019). Process design is useful particularly for the creation of listening spaces geared towards achievable outcomes because, firstly, the method is goal orientated and shaped by the needs of the listening engagement. Secondly, it both attempts to understand and respond to a particular context all while prioritising stakeholders that are affected by said context, which is particularly useful when engaging in the space of gender-based violence. And thirdly, because the methods are conducted and designed to include and prioritise facilitation, the agenda, tools, and methods used in the process all align with the specific goals of the listening engagement. And where opportunity arises to derail the engagement from the predetermined goal, the facilitator is available to ensure it is not taken.

The process design method allows the researcher/facilitator to design a participatory, collaborative, and engaging action process with clearly documented goals, objectives and outcomes that emerge once the stakeholders have been involved. The methodology has six distinct steps that guide the researcher/facilitator in creating a space (Chevalier and Buckles 2019). If a researcher/facilitator is to use the design process steps they will: define the general context and planning scenario; define the action inquiry purpose; identify prior decisions; identify and clarify the specific question(s) and their sequencing; select and sequence tools and design all steps; and plan the documentation process (Chevalier and Buckles 2019: p. 143).

These steps have been included here because they serve as a good starting point for facilitators to turn to when they are looking to create spaces that are conducive to listening towards achievable goals.

Step 1: Define the general context and planning scenario

Understanding the “general context and planning scenario” of the inquiry forms the first step of process design. Chevalier and Buckles (2019) have developed three different scenarios that can be used to understand the context, depending on “the level of certainty and complexity of the goals surrounding the circumstances” (p. 140). The first scenario involves situations that are “predictable and favourable enough to plan activities in advance with considerable detail”. The second scenario is more complicated and involves “complex, multiple stakeholder situations rife with difficulties and uncertainty” (Chevalier & Buckles 2019: 140). In this scenario, the researcher/facilitator is aware that the process design is influenced by the stakeholders and their specific goals and objectives. A key process that takes place under this scenario is the ongoing planning and implementation in a context where “the results of prior activities, the performance of key factors and stakeholder behaviour cannot be fully predicted” (Chevalier & Buckles 2019: 140). In the third scenario, situations are so demanding that only immediate events can be planned. In this scenario, design process turns into an “ad hoc intervention focused on a single or one-off event and the formulation of an immediate follow-up plan” (Chevalier & Buckles 2019: 140). Understanding the general context within the framework of these three scenarios give the researcher/facilitator an opportunity to plan the design process in alignment with the needs of the context.

Returning to the different spaces geared towards listening that were discussed in the previous chapter, it becomes clear that both the Sexual Violence Task Team and the 2018 Presidential

Summit against Gender-based Violence and Femicide can be classified as being similar to “scenario two” with complex needs, multiple stakeholders, and engagements where “causes and effects” were not linear and straightforward and “partners and results” were complex (Chevalier & Buckles 2019: 140). Although both interventions were the result of protests against gender-based violence and urgent calls for intervention, the level of planning and scale of both interventions is more complicated than a “scenario three” case would have called for. The initial stages of these interventions, however, could be classified as “scenario three”, where ad hoc meetings developed more complex follow up plans that resulted in the formation of the Sexual Violence Task Team and the 2018 Presidential Summit against Gender-based Violence and Femicide.

Step 2: Define the action inquiry purpose

In this step, the researcher/facilitator carefully defines the “goal, scope and expected results” of the inquiry/space. According to Chevalier and Buckles (2019), the goal, scope and expected results depend on the main issue that prompts the investigation (p. 140). This step requires the researcher/facilitator to have a “clear sense [of] where things stand at a particular point in time and the directions that could be explored” (Chevalier & Buckles 2019: 141). Relying on a participatory action research methodology grounds the inquiry/space “in collaborative action” that has “strategic value” in determining “what prompted the inquiry/space... who it is for, and what are the expected results”.

Both the Sexual Violence Task Team and the GBV Summit were formed after protestors against gender-based violence presented a set of demands that required that these spaces/interventions be created. Had these steps been used to create the inquiries/spaces/interventions facilitators working in either intervention space would need to be aware of how the issues of sexual and gender-based violence are rife in universities and other South African public and private spaces. Here the collaborative action takes places through the inquiry/intervention being shaped by the protestors and their demands for visibility. The interventions both emerge as “listening spaces” particularly because of the protestors demanding that systematic silencing of sexual and gender-based violence victims be stopped. The goals of the inquiry/intervention were also determined by the protestors. In the case of the Sexual Violence Task Team one of the goals demanded was a revision of the policies on gender-based violence at Rhodes University. And in the case of the GBV Summit one of the goals demanded was a review to answer why there has been policy failure to curb

gender-based violence in South Africa. These demands communicate the specific context that the inquiry/intervention would fall in, they also play a key role in determining “what prompted the inquiry/intervention”, “who it is for” and “what are the expected results”. These examples show that without collaboration, dialogue and listening, the “goal, scope and expected results” of these interventions would not be aligned with the needs of the inquiry.

Step 3: Identify prior decisions

Chevalier and Buckles (2019) argue that every inquiry/space “occurs in the middle of an evolving story” and therefore the researcher/facilitator would be ill-advised to ignore prior involvements and discussions (p. 141). What this means is that the process of designing the inquiry/space should consider previous conversations and conclusions that have been made on the matter. Chevalier and Buckles write:

Prior decisions may concern the people who should be involved in the planning phase and in the overall inquiry. The respective roles of participants and committee members (advisory, steering, organising, attending), how much time will be dedicated to the action inquiry, the available inputs from previous events (knowledge, other decisions) and the single or multiple roles that the facilitator should play (as instructor, expert, consultant, researcher, note taker or stakeholder) should be mapped out (2019: 141).

This step provides an important alternative to inventing the wheel each time an inquiry/intervention or space needs to be created. Reflecting on her participation in the Sexual Violence Task Team, MacLeod explains that the decision to have a participatory process to listen to what the people wanted from the task team was informed by engaging with how previous task teams were handled. MacLeod et al. (2018) explain that protesting students did not trust university task teams because this is a method often used to pacify discontented students. As argued previously, the task team approach has, in the past, been top-down and the “reports have either not been sufficiently publicised, or recommendations have not been (visibly) acted upon” (MacLeod et al. 2018: 88).

A process of *identifying prior decisions* would entail that the Task Team be more bottom-up in its approach, be more open and publicise each step in the process and ensure that recommendations are actually considered and acted upon. This step proves to be helpful because it provides an opportunity for the researcher/facilitator to learn from past achievements and mistakes and create an inquiry that is informed, engaged and in touch with

the stakeholders involved. This process also ensures that key stakeholders are not left behind or left out of the design and decision-making process of the inquiry/intervention/space.

Step 4: Identify and clarify the specific question(s) and their sequencing

This step aims to clarify and determine the exact questions that the action inquiry/space is expected to answer, while “using concepts and language that are meaningful to the participants” (Chevalier & Buckles 2019: 141). In this step, researchers/facilitators identify and unpack “different aspects of the general question that seem relevant” and then proceed to clarify and prioritise each of the questions. Chevalier and Buckles (2019) stress that many failed inquiries/spaces are a result of researchers/facilitators not asking the “right question at the right time, with the right people for the right reasons” (p. 141). This step becomes useful specifically because the design process takes place following a particular need that has been raised by key stakeholders in the inquiry.

The gender-based violence activists both in the #RURReferenceList and #TotalShutdown, for example, presented various demands that informed the “goal, scope and expected results” of the gender-based violence interventions. To ensure that the protestors were true participants, facilitators designing the interventions needed to have questions that reflected the demands of the protestors to ensure that the expected results addressed the initial demands raised “using concepts and language that are meaningful” (Chevalier & Buckles 2019: 141) to the protestors.

Step 5: Select the sequence tools and design all steps

This step involves defining all the steps and procedures needed to conduct the inquiry or create the space. During this step the researcher/facilitator chooses “the right level of depth (simple or advanced) and the kind of technology needed in the situation” (Chevalier & Buckles 2019: 142). The researcher/facilitator’s design must consider the level of detail and how explicit that instructions should be. Chevalier and Buckles (2019) explain that the process of scaling has to align with the purpose and the time available for the inquiry/space. In her reflection on the GBV Summit, Brodie highlights how a change in the plans of the intervention/space led to a process where the original agenda was abandoned and instead the space was usurped by a traumatising, and messy session that did not address the original goals allotted to the time. This reflection indicates a process where the design does not meet the needs of the intervention; the scale of the session went over time and was not designed in

accordance with its needs and the needs of those participating in that particular session. The design flaws, as Brodie indicates, had an impact on the sessions that followed, and none of the goals assigned to those sessions were met. The example of the GBV Summit highlights the importance of creating an inquiry/intervention/space that has enough time, tools, and resources to meet each and every need, goal and demand associated with the inquiry/intervention/space.

Step 6: Plan the documentation process

The last step proposed in this process design methodology involves decision making on how “extensively to report on the group discussions and the use to be made of the documentation” (Chevalier & Buckles 2019: 142). This process of decision making is aimed at assisting the researcher/facilitator determine which activities are central to “documenting the results during and after the action inquiry” (Chevalier & Buckles 2019: 142). What follows is the researcher/facilitator assigning the related responsibilities. Chevalier and Buckles (2019) suggest that the researcher/facilitator document a range of elements throughout the inquiry. These elements include documenting the context or situation in need of attention; the purpose of the action inquiry; a summary of the process; a descriptive analysis of the results; an interpretation of the results; follow-up action identified by the participants; and observations regarding what went well, or difficulties met during the process (Chevalier & Buckles 2019: 143).

The example of the Sexual Violence Task Team shows how effective documentation can be a useful resource for future engagements and interventions. Future task teams can engage with the documents to identify prior decisions and learn from them. The task team’s participatory listening method, with co-created terms of reference, for example, is an effective way to conduct a collaborative action project. Furthermore, the task team’s “demonstrating listening” process, where they transcribe and project participant contributions, is an interesting method of capturing participants’ words and contributions and can later be referred to when writing engaged reports.

Facilitating listening across difference: confronting power, mediating engagement, and listening otherwise

This research has firmly established that South Africa’s history and patriarchal present has shaped how we listen, speak, and engage in the face of gender-based violence. As previously

argued, the way one listens or their “listening habitus” is partly shaped by “culture and [their] social location within it and partly by [their] personality and their particular life experiences” (Lipari 2014: 52). It thus follows that the participants in a space geared towards engaging with gender-based violence will have a pre-established listening habitus which shapes how they listen, what they listen to, and what they ignore in that space (Lipari 2014). Facilitation of such spaces, therefore, needs to be aware of the culturally ingrained power structures that shape the participants’ listening habitus as well as who gets to speak and who gets to be listened to.

Furthermore, facilitators working in these spaces need strategies to overcome the power differentials to create a more egalitarian and dialogical space to host voices that have been previously undermined and ignored due to cultural and historical prescriptions. Dreher (2009) sketches the concept of “listening across difference” in an attempt to conceptualise a “particular kind of listening” that challenges hierarchies and oppression. Dreher’s (2009) concept emerged as a response to Susan Bickford’s (1996) challenge to move towards listening practices where the listeners are “self-conscious about how they listen (and what they hear)”. According to Bickford (1996: 129), certain kinds of listening have the potential to undo oppression by prioritising those who have been deprioritised and making space to hear expressions that have been “undermine[d] through certain hierarchies of language and voice”. Bickford (1996) writes:

If feminist theorists are right that “silence and silencing begins with the dominating enforcement of linguistic conventions” (Alarcon, 1990: 363) – that is if oppression happens partly through not hearing certain kind of expressions from certain kinds of people – then perhaps the reverse is true as well: a particular kind of listening can serve to break up linguistic conventions and create a public realm where a plurality of voices, faces, and languages can be heard and seen and spoken (p. 129).

Here Bickford suggests that “a particular kind of listening” can facilitate a process where multiple voices can emerge and exist and be appreciated and heard. To this Dreher (2009) suggests “listening across difference” as a means to shift the “hierarchies of attention which produce unequal opportunities for speaking and being heard” (p. 446). Dreher’s concept draws on accounts of political listening, listening and privilege and the politics of listening in order to reshape listening and transform it into a process that realises “that how we listen shapes the ways in which others can speak and be heard” (Dreher 2009: 448).

The coding process of this research revealed that the process of “encouraging voice”, “encouraging listening”, and “encouraging participation” were all aligned with the process of facilitating “listening across difference” as conceptualised by Dreher (2009). This means that the process of facilitation, which Bens (2005: 03) argues “is grounded in a sincere respect for all group members regardless of their age, rank, or cultural group”, involves encouraging participation and listening that embodies Dreher’s (2009) concept of listening. The process of listening in the face of gender-based violence may require the engagement of multiple stakeholders each with their own goals and interests. Facilitators of such an engagement should be attuned to “listening across difference” (Dreher 2009) and where necessary be able to mediate a process where participants are able to do the same.

The facilitator has to have an awareness and understanding of the power structures that shape the power dynamics within the group and be able to listen beyond what these structures dictate while empowering those in attendance to do the same. Facilitation, according to Auvine et al. (2002), is at its optimal “when certain values are accepted and practiced not only by the facilitator but by the entire group in which the facilitation takes place” (p. 53). The values that are highlighted by Auvine et al. (2002: 53-54), which include democracy, responsibility, co-operation, honesty, and egalitarianism, are all made possible when the facilitator of an engagement/space encourages “listening across difference” (Dreher 2009).

To value democracy means that the facilitator will ensure that each group member has the opportunity to participate without prejudice. Further, valuing democracy means that the planning of meetings is open, and the agenda is designed to meet the needs of the participants. The agenda should also be open to change to suit the evolving needs of the participants (Auvine et al. 2002: 53). With regards to the concept of responsibility, the facilitator and each participant takes responsibility for their participation in the engagement/space. The facilitator “must be sensitive to how much responsibility the participants, at any meeting, are prepared and able to take” (Auvine et al. 2002: 54). To value co-operation means that the facilitator and the participants work together to achieve their collective goals. Valuing honesty means that the facilitator and the participants honestly represent their own “values, feelings, concerns, and priorities” in the engagement/space. The facilitator that values honesty will be clear about their own abilities, represent themselves fairly and “not attempt to go beyond [their] capabilities in the role of a facilitator” (Auvine et al. 2002: 54). Finally, egalitarianism means understanding that each participant has “something to contribute” and is given a fair opportunity to do so.

When dealing with gender-based violence, however, facilitating spaces that prioritise the values of democracy, responsibility, co-operation, honesty, and egalitarianism may not be an easy task. Findings from this research indicate that alongside these values, the process of facilitators working in spaces that deal with gender-based violence should understand networks of privilege and power, and build intra-group trust through commitment, openness, knowledge, and empathy.

Understanding networks of privilege and power

In her book, titled *Why a politics of listening*, Leah Bassel explores listening as a social and political process with the ability to “create a responsibility to change roles of speakers and listeners and thereby disrupt power and privilege” (2017: 06). Bassel argues that the reason why one should listen is political equality. According to Bassel (2017), the politics of listening contains “an intrinsic value” and recognition “that counters vicious exclusions” (p. 06). Bassel writes:

The agonistic democratic tradition (particularly the work of Jacques Rancière) reveals how people can and do demand to be recognised as speaking subjects in contexts where they are not recognised as political beings capable of ‘voice’... The politics of listening challenges norms of intelligibility, with the specific purpose of transforming audibility and breaking down binaries between ‘Us’, the audible and ‘Them’, the silent or stigmatised Others (2017: 06).

Here Bassel speaks to the process of othering that takes place when speaking subjects are not appropriately recognised, and how listening can help disrupt this process. Further, Bassel highlights how the adoption of a politics of listening “undertaken in adversarial, unequal and tense political moments” can set off a chain reaction in which “unheard voices are listened to in moments of heightened tension and anxiety” (Bassel 2017: 05). Dreher’s (2009) “listening across difference” for example, is a politics of listening that focuses on understanding the “networks of power and privilege” so that “those who enjoy the prerogative of not listening” are put into a position where they have to “give up that privilege” (p. 451).

Dreher (2009: 452) explains that “listening across difference” must be power sensitive and “responsive to the inequalities and conflicts that shape speaking and listening relationships”. According to Dreher (2009) the challenge of “listening across difference” as a means to undo privilege lies in the reality that “colonial histories and contemporary struggle produce unearned privileges that should not be ignored” and “privilege most often operates through remaining unmarked, normalised, and naturalized” (p. 452). What this means for facilitation

is that there are some participants who routinely enjoy the privilege of speaking and being heard while there are other participants who are “silent and stigmatised others” (Bassel 2017: 06).

Facilitating a space that prioritises those who have been silenced and stigmatised is a challenging task. In an interview for this research cultural worker Judy Seidman reflects on her experience of facilitating an art-making workshop where she and other facilitators were forced to act against a participant who used their power and privilege to intimidate another participant.

We were doing body maps where you ask people to think about what has happened to them and how has it affected their body. And then they draw the things that they feel helps make them the person that they are. We were in a group that deals with gender and at that point we had people from a lot of the alternate gender organisations. And those get to be quite difficult conversations sometimes. There was this fairly sort of thin, short young woman. I think she was in her early twenties from one of those organisations. She did a picture about why she was lesbian and this man from another organisation which was supposed to be a gender related organisation started asking her “Well what do you do when you are having sex with a woman?” And she said, “This is not appropriate, this is not what we are going to talk about.” And he wouldn’t let it go and finally she said, “Look, your organisation is very close to our organisation, if you really want to know about this, we can teach you, but we are not going to do it at this venue this is not the right place. You can come to our office, and we can talk about those issues. If it’s really necessary but really, I don’t think it’s necessary.” He then said something to her very quietly and we didn’t hear it. She burst into tears and ran out of the room. So, we had principles about what you should do in those circumstances, we stopped the class, and we went and calmed her down. Turns out he said to her “If I come to your offices, I am coming to get you.” At which point [the other facilitator], the head of 1-in-9, and me had a long discussion and decided we were going to ban men from the class at least at that point. Which was not fair to the ones that were very good, but we chose to prioritise the safety and comfort of the people who were most vulnerable in those meetings (Seidman Interview 2022).

Seidman’s experience highlights various points about understanding power and privilege and facilitating spaces that host difficult conversations. This experience, which illustrates how participants can influence how others engage, express themselves and feel safe in a space, provides valuable information on facilitation (Bens 2005). The example shows how Seidman embodies the values of co-operation, egalitarianism, and responsibility (Auvine et al. 2002: 54) and prioritising empowerment through a politics of listening and a framework of “listening across difference” (Dreher 2009).

The process of the young woman sharing the picture about why she is lesbian can be seen as speaking or her expression of voice with regards to her identity and her sexuality. The man's response to divert the conversation and make it about the sexual engagements of all lesbians is a form of cataphatic listening (Waks 2007). The man's listening habitus (Lipari 2014: 52) falls clearly in line with broad South African beliefs where "violence against lesbians precipitated by culturally sanctioned homophobia and hate speech, often results in physical, mental and emotional harm inflicted on such women (mostly by men)" (Mkhize, Bennett, Reddy, and Moletsane 2010: 02). Initially, the man practises his privilege by refusing to listen and ignoring the woman's attempts to steer the conversation away from sexualising lesbian women. He then enforces his power by threatening the woman with violence and attempting to position her in similar ways to how other lesbians have been positioned in the South African context, where they "face problems of, among others, disempowerment, stigma, rejection, ignorance and isolation" (Mkhize, et al. 2010: 02).

Here Seidman and her co-facilitators' quick and decisive actions to stop the engagement and go see what the woman had experienced embodies a "politics of listening" (Bassel 2017) and "listening across difference" because they were "power sensitive and responsive to the inequalities and conflicts that shape[d] the speaking and listening relationships" within the workshop (Dreher 2009: 452). According to Mkhize, et al. (2010) lesbians in "homophobic contexts and cultures in which sexual violence is a popular weapon" like South Africa, are more vulnerable to "local policing through physical and sexual assault" (p. 26). The threat that the man quietly made to the young woman gains more power when understood as being part of a wider context of homophobia and policing. In South Africa, there have been very specific forms of sexual attacks, namely curative rape, that have been used to "humiliate and punish lesbian women for their choice of sexual identity and lifestyle" (Mkhize 2010: 26). Understanding this context and the power and privilege that the man had in that context is vital for the facilitators to ensure they do all they can to protect and empower the lesbian woman who has chosen to illustrate, embrace and voice her identity.

By deciding to ban men from the class the facilitators prioritised the importance of all participants embodying the politics of listening and care and did not want to risk facilitating a space where the positionality and power of some participants, particularly men, could be used to oppress others, in this case lesbian women. We see from this decision, the values of egalitarianism, co-operation, and responsibility (Auvine et al. 2002: 54) being used to determine what is best for the overall achievement of the groups goals, one of which is

empowering voice and creating a safe space for participants. According to Bens (2005) a key principle of facilitation includes advocating “empowerment and participation so that groups buy in and own the outcomes of their deliberations” (p. 03). Seidman and her co-facilitators understand the context of violence in South Africa and particularly how it makes lesbian women more vulnerable to gender-based violence and abuse and realise that “empowerment and participation” could not take place in that context with men present. Seidman and her co-facilitators’ decision aligns with another one of Bens (2005) principles of facilitation, which states that “all facilitation activities aim to foster co-operation and commitment” (p. 03).

An integral part of the process of fostering co-operation and commitment is building trust, and it is clear from Seidman and her co-facilitators’ decision that the process of removing men from the class was aimed at rebuilding trust and creating a safe space to ensure that all the participants were free to speak and share and commit to the tasks of the engagement.

Gouws reflects on similar decision making that goes into creating safe spaces when conducting focus groups that deal with gender-based violence.

I think people need to feel safe. So, what we ask ourselves when we do focus group work is, do we put men and women together in the same room and make them talk to each other and see what comes out? Or do you rather have women in a safe space and have men in a safe space? In that instance then, of course, they don’t hear each other, but they can hear from their own genders. And sometimes they speak more openly (Gouws Interview 2023).

Both Gouws’s and Seidman’s reflections indicate that although the optimal situation would have people participating and “listening across difference” especially along gender lines, the need for safety and empowerment of voice of participants may not allow the groups to be facilitated in that way. An obvious shortcoming of this important safety consideration is creating the space for people to speak and listen to voices they may not otherwise hear – in a mediated and facilitated context. In an interview for this research, community publisher Kathy Bond-Stewart introduces a community publishing method that may effectively allow different participants to engage safely and communicate across difference in a workshop setting:

One of my favourite parts of my job is using images to spark discussions and insights. Once you understand the context, you are aware that you are normally working with very marginalised people. Either people marginalised by poverty, gender-based violence or organised violence. I have also worked with young people in prisons. So, it’s not easy to get them talking deeply and freely and in

order to do this you need to find appropriate images. I often use tangible symbols or pictures although tangible symbols are better to really spark discussions and insights and self-expression because the images are normally images that surround painful issues with hope (Bond-Stewart Interview 2022).

Enhancing Community Voices (ECV), an NGO that Bond-Stewart heads, defines community publishing, which begins its process with listening research, as an “internally driven process of change, rooted in community wisdom, creativity, and solidarity” (ECV 2024). The process begins with a trained community publishing facilitator “listening intensively” to the “unstructured conversations of a particular group in their locality, in places where people usually gather” (ECV 2024). After a sustained period, the facilitator will note social, economic, and political issues that are recurring during the unstructured listening process. The purpose of the listening is to “identify generative themes and issues people feel strongly about” to inform workshops and publication programmes so participants resonate with the content and “are motivated to take action” (ECV 2024). Bond-Stewart’s reflection highlights an engagement that follows the initial process of “listening and understanding the context” (ECV 2024). Here the facilitator chooses certain images and uses those images to generate conversation and engagement. Bond-Stewart explains that if an effective image is chosen, it has the ability to bridge divides and stimulate a process of engagement even between participants with conflictual relationships.

In 2009 or 2008 we used an image that was very effective. The workshop was involved with understanding organised violence and we were doing peace building in some of the hotter spots in the country (Zimbabwe). And we had people who had literally been in violent conflict with each other sitting in the same room. And they could hardly bear to be in the same room, let alone talk or listen to one another. And my colleague is a former war veteran, her and I were the only women in that space. So, we used pictures of a clay water pot, a spear, and a calabash for scooping water as images of life bringing and life taking culture. And it’s just amazing how it got people to face each other and talk to each other. So, these images were really stimulating, and they worked really well (Bond-Stewart Interview 2022).

According to Bens (2005) a key principle of facilitation is valuing “the synergistic power of collective thought and strive to help groups arrive at collaborative decisions that represent a win for all parties” (p. 03). To achieve this principle within community publishing, Bond-Stewart shows that participants are given pictures which are aimed at generating “constructive discussion on problems and to inspire and give hope that alternatives are possible” (ECV 2024). What follows is the process of participants beginning to build trust

with one another and working towards the common goal of publishing true expressions of the community – in this case voicing their thoughts on organised violence in their community. What the picture exercise highlights here is that it may be possible for facilitators to mediate spaces where “listening across difference” takes place, this process however requires deep thought, understanding of the context and targeted trust building activities aimed at inspiring collaborative engagement towards meeting the goals of a designated space.

Building trust and creating a safe space to engage across difference

Trust is an important feature of all kinds of social relationships (Hogan 2003). Trust, however, is built slowly, is fragile and can be destroyed in an instant. If trust is broken or lost, “it takes time to rebuild, or may never be regained” (Hogan 2003: 45). When it comes to facilitation, as highlighted above, the participants need to trust one another and “to feel trust in the facilitator and the institutions involved in the workshops” (Hogan 2003: 45). According to Hogan (2003), “trustworthiness is built when there is a perception of fairness and fair play” (p. 45). According to Chevalier and Buckles (2019), a facilitator’s role in trust building may move them to intervene in situations “where there may be tension or mistrust, where [participants] take rigid positions” and where participants do not feel free to express themselves, or clear rules of order are needed (p. 143). Trust also affects the initial stages of creating a space for engagement because facilitators need to offer “an environment that inspires trust in the convening body, the facilitation team and the questions and rules that guide the overall process” (Chevalier & Buckles 2019: 144).

Bond-Stewart explains the intricate process of trust building involved in the process of creating and facilitating community publishing workshops that deal with gender-based violence and violence against women and children:

The facilitation process is firstly about building relationships. That’s absolutely fundamental especially relationships across divides because we live in such a fragmented society. And for community publishing you really need to bridge a lot of these divides. It’s regarding relationships; building positive relationships often in cases where relationships have been very destructive. Building relationships, especially trust building is so important for people who have been so abused. And also building relationships across people who have been in very conflictual relationships (Bond-Stewart Interview 2022).

Bond-Stewart suggests that the facilitator should be equipped with the methods and resources to begin to build relationships across divides. Hogan (2003: 45) explains that at times,

meetings and workshops are attended by “angry, frustrated and/or fearful” people and an effective strategy for facilitators to build trust among these people is embracing the “COKE” acronym developed by Covello (1992) and Peters and his coworkers in 1997. According to Hogan (2003), the COKE acronym, which stands for “commitment”, “openness”, “knowledge,” and “empathy”, helps facilitators “build empathy and trust with adults in community meetings” (p. 45). Hogan (2003) explains that the facilitator should show commitment to the subject area, to facilitation and to participants. There should be a degree of openness, which ensures that the facilitator is approachable and contactable in and out of the workshop, they are open to questions and there are established ground rules. Knowledge is concerned with the facilitator’s experience and research in the subject area. And empathy, which “is the most important of the four attributes”, involves facilitators getting on the same wavelength as participants, making connections and building rapport (Hogan 2003: 46).

Seidman explains that trust building prioritises creating a safe and comfortable environment governed by clear rules that protect the participants against being bullied or discriminated against by other participants.

For participants to build trust you need a space that is comfortable, you need people in the group who go through introductory rules for the workshop. Rules like, no cross talking over people, no telling people to shut up, no discriminatory stuff, and if you see it, you need to flag it. And if you don’t feel that you can cope with it, you must come to a facilitator and say that this is a problem even if it is not happening to you. And in some cases, in workshops especially with adults there is a process, again this was not original to me this is Freirean methodology, which suggests you appoint people as class monitors or group monitors if you suspect that there might be some kinds of problems. So, everyone gets to keep track of what they see happening and at the end of the day the facilitator can ask, “have you seen any experiences of gender discrimination or class discrimination or xenophobia?” And that can be as latent or as subtle as the person thinks it is, but the idea is basically if you can set up a couple of people to be monitors and change it every day so that the people who also have those experiences also think about what they are looking for. This becomes a way to make conversations about discrimination part of the discussion in the group which is quite cool (Seidman Interview 2022).

Here we see that Seidman’s process of trust building not only requires “commitment” and “empathy” (Hogan 2003: 54) from the facilitators but also requires participants to show these attributes when they take up the responsibilities of being a monitor and they “keep track of what they see happening” (Seidman Interview 2022). Through this process the participants are given an opportunity to look out for one another, curb various forms of discrimination and

ill behaviour and act in each other's interests by communicating any problems to the facilitators. The process also does the work of creating the opportunity for discussions about the issues that might have occurred. Bond-Stewart has similar sentiments on building trust in workshops and meetings. Her process, however, starts with an engagement she terms "centring".

Building trust is exactly why we begin every meeting with centring. Getting people to reflect on a symbol or an image and then introduce themselves to the whole group. It's a whole process of building up trust and that's how we always start. And after that, and this is also another important thing, is everyone is given a role in our meetings. We hand over leadership and we share roles. So, everyone feels like they are running the meeting, and they have something important to say. And then the facilitator varies things. There are times when people are asked to write something individually, and there are times when people work in teams, there are times when people are working with a group, and there are different rhythms of activities so that everyone is vocal (Bond-Stewart Interview 2022).

Both Bond-Stewart's and Seidman's reflections indicated that there is Freirean pedagogy of facilitation involved in building trust and creating a safe space (Poekert 2011). The pedagogy they allude to encourages "respectful relationships" among participants, stimulates trust and confidence building, "provides a balance of autonomy and external direction, and addresses power relations through shared leadership structures" (Luguetti, Oliver & Parker 2020: 04). In Seidman's process, the opportunity to discuss internal issues and acts of discrimination opens the engagement up to embracing a process of "listening across difference" (Dreher 2009). These facilitators, through cultivating their "knowledge" (Hogan 2003: 54) and "unstructured listening" (ECV 2024), have come to understand the context of the engagements they facilitate and the ingrained "listening habitus" of the participants. Their knowledge and expertise guide them when they are deciding what kind of space would safely confront structural power imbalances while empowering participants to communicate and work towards a common goal.

Where participants can safely communicate and "listen across difference", the facilitators have created "icebreakers" to stimulate comfort and trust building among participants. Where the space is not safe for some participants to communicate across divides, the facilitators have separated the groups and created groups that facilitate a process of empowering voice among the participants.

The role of a critically self-reflexive facilitator: empowering voice, promoting participation, and demonstrating listening

In her book *Advanced facilitation techniques: tools and techniques to master difficult situations*, Ingrid Bens (2005) lists the roles of a facilitator. These roles prioritise a range of the values of facilitation highlighted by Auvine et al. (2003). According to Bens (2005) the facilitator should “suggest ways of proceeding, offer tools and techniques, make sure everyone is heard, point out digressions, ask probing questions, offer ideas for consideration, offer feedback on meetings, suggest improvement ideas, help the group achieve closure, encourage clear next steps, [and] manage the process so members are free to participate in the discussion” (p. 95).

As previously highlighted a key principle that Bens prioritises for facilitators is that they “advocate empowerment and participation so that groups buy in and own the outcomes of their deliberations” (03). Adopting a “politics of listening” (Dreher 2009), as argued in the previous section, is one way for facilitators to prioritise this principle. Added to this, facilitators should adopt a “politics of voice” (Couldry 2009) to encourage participation, empower voice in the participants, and stimulate collective responsibility among participants during a facilitated process. Bens’s (2003) suggestion that the facilitator should “make sure that everyone is heard”, for example, prioritises not only the values of democracy, responsibility, co-operation, and egalitarianism (Auvine et al. 2003: 53-54), but also draws on a “politics of listening” as well as a “politics of voice”.

Here the relationship between voice and listening is emphasised. Couldry (2009) explains this relationship and argues that “it is through the process of listening that the value of voice is mutually registered” in people (Couldry 2009: 579). The ways in which people adjust in order to listen are directly related to their attempt at “finding better ways of taking account of the complexities, [and] the processual subtleties, of voice” (Couldry 2009: 579). Facilitators who adopt a “politics of voice” have the ability to effect change “in contexts where long-entrenched inequalities of representation need to be addressed” (Couldry 2010: 01).

The coding process of this research revealed that the concepts of “empowering voice”, “demonstrating listening” and “critical self-reflexivity” were key concepts in the process of facilitating workshops, spaces and engagements that deal with gender-based violence in South Africa. Two key arguments emerged with regards to the role of a facilitator in this context. Firstly, the facilitator of a process of listening in the face of gender-based violence in

South Africa, has to be critically self-reflexive and be able to take critique. According to this argument, the facilitator must have humility and not be defensive in order to listen to others' understandings and critiques. And secondly, the facilitator's role should be attuned to both the facilitation of listening and the empowerment of voice to host conducive dialogical communicative spaces. According to this argument the facilitator has to find ways to build trust, demonstrate listening, and encourage collective responsibility among participants and ensure that the space remains safe and open to host a robust process of speaking and listening.

The challenge of facilitation: using critical self-reflexivity to promote engagement and participation

Bens (2005) argues that one of the biggest challenges faced by facilitators "is remaining neutral" when meetings begin to flounder. Facilitators who take on a "helping role" usually have the "impulse to rescue a struggling group" (p. 29). The challenge, Bens (2005) argues, is made more prominent by the "fact that facilitators should never stand by idly while a group makes a disastrous decision" (p. 29). Having clear guidelines for the facilitator to establish their role in an engagement space is therefore very important, because it can shape the ways in which a facilitator is able to intervene when necessary. If a group makes a hasty decision without adequate data and information, for example, the facilitator can intervene by engaging the participants in searching for and finding the missing information needed "to make an effective decision" (Bens 2005: 29).

This information can then be used as a "checklist to test the quality of the available options" (Bens 2005: 29). For a facilitator to be equipped to intervene, however, there is a level of self-reflexivity that is needed to ensure that their strategies remain committed to the goals of the group and the goals of the intervention. Speaking on her experience facilitating the Sexual Violence Task Team, MacLeod highlights the key roles one needs to be a facilitator in a contentious engagement space.

The main trait that a facilitator must have, is a deep belief in collective action. And I suppose a respect of the knowledge and expertise of people who don't necessarily have the qualifications. So, they're not the doctors or the professors but they possess the actual knowledge and expertise and understandings of the people that are involved in the processes. Also, facilitators should not be defensive, so they must be able to take critique. And have processes of self-reflection, saying, "yes that's valid" and, "you are right" and, "I know I erred there". So, the humility to listen to others' understandings and critiques, and to

adjust accordingly. Facilitation is also about being clear as to what you are doing and not to be derailed by the many difficult processes. So, if the aim is to retain collective voice and there are those who wish to stamp that out – you need to have the ability to just stand up to it (MacLeod Interview 2023).

Here MacLeod highlights four important roles and considerations of a facilitator. First, they must believe in collective action. This points to the participatory framework that the facilitator needs to adopt. Here constructive collective action or participation means that the “resolution of concern will require a mutual education process and joint problem-solving or conflict resolution activities” (Hogan 2003: 311). Second, the facilitator should understand that the “mutual education process and problem solving” (Hogan 2003: 311) involves the knowledge and expertise of not only the facilitators but also the participants who have their own knowledge and expertise regardless of whether they are a “doctor” or “professor”. Third, the facilitator has to show humility, be self-reflective and be able to take critique, especially because “facilitators never use the process role in order to seek personal power or control” (Bens 2005: 03). When the facilitator shows humility and is open to critique, they admit that they are not above the process, do not have all the expertise and knowledge necessary for change and are mainly concerned with “enhancing the effectiveness of others” (Bens 2005: 03). Fourth, the facilitator should remain aware of the goals of the engagement in order to ensure that the process is not derailed by any participants with their own agenda.

Facilitating contentious spaces or spaces like the Sexual Violence Task Team listening space can be challenging because there are multiple stakeholders each with valid points that may derail the original intention of the space. MacLeod explains that when this is the case, the facilitator has to steer the engagement in the direction of the aims of the engagement:

Facilitating the task team was a challenging process and it did take all of my facilitation skills to try to manage the process and space. There were some misconceptions also, some people wanted to use [the space] as a protest space as well, which was fine. I remember one particular person saying, that what’s happening, the university’s bringing in police and putting our bodies on the line, is unacceptable. And as a facilitator you just have it and say, “yes, yes, yes, I hear you”. What would you like see in the terms of reference for this task team that would speak to that?”. So, that facilitation process was about allowing people to say those sorts of things because it was their immediate experience and their immediate visceral response to what was happening on campus at the time. So, it really was a case of allowing people to be angry and not responding to the anger. Not being defensive about what the university is or isn’t. But just hearing and then saying, “I hear you. Let’s talk about how we can incorporate that into something that this task team will address in some way or in or another.” And

“how do you think it could be addressed,” and, “what mechanisms do we need to include to try to address those conversations” (MacLeod Interview 2023).

MacLeod’s experience illustrates how facilitators can respond to participants whose “immediate experience and immediate visceral response” (MacLeod Interview 2023) draws the conversation away from the goals of the engagement. By relating it back to the goal at hand, of creating the terms of reference for the task team, the facilitator allows the participant to shape the problem-solving activity using their experience. This process can work effectively at both empowering voice among participants and dealing with the matters associated with the goals of the space and engagement. The question of facilitators remaining neutral, however, returns to the fore if the participants make rash decisions based on their “immediate visceral experience”. Phillips and Phillips (1993) argue that facilitators, when involved in helping groups, should refrain from “appraising or refuting statements made: they should contribute to the process and structure, not the content” (p. 95). Gregory and Romm (2001), however, are concerned about this kind of neutral stance. They propose that instead of facilitators assuming a neutral, uninvolved stance, their role should be extended towards a process of “critical facilitator” (p. 453). According to Gregory and Romm (2001) critical facilitation is premised on the development of “an orientation of openness to discourse” (p. 453). Drawing on Schein’s (1987) notion of process consultation, Gregory and Romm (2001) imagine that a facilitator “strives to improve group dynamics or provide guided learning”, while assisting participants to gain interpersonal skills and “transforming the pattern of communication” (p. 458). Concern arises in the context of facilitation, when “participants may (knowingly, unknowingly) be using information and experiences in a way that perverts/distorts possibilities for discursive engagements with alternative visions” (Gregory & Romm 2001: 458).

Here if the critical facilitator intervenes to “alter the flow of the discussion” using a process of “validity checking” (Habermas 1984), while being critically aware of their values and beliefs, they “will make a difference to the way in which the discussion becomes directed” (Gregory and Romm 2001: 458-459). Gregory and Romm (2001) argue that the critical facilitator is better than the neutral facilitator because the critical facilitator “allows participants to benefit from the facilitator’s challenging input, expressed openly as part of the discursive encounter” (p. 465).

A critical facilitator, therefore, has a keen awareness of themselves, their beliefs, their values, and the power they hold in a facilitation context. If the critical facilitator is to intervene in an

engagement, they should do so only in the interest of creating a discursive encounter that is more robust, informed and questioning. Participants working with a critical facilitator should be empowered to question, critique, and disagree with fellow participants as well as the critical facilitator. This mode of facilitation is aimed at creating diversity in the discourse and discussion of engagement as well as empowering participants to freely express their voice and their opinion.

This section on the roles and responsibilities of critical facilitator indicate that it is not a simple task. Added to this, if a critical facilitator is to encourage and use a process of listening otherwise, they may need to contend with the difficulties associated with listening in this manner. As highlighted in previous chapters, listening otherwise creates the space for alterity and disturbance. The critical facilitator needs to be aware of these factors and be equipped to encourage these kinds of engagements. Included in the skills of a critical facilitator in the South African context, is the ability to handle complex listening engagements, facilitate multilingual spaces and create the means for paralinguistic communication to take place.

Using art and writing to empower voice and demonstrate listening

The role of a facilitator, as previously mentioned, involves advocating empowerment and participation to help groups get to a point where they are able to solve conflicts and meet their goals. This process involves facilitators using various techniques for trust building, to stimulate diverse discussion and to get participants interested in the collective agenda of the engagement. One strategy that Hogan (2003) offers, is that facilitators encourage dialogue among participants rather than debate. The “competitive, win-lose” atmosphere of debate creates a relationship where “listening is overridden by the need to interrupt with one’s own side of the argument, or rather what is perceived to be the correct or right side or answer (Hogan 2003: 220).

Dialogue on the other hand, has a more convivial approach to engaging that moves “participants to work together as a team through interaction in search of new meaning and understanding” (Hogan 2003: 220). Hogan (2003) suggests that facilitators stimulate dialogue by encouraging participants to observe their patterns of thought and listening. This process of observation involves adopting a politics of voice and a politics of listening. In his work, “Rethinking the politics of voice”, Nick Couldry explains that listening is “the act of recognising what others have to say, recognising that they have something to say” and “like

all human beings they have the capacity to give an account of their lives that is reflective and continuous; an ongoing embodied process of reflection” (Couldry 2009: 579). When facilitators encourage participants to interrogate their patterns of listening, they hope to stimulate a process where the participants begin to prioritise the voices of those around them.

Couldry (2009) explains that the meaning of voice, in contexts such as the one mentioned here, not only refers to the “simple claim to speak... in one’s own name” (p. 579). Voice, in the facilitation context, means much more than that. It refers to “the second-order value of voice that is embodied in the process of mutually recognising our claims on each other as reflexive human agents” (Couldry 2009: 579). Couldry (2009) explains that the concepts of listening and voice are sewn together because people would not care so much about listening if they were not interested in hosting and empowering voice. Bond-Stewart illustrates this relationship and explains how empowering voice through deep listening is an essential facilitation strategy in community publishing:

I think the only way that societies can really change and develop is if you tap deeply into people’s own thoughts and experiences and expression, their struggles, and their solidarities. I can’t see any other way that one finds the energy for social change or development other than tapping into the wisdom that the people have. It is very useful. So that’s really how Community Publishing started, and it has become more refined over the years, but relies on the idea that there is a resource in every community, regardless of how impoverished, regardless of how they are oppressed or the terrible violence or trauma they have been through. There is always these resources of people using their own wisdom, their own creativity, and their own solidarity. I think what’s very important is that you listen widely, and you listen deeply. Listening can be seen as really excavating and bringing out people’s voices. This can help them discover their own voice and value and their own strength. Listening deeply can be an act of highlighting the powerful voices of the community (Bond-Stewart Interview 2022).

Here Bond-Stewart highlights how the method she terms “deep listening” can “excavate” and bring out the voices of the participants involved in community publishing workshops. This participatory methodology emphasises listening so that the participants’ voices can be reflected in the work published after the workshops. Couldry (2010) argues that voice requires material form which may be individual, collective, or distributed. This means that voice does not emerge in isolation, “without support” (Couldry 2010: 09). On the contrary, voice is socially grounded and therefore “having a voice requires resources: both practical resources (language) and the (seemingly purely symbolic) status necessary if one is to be recognised by others as having a voice” (Couldry 2010: 07).

Bond-Stewart's reflection that "there is a resource in every community" (Bond-Stewart Interview) is an acknowledgement or recognition that there are voices worth listening to in the communities in which she works. Both the workshops and the subsequent books that are published act as the "material form" (Couldry 2010: 09) that the voices of the participants take on. Bond-Stewart highlights that the community publishing methodology requires the voices of community members in order to speak about the community. In doing so, Bond-Stewart illustrates that the community publishing methodology provides the symbolic resource of recognising the community members as having a voice and provides the practical resources of providing the language of creative writing a means to empower the voices of the community. Poetry and collaboration are used as practical "languages" to communicate to the participants that their voices are valuable, and their contributions are necessary. Bond-Stewart explains how creative writing is used to inspire voice at every workshop.

Zimbabwean researchers get people to write and most Zimbabweans are highly literate. Your response if you write and if you talk are different. And once you ask people to write you just get an amazing range of quality and quantity in everything. We always begin and end with poetry. We use poetry a great deal. Poetry is also a very good vehicle for strong emotions. It's also really good for avoiding censorship. It inspires, it provokes. I think it's a very important tool. And normally we begin and end a meeting with poems about the topic, about people similar to those working in the workshop. We probably find that there are one or two poets in the room. Some who are just incredible, who can just compose a profound poem which summarises everything that has been said in the course of an hour. Meetings often begin so boringly. And so, if you begin with a poem, it's okay and also begin by sharing all of the roles of the meeting. So, some people will be sharing, some people will be doing time keeping, some people will be reading, some people will be doing energisers. You know everyone has something to do. Then everyone instinctively from the beginning has a value role. It's not having a facilitator up there and participants back there. Everyone is helping the process move. So, I think the other point about workshops is that you vary the groupings, and you vary the kinds of activities so that people are always wide awake and really focused (Bond-Stewart Interview 2022).

Couldry (2010) explains that ownership of the "materials" and "distribution of narrative resources" is necessary for people to feel like they have a voice and are therefore not oppressed (p. 09). These resources should be available for people to "build an account of themselves" and should be "theirs to adapt and control" (Couldry 2010: 09). Without this, then there is a "deep denial of voice" and a "deep form of oppression" (Couldry 2010: 09). What Bond-Stewart highlights is that the use of poetry and the process of assigning roles

within the workshop act as a symbol of sharing “materials” and “narrative resources” (Couldry 2010) with the participants who then share their voices.

The process of empowering voice goes beyond just listening to the accounts of the participants and recognises that they have diverse and interesting contributions to make in the facilitation process as well. Bond-Stewart also highlights the importance of using poetry as a “language” (Couldry 2010) of expression because she says it is a good vehicle for emotion and avoiding censorship. What Bond-Stewart is saying, essentially, is that the speaking habitus of poetry is not confined to the “patterns that are shaped by [the participants] surroundings and their history” (Lipari 2014) of policing and censorship in Zimbabwe.

Seidman, who uses “body mapping” (Coetzee, et al. 2019) as the “language” (Couldry 2010), explains how the process not only empowers voice but also prioritises trust building and collaboration from the beginning of the process.

With the body mapping we start by doing an outline. So, you have somebody lie on a piece of paper and then you ask somebody else to draw around them. Just an outline, a straight outline. And when you introduce that, you have to point out that you have to trust the person who is doing the drawing, and they have to trust you. Once the outline is there then you take it over because it is going to be your picture, but from the beginning it’s a matter of it’s not just you, it’s an interaction. And then, depending on the group and depending on what the subject is we can ask what the overall concept or what the picture is. We ask people to sit on top of the picture or the outline and think – who am I? How did I get here? What are the issues I want to express? If it’s gender-based violence; have I experienced gender-based violence? Is it something that is part of my overall experience? We don’t usually do gender-based violence directly but what we have found is that it is really important when working with women conceptualising themselves that you need to at least express it right at the beginning. Because otherwise people feel afraid to or unwilling to go into it. They have been silenced and told for so long that it’s their fault one way or the other (Seidman Interview 2022).

Here we see again how voice requires a material form (Couldry 2010) which is collective. When the facilitators begin the process of body mapping, they ask participants to trust one another and collaboratively create outlines that take on the material form that will later host the voices of the participants. The workshop and methodology act as symbolic resources of recognising that each participant has a voice (Couldry 2010). The actual body maps, the reflections within them and any words and colours used to decorate them act as the practical resource and language used to pronounce the voice of the participants. Although the workshops do not specifically focus on gender-based violence, Seidman raises an important point about including gender-based violence as a consideration. This consideration takes into

account that years of silencing at the hands of gender-based violence in a patriarchal society may result in participants thinking any violation of that kind is not important for discussion. Seidman shares an anecdote that highlights various facilitator responsibilities that have been covered in this chapter:

When we first did this workshop, we asked people to think about, since this is a workshop about the violations that were done to you, what did they see as a violation. What are the images in your mind. Out of the nine people in the room there was only one that said gender. So, when we started putting it on the walls she gave this description. She didn't actually talk about exactly what happened, but when we were assessing it, I said, not about her picture but about all of them, that nobody here has mentioned gender-based violence. Yet we know that particularly in that area, there was gender-based violence and that this is a form of human rights violation. Four of the nine women stood up and said I was raped by soldiers during that time. And when we talked about it afterwards, we said that in every single one of these workshops that we did, we should throw in the concepts gender and gender-based violence. In the introduction, not after they have done the drawings (Seidman Interview 2022).

Here the role of a critical facilitator is underscored by understanding a particular context and using that information to empower voice among participants. Instead of “remaining neutral” and accepting the participants’ discussion as is, Seidman introduced the concept of gender-based violence which influenced participants’ understanding of what counts as a human rights violation. Once gender-based violence was added to the discussion, more participants voiced their experience of violation and rape. Here Seidman was able to “alter the flow of discussion” (Gregory & Romm 2001: 458), while being critically aware that her values and beliefs could “make a difference in the way the discussion [became] directed” (Gregory & Romm 2001: 458). The joint facilitator decision to begin future workshops with a similar intervention emphasises a politics of listening that is “power sensitive”, understands the routine silencing of women and them speaking out against gender-based violence, and is “responsive to the inequalities and conflicts that shape speaking and listening relationships” in South Africa (Dreher 2009: 452).

Critical facilitation is not an easy process to achieve. It requires deep thought, an understanding of the context, and a deep and unwavering commitment to communal action. What this chapter highlights is that critical facilitation, in spaces geared towards listening, is possible. The process begins with the facilitator understanding the context enough to create a listening space or intervention for it. The facilitator can lean on process design, a participatory action research methodology, to create a listening space with goals, questions

and tools to facilitate a process of listening towards achievable outcomes. In the space the facilitator needs to be prepared to facilitate a process of listening across difference that takes into consideration the networks of power and privilege. The primary goals of the facilitator should be to build trust, foster safety, and empower voice through creative means such as art and writing. Although the process of critical facilitation is complex, the process design methodology encourages facilitators to lean on past spaces and interventions and learn from them, so that facilitators are not reinventing the wheel each time they attempt to listen.

Chapter 9: The framework for listening otherwise

Introduction

Throughout this thesis there has been a consistent argument about the listening habits of South Africans. As previously mentioned, listening habitus is shaped by one's culture, social location within that culture and life experiences (Lipari 2014). The listening habitus of South Africans, particularly to issues surrounding gender-based violence and the normalisation of violence against women, is shaped by three main influences. Firstly South Africa's history of colonialism, apartheid and racial oppression has created boundaries and categories that normalise violence and police the actions of women and men in contemporary South Africa (Moffet 2006). These categories play a vital role in South African's imagined realities and crucially shape how we have come to understand gender-based violence, femicide, rape and the assault of women in the present context (Gqola 2015).

The second influence that shapes South African's listening habitus to gender-based violence is the national culture of patriarchal structural violence (Storkey 2015). Patriarchal structural violence takes place when "systems or structures of exploitation [normalise] socially constructed gender differences and legitimise male domination" (Storkey 2015: 183). This culture is evident in the treatment of rape victims and various publicised rape trials that show how male dominance and rape myths are enough to excuse rape, rendering it invisible in the South African context.

A third influence, which shapes South Africa's listening habitus, is the language, discourse and ideology that the media and government use to represent gender-based violence to a South African audience. Any time these institutions normalise misogyny and gender-based violence they fulfil the role of shaping the public's orientation to violence. When the representations include victim blaming (Oparinde & Matsha 2021) or ignore the gendered nature of certain assaults (Watson & Mentor-Lalu 2015) they train the audience to listen, understand and think of gender-based violence in similar ways. The representations, therefore, determine the kind of listening that the South African public engages in when they are faced with stories, testimonies and engagements that deal with gender-based violence and femicide.

Careful consideration about listening, listening habitus and the ways in which one listens, particularly in relation to gender-based violence, is extremely important. Following a process of rigorous initial, focused and thematic coding, the codes “listening deeply”, “intuitive listening”, and “active listening” emerged as concepts that are key to the process of listening in the face of gender-based violence. These concepts alongside the arguments and concepts found in the previous chapters have been coded to inform this chapter and the framework for listening that will be presented here. The chapter begins by presenting a conceptual framework of listening otherwise to gender-based violence in the South African context. In this section the concepts of critical facilitation, the awareness of space and power, active and engaged listening, dialogical communication, listening towards achievable outcomes and commitment to communal action will be used to generate a schema for listening otherwise to gender-based violence. This is followed by the presentation of a series of practical steps to guide those interested in understanding how they can listen otherwise. The six steps are a practical guide for listening in the face of gender-based violence and can be applied to other contexts as well. At the close of this chapter are a few considerations for media practitioners engaging with and representing gender-based violence to a South African audience. These considerations combine some aspects of the research findings with the listening framework to suggest possible ways these institutions can perform better when listening and shaping the public listening habitus to gender-based violence.

A conceptual guide to shedding the habitus

When we are asked to shed the habitus we are asked to voluntarily allow ourselves to not know; to ignore what history and culture have taught us and feel the moment and take it as it comes to us; to not expect, but rather mould ourselves into an empty canvas and be transported to an unknown place where bearing witness is the only point of the journey. But what if our canvas is not empty? What if we are covered in layers and layers of paint in the colours of pain, and our histories of struggle, love, and violence? If we have witnessed the world and bear the brush strokes to prove it, how then can we truly listen otherwise?

Listening otherwise in the face of gender-based violence in South Africa is an extremely difficult task. It is the listener committing to being aware of the other and becoming the space to host the other without expectation of where the communication will go. Listening otherwise in our context means that we do not become overwhelmed by what we might hear based on the dire situation in South Africa. It means that we do not adhere to labels such as

victim, survivor, perpetrator, or witness when we listen. We simply allow the listening to tell us something we couldn't have already known prior to the engagement. We do not assume a person's level of vulnerability based on their socio-economic status, gender, age, or education. We are not suspicious of a person when they do not behave in accordance with what we know about gender-based violence. When we listen, we do not wait for intervals in their communication where we can shoot off our judgements, advice, or straight-forward solutions. We do not allow our country's dire situation to overwhelm us to the point where we cease to host the other who speaks to us. Instead, we sit there, and we take it in. We allow it to exist outside of the control mechanisms we have built up to cope with the level of violence we are faced with. Listening otherwise in the face of gender-based violence is not a passive engagement; it is a difficult commitment to the other, to unflinchingly bear witness to their pain while renouncing control of their being. It is a commitment to letting go of the little control we might think we have of the narrative of gender-based violence and allowing the other to take us on a journey, painful as it may be.

One can, with some difficulty, take up the initiative of listening otherwise for the sake of bearing witness and being present and aware of the other. The principles of listening otherwise are attainable with focus and commitment especially when one is trying to engage on an interpersonal level. The conceptual framework that has been developed through this research has engaged with the principles of listening to account for listening otherwise in the face of gender-based violence on both an individual and a communal level. Because of the counterintuitive nature of the process, it requires active participation, awareness, and conscious facilitation. The framework consists of six concepts that include critical facilitation, the awareness of space and power, active and engaged listening, dialogical communication, listening towards achievable outcomes and commitment to communal action. These concepts are unpacked below.

Critical facilitation

When there are calls to "speak out" against gender-based violence, South Africans are asked to share stories of violence, call out cultures that normalise gendered violence, intervene where there is gender-based violence in their communities and report perpetrators to ensure that they face the full might of the law. These calls however rarely ever provide the resources to support those who speak out or ensure that listening takes place with the same energy as the speaking out. Here critical facilitation is crucial for a variety of reasons. First, the critical

facilitator acknowledges that there is a need for voicing concerns, particularly with regards to gender-based violence, and an equal need for those concerns to be heard and addressed. This acknowledgment also comes with understanding the context of violence, its history and how power works within that context.

The role of the critical facilitator begins with a deep and concerted effort to understand the context and need for voicing concerns, the role of listening and the power dynamics that may have an impact on the engagement. The facilitator can begin this process by asking some crucial questions to map the context where the need for voicing and listening has emerged. Here the facilitator can ask, what kind of society do we live in? How is power structured and who is empowered to speak in this society? What habits have been normalised in the society, that might have an impact on who can speak and who should listen? And most importantly, how can I set up an egalitarian space that undermines the existing habitus? The critical facilitator is then tasked with creating a participatory engagement process that invites those who need to voice their concerns and those who need to listen into one space.

Awareness of space and power

The creation of a conceptual or physical space is an important task for the critical facilitator because this space then acts as the host for dialogue, participation and listening. History and culture have positioned people differently, and these differences are apparent when people enter into spaces and dialogue. The critical facilitator needs to have an awareness of space and power to ensure that the space is able to host a listening process that addresses the needs of all the participants.

The critical facilitator needs to ask is the space a physical space or a conceptual space? And once the facilitator has decided on the kind of space to create, they must ask who needs to be a part of this space and whether the proposed space has the capacity to host the listening process? Here the facilitator needs to consider the needs of the participants and things like time, power dynamics and the physical make-up of the proposed space. They then should ask; how should the space be set up to ensure that all the participants feel empowered to both talk and actively listen to one another?

Active and engaged listening

The principles of active and engaged listening play a crucial role in the process of facilitation. Here the critical facilitator needs to ensure that all the participants are aware of the principles

and adhere to them throughout the listening process. Some principles of active and engaged listening have been highlighted in Table 1.8.

Considerations of active and engaged listening		
Listen actively and engage with ideas coming at you	Don't talk so much	Enable them to broaden the story
Be present	Don't anxiously worry about what the next question is	
Ask the right questions	Help the person elaborate on what they are saying	Encourage and empower the other to share their voice
Be comfortable with silence	Understanding that silence should be listened to as well	
Get past or work around cataphatic listening	Find a way to perceive differently (through creative processes like art or writing)	Hear where the person is at (from their position and not yours)
Be self-reflexive	Reflect on what the person is saying	

Table 1.8. Principles of listening that emerged from research interviews.

Table 1.8. highlights a few listening methods that are crucial for listening engagements. Here both the facilitator and participants are encouraged to empower the other to share their voice by asking the contextual questions, being present, reflecting on what the person is saying and, when necessary, using other forms of communication, like artwork or writing. This should be done all while respecting the role and intricacy of silence. The facilitator needs to do a lot to ensure that the process they undertake leads to listening. However, the facilitator's role should not only be attuned to listening but also to the empowerment of voice, and the facilitation of conducive dialogical communication.

Dialogical communication

Here the facilitator leans on the dialogical model of communication to promote dialogue, mutual understanding, active participation, and engagement between all parties (Carpenter et al. 2016). Drawing on the five dimensions of dialogic communication, as proposed by Kent and Taylor (2002), facilitators can prioritise a process that engages with mutuality, propinquity, empathy, risk, and commitment. By embracing mutuality, the facilitator and the participants recognise that all involved parties are closely tied together to achieve a mutual goal. There are temporal and spontaneous possibilities that may arise from the dialogical

process and propinquity highlights the facilitator's awareness of such possibilities. A crucial role of the facilitator is to cultivate a trusting and supportive atmosphere. To do this the facilitator must be aware of the three features of dialogic empathy which are "supportiveness, communal orientation, and confirmation or acknowledgement of others" (Carpenter et al. 2016: 525). The element of risk refers to the willingness of facilitators and participants to engage in communication with the other on their own terms. And finally, commitment emphasises the relationship of the participants rather than the outcome of the engagement. Here both the facilitator and the participants should be committed to engaging in dialogue.

Listening towards achievable outcomes

As previously mentioned, the facilitator needs to be aware of the goals of a listening space. For example, if the space is created to discuss ways to develop institutional policies that respond to the rise of sexual harassment in workplaces, then a concerted effort needs to go into structuring the engagement towards achievable outcomes. Listening towards achievable outcomes is a process where a listening engagement is set up in the hopes that real outcomes can emerge from the engagement. With regards to the example above, a listening engagement may give voice to those who have been vulnerable in the workplace and determine what the policy needs to change to curb the levels of harassment. Having a focus on achievable outcomes gives those with the power to change things an opportunity to listen to those who need those changes to occur.

For example, if employees communicate that the reporting process for harassment contains a conflict of interest – in cases where they may be forced to first report the harassment to their line manager before any further steps are taken – then practical changes can be made to ensure that employees feel comfortable and safe to report harassment. In this example, policy changes could include having more than one HR representative to report harassment to and having services outside of the immediate organisation that handles harassment cases. The process of listening towards achievable outcomes should be geared to understanding the problems at hand and brainstorming practical ways to solve them.

Commitment to communal action

The issue of gender-based violence is an issue that affects more than just the perpetrator and the victim of the assault. When facilitators and participants embark on a process of listening geared towards engaging with issues of gender-based violence they should have a commitment to communal action. This can take various forms. Facilitators, for example, can

create spaces that utilise restorative justice methodologies which prioritise engagement between the perpetrator, the complainant and the community. Approaching listening spaces with conviviality or a loving politics can also show commitment to a process of communal engagement and healing.

These concepts provide guidelines for those who wish to begin to facilitate a process of listening. Although the concepts circulate around the idea of a critical facilitator, the process of facilitating a listening space can take place even when there are two people involved. This does not require an entire project; it all depends on the kind of space that the facilitator chooses.

A person, for instance, might see that a friend needs to voice their concerns and be listened to. In taking up the responsibility to listen to that friend, the person becomes a critical witness and can decide, based on the context, what an appropriate space of engagement might be. Choosing a public coffee shop may not allow the friend to speak freely or become emotional, so the critical witness needs to understand the needs of their friend as well as the kind of conversation the friend would like to have. The space that is then created should provide comfort, time and safety for the friend to express themselves. The critical witness will then engage using some of the principles of active and engaged listening and dialogical communication. The process of listening towards achievable outcomes will be determined by the friend. Here the friend will communicate whether they need a practical solution or if the listening engagement will suffice as the achievable outcome. The process of listening, being open and bearing witness to their friend, even when it hurts, will then constitute the witness' commitment to communal action. If the friend is comfortable and engages in dialogue, they too will be committing to communal action and healing.

This process, however, is complex and should be able to take place even when the person in need is not a friend. The six actions of listening otherwise can provide a useful guide to help both critical facilitators and critical witnesses who wish to listen.

The six actions of listening otherwise

These six actions have emerged through a thorough research process that engaged with listening in the face of gender-based violence. The actions, however, are not limited to only listening engagements that involve gender-based violence. These actions can be applied to any listening activity that attempts to engage and listen outside of the dangerous categories

and schemas that deafen people in engagements with the other. So where do we begin the process of listening otherwise? When we listen, we need to:

1. Recognise, acknowledge, and accept the other as an ‘other’.

Here we need to embrace alterity and intersectionality – the idea that no two people are the same or experience existence in the same way. This is where we break the habitus about who people are, how much power they have, and whether or not they deserve to be listened to.

At this level we see how history, ideology and discourse have constructed people, and we recognise the intersections of their identities and acknowledge that we cannot fully know them the way we know ourselves. We recognise and acknowledge that they are an “other” to us and accept that we do not need to know them in order to listen. Here we do the work of accepting that the other may be different or radically strange but they have something unique to offer so they need to be allowed to be themselves so we can see what emerges.

2. Create space for the other

This can be a physical space or a conceptual space, but it all depends on the context and the needs of the other. It is an intentional process that requires resources like time and capacity. Before we create a space where we can listen to the other, we need to ask ourselves if we have the mental and emotional capacity to actually listen and bear witness. There will be times when the answer is no and it is very important to acknowledge that as well. Creating space requires planning and goal setting to understand the kind of space that is needed. (See Chapter 8 for further steps to create spaces conducive to listening.)

3. Empower voice and participation in the other

Here we need to ensure that the other knows that their voice has value and there is someone listening. In interpersonal engagements we can communicate this by telling the other that we are listening, and their voice has value. In group contexts we can empower voice and participation through strength-building exercises that allow the other to see their potential. Here, art and writing are interesting and welcomed forms of engagement to motivate and encourage the other to share their voice.

4. *Sit with or host the other*

This is giving space and time to the other to allow them to speak and share their voice. The process relies on the principles of active and engaged listening. When we sit with the other, we are committed to listening deeply, receiving disclosure, bearing witness, caring, and thinking with the other so they feel listened to and hosted. During this time, one is not expecting solutions or problem-solving strategies.

The *sitting with* process is more about a sacred listening, listening for the sake of listening and creating a shared vulnerability. This process does not make the other the same as the listening host, but it does facilitate a shared humanity and community between the listening host and the other. By *sitting with* the other we create a space of trust building.

5. *Create a “listening symbol”*

For the future, in case one feels othered and discouraged from being radically strange, there needs to be a symbol, record, or illustration that serves as evidence that the listening process has taken place. It needs to be etched into history that listening otherwise is possible. This symbol provides evidence that the other’s voice was valuable and valued.

The *listening symbol* should be a result of co-creation. A result of the listening host and the other thinking with, holding, receiving, and acknowledging one another. The symbol can be writing, poetry, artwork, pictures, sculpture, video, documentary or a recurring listening space. The symbol helps us understand what has emerged from the process of listening – and if we are to create a space for intervention – it can give us some critical information about the needs of the other. The symbol can be a hug or a detailed police report – it just depends on the needs of the other and the situation.

6. *Reflect on the listening process (alone and with the other)*

Although it is crucial that reflection takes place at each stage of the listening process, once a symbol has been created it is important to reflect on how the listening process has gone and what could have been done to improve it. In a process of self-reflection, we can think about the space that was created and ask ourselves if it was enough for the needs of the other. We should also reflect on our own capacity to listen, did we listen? And if so, did we listen well? We can also ask ourselves if there were any

beliefs and schema that got in the way of our listening process. And reflect on how we overcame some of the barriers to our listening process.

In a process of communal reflection, together with the other, we can reflect on whether the process was enough. We can also explore ways to make future spaces more hospitable and reflect on what has emerged since the listening process began.

Listening, and listening otherwise is not an easy process. It requires time, commitment and the kind of care that forces one to renounce one's ego and be completely present for another person. The concepts and actions presented in this chapter cannot overcome all of the barriers we face when attempting to listen, particularly in the face of gender-based violence. They do, however, provide a guide for the beginning steps of a listening process with the ability to stimulate communal engagement and healing. This framework has emerged from rigorous reading, engagement with professionals in the field and my own reflections on the process of listening. Although I believe it provides useful guidance, it remains a work in progress. If one is to draw from this framework, they might benefit from a reflection process to ensure that they too learn more about how they could have listened better in their particular listening engagement.

The framework should be used alongside other considerations that are specific to the context one is working within. How the media might listen otherwise, for example, may not be the same as those working in law enforcement or in the NGO sector. Journalists and media practitioners have their own practices and processes that can be drawn upon to improve their own listening and the listening habitus of their audience. Described below are the ways in which media institutions, journalists and reporters can engage with gender-based violence to help reshape the collective listening habitus to one that is more caring, healing and aligned with the framework presented in this chapter.

Considerations for the media as a critical witness

Although news organisations cannot in themselves be critical facilitators, their practices, representations and approaches to gender-based violence have the potential to create cultures of listening and critical engagement with the ability to inspire critical witnesses engaging with gender-based violence.

In her work “Journalism and witnessing” Mervi Pantti highlights the dialogical communicative act of witnessing and explains that it takes place when there is a “witness

who publicly narrates personal suffering to the audience [...] and [is] moved by the witness' account, so the audience members become future witnesses in turn" (Pantti 2019: 04).

Through the process journalists act as witnesses and provide opportunities for the audience to become witnesses as well. Taking it a step further, Pantti (2019) explains that when it comes to suffering there is a need for the process of bearing witness which is different from journalistic reporting – normatively based on eye witnessing, detachment and objectivity. Pantti explains:

Bearing witness, then, is essentially driven by a moral purpose and is not merely geared toward transmitting information about the event (Tait 2011). The morality of bearing witness is fundamentally bound to the recognition of other people's suffering and traumatic experiences (Felman 1992; Peters 2001; Rentschler 2004; Sontag 2003). Bearing witness involves reconstituting and communicating other people's experiences of pain and loss to the wider world in ways that encourages the receivers of the message to take action in response to situational or structural violence (2019: 05).

The process of bearing witness not only concerns itself with representing the pain and suffering of others, but also highlights the situational and structural violence responsible for the suffering. If media institutions and journalists listen otherwise in cases of gender-based violence and act as critical witnesses, their work will be more aligned with the process of bearing witness than that of detachment and objectivity. What this means in terms of their practice is that they take seriously a slower more deliberate and thoughtful type of gender-based violence coverage. This means that journalists reporting on gender-based violence will be conscious that they are creating witnesses and contributing to a listening culture that will respond to the suffering. With this in mind, journalists need to have an awareness of how their reporting, language use and discourse leads to cataphatic listening or listening otherwise.

The use of "slow journalism", for example could be an effective way for journalists to engage with gender-based violence in a way that bears witness and creates informed critical witnesses and listeners. Because slow journalism "requires time for deeper reflection", it "avoids sensationalism and herd reporting" which means stories go beyond the mechanic expository style of hard news (Le Masurier 2015: 143). Through slow journalism, journalists are able to provide more context and details surrounding the story and the audience is given an opportunity to see beyond the initial gruesome account of gender-based violence, femicide and rape. Slow journalism's use of narrative storytelling techniques "is ethical in [the]

treatment of subjects and of producers” (Le Masurier 2015: 143). It highlights “that the people you are writing about had lives, had interests and were part of communities and [reflects] that in the journalism” (Tolsi Interview, 2022).

Aside from bearing witness in coverage and using slow journalism to tell meaningful stories, media institutions can contribute to a better listening habitus by providing training for journalists and reporters covering the gender-based violence beat. The impetus behind the training should be to instil an ethics of listening so that the journalists produce work that shares the power with citizens and all those with a voice and a stake in the fight against gender-based violence. To do this journalists need to learn to relinquish control, be prepared to have their assumptions challenged, accept that what emerges may be more complex and incomprehensible than initially imagined, and that the journalists themselves may play a role in the problems they seek to understand.

Embracing an ethics of listening in journalism practice may also inspire journalists, editors and media practitioners to create spaces aimed at listening to local communities and citizens with something to say about the issue of gender-based violence in South Africa. Journalists and media practitioners can create this kind of space both physically and online by ensuring that the space, firstly is created and made accessible to interested community members. This means that the broader community should be made aware that the space exists. If the space is online, journalists and media practitioners should consider whether a diverse range of people are able to access the space and contribute to the dialogue. Secondly, the space should be dialogical and promote the expression of voice, particularly the voices of those often left in the shadows of the public sphere.

A third consideration that the journalists should have for the space is that they invite those with the power to listen and explain as well as listen and affect policy into that space. This process will ensure that the dialogue is spread across power and difference – so that people who otherwise might not have listened to one another can engage on matters that are important. A fourth consideration for these spaces is how they are facilitated and mediated. To really relinquish control, the media practitioners and journalists should allow community members and leaders to be the ones that mediate the engagement. This means that the space is guided by the needs and voices of the community itself. To then truly listen, journalists and media practitioners should then allow the dialogue and the space to feed the news agenda.

The voices, concerns and issues raised by the community in such a space should be represented in news stories.

Embracing an ethics of listening otherwise means that the journalists will be able to do more than report on the facts of each story. Journalists would be able to provide a contextual understanding of South African gender-relations and the structural circumstances at play when violence occurs. This may provide some explanations and context for some of the issues raised by community members. Journalists through their coverage may also be able to do more than informing the audience. By having an awareness of the words, discourses and rape myths that add to the problem, journalists can educate audiences through explainers, feature articles, and opinion pieces that help the public understand why the rates of gendered violence are so high. Thorough and conscientious journalism on gender-based violence has the potential to act as a “listening symbol” that journalists can use to show how they have “recognised”, “empowered voice”, and “hosted” those who have been othered all while creating the space for the voices to be critically witnessed by the public.

Conclusion

South Africa has one of the highest rates of gender-based violence in the world. This includes femicide, rape and intimate partner violence. During the process of the research alone, well over 84 732 cases of rape, and over 121 528 cases of domestic violence-related assault were reported to the South African Police Service. With the growing number of violations against women and vulnerable others, gender activists, scholars and government campaigns have called for breaking the silence and speaking out against gender-based violence.

This research began as an exploration of the idea of listening, particularly as a response to the calls to voice, speak out and break the silence surrounding gender-based violence in South Africa. The choice to focus on listening is a result of the inefficacy of the interventions related to voice. Gender-based violence in the South African context seems insoluble and the calls to break the silence and speak out have not made much of a dent in the fight. What is evident, after thorough reading and engagement with gender scholars and practitioners in the field, is that there is no silence. There is, in fact, a multitude of ways in which people are talking about gender-based violence, exposing perpetrators and disclosing their personal experiences of rape, and gender-based violence and engaging in public shaming.

This research found that the deficit cultures of listening and responding to the voices speaking out is what creates the illusion of silence surrounding gender-based violence. Although expert knowledge, attention and emphasis has been placed on “voice” and “speaking out” in the fight against gender-based violence, very little effort has gone into understanding listening and the methods that make a difference socially. As a result, the listening that has been taking place is deficient. What is done through this research is to place emphasis on the kind of listening that may have a greater social impact with regards to gender-based violence.

Although there is no silence around rape, gender-based violence and femicide, there is silence around gender, misogyny and patriarchy when discussing the causes of gendered violence in the country. In fact, news reports, government discourse and court processes generally speak about perpetrators as individual bad apples, femicide as genderless incidences and justice as case specific where if one perpetrator rots in jail the problem of gender-based violence and femicide will automatically be resolved. There is little engagement with the public nature of most of the violence, the cultures that support gendered violence and the history of pain and oppression that play out in the current context. These institutions – media, government, and

the judicial system – play a crucial role in in shaping the public’s understanding of and response to cases of rape, femicide and gender-based violence. When these institutions ignore the complex and intertwined nature of misogyny and patriarchy in specific experiences of gender-based violence, they teach the public to do the same.

To understand South Africa’s listening cultures, the research explored various kinds of listening practices. Crucial to the context of gender-based violence, the research introduced cataphatic listening, which involves listeners imposing their own pre-existing schema into the process of listening. This is contrasted by listening otherwise – where one listens beyond schemas, categories and the dualistic thinking of the conceptual mind.

What the research found is that South Africa’s public listening habitus, which is the public cultures and practices pertaining to listening, are shaped by the country’s history of oppression and adhere to beliefs and practices common to patriarchal structural violence. Rape myths, for example, routinely shape how the public understands, engages with and responds to women who accuse men of rape and sexual assault. This listening habitus, shaped by patriarchy, is also what creates the myth or illusion that there is silence surrounding gender-based violence. Shedding this patriarchal habitus and listening otherwise becomes a crucial practice in the face of gender-based violence. This finding pre-empted an exploration with the question, how do we create a better listening response to gender-based violence in South Africa?

The research found that creating a better listening response, or one that is not cataphatic in nature but more open and free from patriarchal schemas, requires time, commitment, and creativity. One gender scholar who participated in the research suggests a turn to a caring society, where a loving politics is what guides our listening habitus instead of a patriarchal politics. A crucial part of the care society would insist that there is a communal effort to play together, build public trust and transform the public response to gender-based violence. Building this care society would be to understand the country’s history of oppression and move beyond the boundaries, schemas and categories that were created and shaped by colonialism and apartheid.

The research shows how practices such as restorative justice, which emphasise communal listening and healing, are possible avenues to turn to when building a caring society with a better listening response. Here restorative justice is outlined because it prioritises a culture of listening and insists that there be community engagement. Restorative justice is practised

with the belief that when there is conflict between a perpetrator and a victim, entire communities need a mechanism to recover from the psychological injury caused by the conflict. Used as a listening response when engaging with gender-based violence, restorative justice processes may begin to shift the public listening habitus from a patriarchal habitus to a holistic, caring and healing-centred listening habitus. The shift in listening habitus should not be reserved for a select few; it must permeate government discourses, legal discourses and media discourses as well as people trained in managing gender-based violence. The shift is also important for ordinary people, friends, family and those supporting victims.

Shifting the listening habitus requires the process of creating, or reshaping, space to host listening engagements around gender-based violence. The research found that the process of creating space was an important starting point when attempting to host listening engagements. Many South Africans who have experienced gender-based violence, rape and sexual assault need spaces of disclosure, to voice their experiences, and have others bear witness to their suffering. Many spaces that are created to engage with gender-based violence do not provide the necessary space and time for disclosure. Spaces created for engagement, for policy development for example, are taken over by the real needs of South Africans to have their voices and experiences listened to and taken seriously. Not only do these spaces need the capacity, which includes time, space, agenda items, to host listening, but they need designated facilitators to guide the process and meet the goals of the listening engagement. With regards to creating disclosure spaces the use of public ritual, for example, the taping of one's mouth, marching across town, and having 'breaking the silence' ceremonies can create space for disclosure and prime those within that space to listen in ways that are different and radically strange.

One can set goals for a listening space and conduct a process of listening towards achievable outcomes. The achievable outcomes could include, fixing streetlights in certain areas, providing accessible women and children's shelters, and using slow journalism to produce informed, educational and critical gender-based violence news coverage. The facilitation of such a listening engagement is paramount to ensure that the achievable outcomes are noted and later implemented.

Facilitation, therefore, plays a crucial role in the process of listening in the face of gender-based violence. Whether one is a critical facilitator working with groups, a critical witness listening to a friend, or a media practitioner bearing witness and creating witnesses – the

principles of facilitation are useful and crucial to the process of reshaping the listening habitus around gender-based violence. Part of the facilitation process includes creating an appropriate space, ensuring that the space remains safe for all participants and guiding the participants in trust building. Journalists and media practitioners can think of their coverage as a listening space and facilitate the process by ensuring that they steer away from dangerous patriarchal discourse and rape myths that misinform and isolate their audiences.

Facilitators of such spaces should have an awareness of how the country's history, dominant ideology and structures shape the way people participating in the listening engagements share their voices and listen to one another. Here the facilitator needs to create avenues to build an egalitarian, non-sexist, non-racist listening habitus. The facilitators should keep an eye on how power relations between men and women play out, for example, and ensure that those who are more vulnerable in the interaction are protected and empowered to speak openly while being listened to attentively. A key finding of the research is that having a facilitator in listening spaces helps empower voice in participants and guide the participants to achieve the goals of the listening engagement. To avoid creating an oppressive space that reproduces cataphatic listening, the facilitator has to have a deep belief in collective action, be open to critique, self-reflexive, and be open to the knowledge and expertise of all the participants engaging in the listening space.

One of the aims of this research was an exploration that would amount to a framework for listening in the face of gender-based violence. The framework was created using grounded theory methods for data collection and analysis. The data used to construct the framework includes in-depth interviews, case studies, academic literature, news interviews and newspaper articles. The framework that emerged considered various aspects of listening and the field of gender-based violence and arrived at six conceptual considerations and six actions for listening otherwise. The conceptual considerations include critical facilitation, awareness of space and power, active and engaged listening, dialogical communication, listening towards achievable outcomes, and commitment to communal action. These concepts underpin the research's key findings and considerations with regards to listening particularly to gender-based violence. The actions for listening otherwise, on the other hand, provide practical steps towards listening in a way that is open, engaged and potentially healing. These actions include, recognising, acknowledging and accepting the 'other' as an 'other'; creating space for the 'other'; empowering voice and participation in the 'other'; sitting with or hosting the 'other'; creating a listening symbol; and reflecting on the listening process. These

actions draw on the concept of listening introduced by Lipari in combination with key elements highlighted throughout the research process.

The framework for listening otherwise is a contribution to listening scholarship and the activism against gender-based violence. The research asked: how do we listen otherwise when faced with gender-based violence? The framework that emerged serves as a practical and methodological response to that question. The methodology however is only one way to listen outside of the dominant patriarchal habitus. There are many actions that South African scholars, activists and gender advocates are taking that do the work of reshaping the patriarchal habitus into one that is more egalitarian, non-sexist and does not normalise violence against women. An interesting listening methodology that emerged from the interviews is the process of 'listening counterintuitively'. This process involves understanding the patriarchal listening habitus and using feminist ideologies and practices to respond in opposition to what the patriarchal ideology would have you think, listen and respond. Patriarchal logic and habitus trains people to not believe women when they say they have been violated. To think counterintuitively would be to think in line with the feminist response which believes women and does not consider their experience untrue, unreliable or unimportant.

One cannot eradicate gender-based violence alone or using one method. The fight requires communal efforts and joint resources to challenge it at every level. This research provides avenues to challenge it through listening and transforming the current patriarchal listening habitus. With every call that demands that people speak out against gender-based violence there needs to be efforts that listen otherwise and listen effectively towards the eradication of misogyny and gender-based violence.

The concepts discussed in this thesis may seem fairly complicated, but the listening process outlined in the framework is for everyone to use in everyday life. These listening practices have been created for ordinary people to use in workplaces, schools, and places where they engage with issues surrounding gender in South African society. We can, as a country begin to shift the patriarchal listening habitus. Through a loving politics and convivial culture, we can listen otherwise, and build a trusting and caring society.

Reference List

Abrahams, N., Jewkes, R. and Mathews, S. 2010. 'Guns and gender-based violence in South Africa', *SAMJ: South African Medical Journal*, 100(9), pp.586-588.

Adebayo, B. 2019. 'A post office worker was given three life sentences for raping and murdering a student. Now South African women are saying enough', *CNN* [Online Article] Available at: <https://edition.cnn.com/2019/11/15/africa/south-africa-student-murder-sentence/index.html> [Accessed 15 July 2024].

Adler, R. and Rodman, G. 2011. *Understanding communication* (11th ed.). Oxford: Oxford University.

Alexander, R. 2018. 'Gender, structural violence, and peace', in Gentry, C.E., Shephard, L.J., and Sjoberg, L. (eds.), *The Routledge handbook of gender and security* (1st ed.). London: Routledge, pp.27-36.

Anderson, A. and Christie, D.J. 2001. 'Some contributions of psychology to policies promoting cultures of peace.' *Peace and Conflict: Journal of Peace Psychology*, 7(2), pp.173-185.

Anguiano, N. 2018. 'A Rhetorical Analysis of Desmond Tutu's 1976 Letter to Prime Minister John Vorster', JMU Libraries [Online] Available at: <https://commons.lib.jmu.edu/scomconference/2018/schedule/3/> [Accessed 15 July 2024].

Arampatzi, A. 2017. 'Contentious spatialities in an era of austerity: Everyday politics and "struggle communities" in Athens, Greece.' *Political Geography*, 60, pp.47-56.

Aroustamian, C. 2020. 'Time's up: Recognising sexual violence as a public policy issue: A qualitative content analysis of sexual violence cases and the media.' *Aggression and violent behavior*, 50(101341), pp.1-15.

Auvine, B., Extrom, M. and Densmore, B. 1977. *A manual for group facilitators*. Madison, WI: Center for Conflict Resolution.

Bacharach, S. 2023. 'Bearing Witness and Creative Activism.' *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, 81(2), pp.153-163.

Back, L. 2007. *The art of listening*. Oxford: Berg.

Baderoon, G. 2014. *Regarding Muslims: From slavery to post-apartheid*. New York: NYU Press.

Barker, K. 2022. *Making the personal political: Understanding the impact of participation in an anti-rape protest for women who have experienced sexual violence*. PHD, Rhodes University.

Barker, K. 2023. Interview with Thandi Bombi. In possession of author.

Bassel, L. 2017. 'Why a politics of listening?' in Bassel, L. 2017. *The politics of listening: Possible Challenges for Democratic Life*. London: Palgrave Pivot: pp.1-15.

Baxter, L.A. 1992. 'Forms and functions of intimate play in personal relationships.' *Human Communication Research*, 18(3), pp.336-363.

Beare, K. and Boonzaier, F. 2022. 'South African women's constructions of sexual consent', in Willis, M. (ed.), *Nuances of Sexual Consent*. London: Routledge, pp.64-76.

Bekoff, M. 2001. 'Social play behaviour. Cooperation, fairness, trust, and the evolution of morality.' *Journal of Consciousness Studies*, 8(2), pp.81-90.

Benaquisto, L. 2008. 'Codes and Coding', in Given, L.M. (ed.), *The Sage encyclopedia of qualitative research methods*. Los Angeles: Sage publications, pp.85-88.

Bennett, J. 2001. "'Enough lip service!" Hearing post-colonial experience of gender-based violence'. *Agenda*, 16(50), pp.88-96.

Bennett, J.F. 1997. 'Credibility, plausibility and autobiographical oral narrative: Some suggestions from the analysis of a rape survivor's testimony', in Levett, A., Kottler, A., Burman, E. and Parker, I. (eds.), *Culture, power and difference: Discourse analysis in South Africa*. Cape Town: University of Cape Town Press, pp.96-108.

Bens, I. 2005. *Advanced facilitation strategies: Tools and techniques to master difficult situations*. Hoboken: John Wiley & Sons.

Beres, M.A. 2018. 'The proliferation of consent-focused rape prevention social marketing materials', in Dale, C. and Overell, R. (eds.), *Orienting feminism: Media, activism and cultural representation*. London: Palgrave Macmillan, pp.181-196.

Betcher, R. 1981. 'Intimate play and marital adaptation.' *Psychiatry*, 44(1), pp.13-33.

- Bhana, D. and Pattman, R. 2011. 'Girls want money, boys want virgins: The materiality of love amongst South African township youth in the context of HIV and AIDS.' *Culture, health & sexuality*, 13(8), pp.961-972.
- Bickford, S. 1996. *The dissonance of democracy: Listening, conflict, and citizenship*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.
- Blatter, J.K. 2008. 'Case Study', in Given, L.M. (ed.). *The Sage encyclopedia of qualitative research methods*. Los Angeles: Sage Publications, pp.68-71.
- Bond-Stewart, K. 2022. Interview with Thandi Bombi. In possession of author.
- Boonzaier, F. 2017. 'The Life and death of Anene Booysen: Colonial discourse, gender-based violence and media representations.' *South African Journal of Psychology*, 47(4), pp.470-481.
- Bordenave, J.D. 1994. 'Participative Communication as a Part of Building the Participative Society', in White, S.A. (ed.), *Participatory Communication. Working for Change and Development*. California: Sage, pp.35-48.
- Bosch, T. 2017. 'Twitter activism and youth in South Africa: The case of #RhodesMustFall.' *Information, communication & society*, 20(2), pp.221-232.
- Bashonga, R. and Khuzwayo, Z. 2017. "'This thing of the victim has to prove that the perp intended to assault is kak!": Social media responses to sexual violence on South African university campuses.' *Agenda*, 31(3-4), pp.35-49.
- Bourdieu, P. 1977 [1972]. *Outline of a Theory of Practice*, trans. Richard Nice. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Bourdieu, P. 2020. 'Outline of a Theory of Practice', in Seidman, S., and Alexander, J.C. (eds.), *The new social theory reader*. London: Routledge, pp.80-86.
- Brock-Utne, B. 1989. *Feminist perspectives on peace and peace education*. New York. Pergamon Press.
- Britton, H. 2006. 'Organising against gender violence in South Africa.' *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 32(1), pp.145-163.
- Brodie, N. 2020. *Femicide in South Africa*. Cape Town: Kwela Books.

- Brodie, N. 2021. 'Ideal victims and familiar strangers: Non-intimate femicide in South African news media.' *African Journalism Studies*, 42(3), pp.82-99.
- Brodie, N. 2022. 'South Africa's own "Delhi moment": News coverage of the murders of Jyoti Singh and Anene Booysen', in Falkof, N., Phadke, S. and Roy, S. (eds.), *Intimacy and injury: in the wake of #MeToo in India and South Africa*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, pp.27-44.
- Brodie, N. 2022. Interview with Thandi Bombi. In possession of author.
- Bryant, A. and Charmaz, K. (eds.), 2007. *The Sage handbook of grounded theory*. Los Angeles: Sage.
- Buiten, D. and Naidoo, K. 2020. 'Laying claim to a name: Towards a sociology of "Gender-Based Violence".' *South African Review of Sociology*, 51(2), pp.61-68.
- Buiten, D. and Salo, E. 2007. 'Silences stifling transformation: Misogyny and gender-based violence in the media.' *Agenda*, 21(71), pp.115-121.
- Burggraeve, R. 1999. 'Violence and the Vulnerable Face of the Other: The Vision of Emmanuel Levinas on Moral Evil and Our Responsibility.' *Journal of Social Philosophy*, 30(1), pp.29-45.
- Bussie, J.A. 2011. 'Reconciled diversity: Reflections on our calling to embrace our religious neighbors.' *Intersections*, 2011(33), pp.30-35.
- Butler, J., 2009. 'Performativity, precarity and sexual politics.' *Revista de Antropología Iberoamericana AIBR*. 4(3), pp. i-xiii.
- Calder, G. 2011. 'Democracy and listening', in Crumplin, M. (ed.), *Problems of democracy: Language and speaking*. Oxford: Inter-Disciplinary Press, pp.125-135.
- Campbell, G. and Elbourne, E. (eds.), 2014. *Sex, power, and slavery*. Ohio: Ohio University Press.
- Carpenter, S., Takahashi, B., Lertpratchya, A.P. and Cunningham, C. 2016. 'Greening the campus: a theoretical extension of the dialogic communication approach.' *International journal of sustainability in higher education*, 17(4), pp.520-539.
- Chevalier, J.M. and Buckles, D.J. 2019. *Participatory action research: Theory and methods for engaged inquiry*. London: Routledge.

Charmaz, K. 2000. 'Grounded theory: Objectivist and constructivist methods.' *Handbook of qualitative research*, 2(1), pp.509-535.

Charmaz, K. 2005. 'Grounded theory in the 21st century: Applications for advancing social justice studies', paper presented at the Qualitative Research Conference, May 2003, Carleton University, Ottawa, Canada.

Charmaz, K. 2006. *Constructing grounded theory: A practical guide through qualitative analysis*. Los Angeles: Sage.

Charmaz, K. and Bryant, A. 2008. 'Grounded Theory', in Given, L.M. (ed.), *The Sage encyclopedia of qualitative research methods*. Los Angeles: Sage publications, pp.374-376.

Chinkin, C. 2009. 'Gender-related Violence and International Criminal Law and Justice', in Cassese, A. (ed.), *The Oxford Companion to International Criminal Justice*. New York: Oxford University Press, pp.75-81.

Coles, R. 1997. *Rethinking generosity: Critical theory and the politics of caritas*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

Coakley, C.G., Halone, K.K. and Wolvin, A.D. 1996. 'Perceptions of listening ability across the life-span: Implications for understanding listening competence.' *International Journal of Listening*, 10(1), pp.21-48.

Connolly, B. 2003. 'Community Education: Listening to the voices.' *The Adult Learner*, 10, pp.9-19.

Coetzee, B., Roomaney, R., Willis, N. and Kagee, A. 2019. 'Body mapping in research', in Liamputtong, P. (ed.), *Handbook of Research Methods in Health Social Sciences*. Gateway: Springer Singapore, pp. 1237-1254.

Cook, K.E. 2008. 'In-depth Interview', in Given, L.M. (ed.), *The Sage encyclopedia of qualitative research methods*. Los Angeles: Sage publications, pp.422-423.

Couldry, N. 2009. 'Rethinking the politics of voice: Commentary.' *Continuum*, 23(4), pp.579-582.

Couldry, N. 2010. *Why voice matters: Culture and politics after neoliberalism*. London: Sage Publications.

Corbin, J. and Strauss, A. 2008. *Basics of Qualitative research: Techniques and procedures for developing grounded theory*, (3rd ed.) Los Angeles: Sage.

- Dagron, A.G. 2009. 'Playing with fire: Power, participation, and communication for development.' *Development in practice*, 19(4-5), pp.453-465.
- De Klerk, V., Klazinga, L. and McNeill, A. 2007. 'The habitus of the dominant: addressing rape and sexual assault at Rhodes University.' *Agenda*, 21(74), pp.115-124.
- Devries, K.M., Mak, J.Y., Bacchus, L.J., Child, J.C., Falder, G., Petzold, M., Astbury, J. and Watts, C.H. 2013. 'Intimate partner violence and incident depressive symptoms and suicide attempts: a systematic review of longitudinal studies.' *PLoS medicine*, 10(5), pp.1-11.
- Dikeç, M. 2011. *Badlands of the republic: Space, politics and urban policy*. Hoboken: John Wiley & Sons.
- Dobson, A. 2010. 'Democracy and nature: Speaking and listening.' *Political Studies*, 58(4), pp.752-768.
- Dobson, A. 2014. *Listening for democracy: Recognition, representation, reconciliation*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Dreher, T. 2009. 'Listening across difference: Media and multiculturalism beyond the politics of voice.' *Continuum*, 23(4), pp.445-458.
- Ebert, T.L. 1996. *Ludic feminism and after: Postmodernism, desire, and labor in late capitalism*. Michigan: University of Michigan Press.
- Elster, Jon. 1998. 'Introduction', in Jon Elster (ed.), *Deliberative Democracy*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp.1-18
- Enaifoghe, A., Dlelana, M., Durokifa, A.A. and Dlamini, N.P. 2021. 'The prevalence of gender-based violence against women in South Africa: A call for action.' *African Journal of Gender, Society & Development*, 10(1), pp.121-150.
- eNCA ^a (2021) *Unpacking Controversial Rape Appeal Judgement*. 17 October. Youtube. [Online Video]. Available from: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vchdSvwORr0> [Accessed 18 January 2024].
- eNCA ^b. 2021. *High Court Overturns Rape Conviction*. 15 October. Youtube. [Online Video]. Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Pt-id43vhhs&t=303s> [Accessed 18 January 2024].

- End GBVF Collective. 2018. *Gender-based violence in South Africa is a national crisis*. [Website] Available at: <https://gbvf.org.za/> [Accessed 15 July 2024].
- Enhancing Community Voices (ECV). 2024. *The voices of the previously marginalised commanding attention*. [Website]. Available at: <https://www.enhancingcommunityvoices.org/> [Accessed 15 July 2024].
- Falkof, N., Phadke, S. and Roy, S. 2022. *Intimacy and injury: In the wake of# MeToo in India and South Africa*. Intimacy and injury. Manchester: Manchester University Press.
- Farmer, P. 2009. 'On suffering and structural violence: A view from below', *Race/ethnicity*, 3(1), pp.11-28.
- Franiuk, R., Seefeldt, J.L. and Vandello, J.A. 2008. 'Prevalence of rape myths in headlines and their effects on attitudes toward rape.' *Sex roles*, 58, pp.790-801.
- Fromm, E., 1995. [1st ed. 1957]. *The art of loving*. New York. Harper and Row.
- Fried, S.T. 2003. 'Violence against women.' *Health and Human Rights*, pp.88-111.
- Frost, H. 2018. "'There's Plenty of Rapists Here': 'Rape Culture' and the Representation of Anene Booysen's Rape in the International and South African Press.' *Cultural Critique*, 100, pp.176-198.
- Fyn-Bruey. V. 2021. 'Introduction', in Fyn-Bruey, V. (ed.), *Patriarchy and Gender in Africa*. London: Lexington Books, pp.1-12.
- Galtung, J. 1969. 'Violence, peace, and peace research.' *Journal of peace research*, 6(3), pp.167-191.
- Galtung, J. 1990. 'Cultural violence.' *Journal of peace research*, 27(3), pp.291-305.
- Garman, A. and Malila, V. 2017. 'Listening and the ambiguities of voice in South African journalism'. *Communicatio*, 43(1), pp.1-16.
- Gaztambide-Fernández, R., Brant, J. and Desai, C. 2022. 'Toward a pedagogy of solidarity.' *Curriculum Inquiry*, 52(3), pp.251-265.
- Geldenhuys, K. 2022. 'The Murder-Not So Much the Brutal Rape-That Shocked Bredasdorp the Anene Booysen Story.' *Servamus Community-based Safety and Security Magazine*, 115(6), pp.42-47.

Gerring, J. 2004. 'What is a case study and what is it good for?' *American political science review*, 98(2), pp.341-354.

Glaser, B.G. 1978. *Theoretical Sensitivity*. California: Sociology Press.

Glaser, B.G. 1998. *Doing grounded theory: Issues and discussions*. California: Sociology Press.

Glaser, B.G. and Strauss, A.L. 1967. *The Discovery of Grounded Theory. Strategies for Qualitative Research*. New York: Aldine De Gruyter.

Goodmark, L. 2018. 'Restorative justice as feminist practice.' *The international Journal of Restorative Justice*, 1, pp.372 -384.

Gouws, A. 2015. 'The public discourse on rape in South Africa', in Verwoerd, M. and Lopes C. (eds.), *Sexualized violence in the national debate*, Cape Town: Heinrich Boll Foundation Southern Africa, pp.66-75.

Gouws, A. 2016. 'Women's activism around gender-based violence in South Africa: recognition, redistribution and representation.' *Review of African Political Economy*, 43(149), pp.400-415.

Gouws, A. 2018. '#EndRapeCulture Campaign in South Africa: Resisting Sexual Violence Through Protest and the Politics of Experience.' *Politicon* 45(1), pp.3-15.

Gouws, A. 2023. Interview with Thandi Bombi. In possession of author.

Gqola, P.D, 2007. 'How the "cult of femininity" and violent masculinities support endemic gender based violence in contemporary South Africa.' *African identities*, 5(1), pp.111-124.

Gqola, P.D. 2015. *Rape: A South African Nightmare*. Johannesburg: Jacana Media.

Gqola, P.D. 2021. *Female Fear Factory: Gender and Patriarchy under Racial Capitalism*. Cape Town: Melinda Ferguson Books.

Gqola, P.D. 2023. Interview with Thandi Bombi. In possession of author.

Graaff, K. 2021. 'The Implications of a narrow understanding of gender-based violence.' *Feminist Encounters*, 5(1), pp.1-12.

Gregory, W.J. and Romm, N.R. 2001. 'Critical facilitation: Learning through intervention in group processes.' *Management Learning*, 32(4), pp.453-467.

- Groos, K. 1976. 'The play of man: Teasing and love-play', in Bruner, J.S., Jolly, A. and Sylva, K. (eds.), *Play: Its role in development and evolution*. London: Penguin Books, pp.105-131.
- Habermas, J. 1984. 'Habermas: Questions and counterquestions.' *Praxis International*, 4(3), pp.229-249.
- Haroutunian-Gordon, S. and Waks, L.J. 2010. 'Listening: Challenges for teachers.' *Teachers college record*, 112(11), pp.2717-2727.
- Harrison, A. 2008. 'Hidden love: Sexual ideologies and relationship ideals among rural South African adolescents in the context of HIV/AIDS.' *Culture, Health & Sexuality*, 10(2), pp.175-189.
- Hatzisavvidou, S. 2015. 'Disturbing binaries in political thought: Silence as political activism.' *Social Movement Studies*, 14(5), pp.509-522.
- Henry, D.M. and Higate, D.P. 2009. *Insecure spaces: peacekeeping, power and performance in Haiti, Kosovo and Liberia*. London: ZED Books.
- Hinchliffe, S. 2007. *Geographies of nature: societies, environments, ecologies*. Los Angeles: Sage.
- Ho, K. 2007. *Structural violence as a human rights violation*. Essex: University of Essex.
- Hogan, C. 2007. *Facilitating multicultural groups: A practical guide*. London: Kogan Page Publishers.
- Hooks, B. 2001. *All about love: New visions*. New York: HarperCollins Publishers.
- Hudson, B. 2002. 'Restorative justice and gendered violence: Diversion or effective justice?' *British Journal of Criminology*, 42(3), pp.616-634.
- Hunter, M. 2010. *Love in the time of AIDS: inequality, gender, and rights in South Africa*. Indiana: Indiana University Press.
- Husband, C. 2000. 'Media and the public sphere in multi-ethnic societies', in Cottle, S. (ed.), *Ethnic minorities and the media: Changing cultural boundaries*. Philadelphia: Open University Press. pp.199 -214.
- Jewkes, R. and Morrell, R. 2012. 'Sexuality and the limits of agency among South African teenage women: Theorising femininities and their connections to HIV risk practises.' *Social science & medicine*, 74(11), pp.1729-1737.

- Joachim, J. 1999. 'Shaping the human rights agenda: the case of violence against women.' *Gender politics in global governance*, 4, pp.142-160.
- Johnson, A.G. 2004. 'Patriarchy, the system.' *Women's lives: Multicultural perspectives*, 3(2204), pp.25-32.
- Jørgensen, M.W. and Phillips, L.J. 2002. *Discourse analysis as theory and method*. California: Sage.
- Kassa, H. 2021. 'What has happened since the Gender Summit? As South Africa is waiting for implementation of the national action plan on the ground, Dr Hibist Kassa outlines the background.' *New agenda: South African Journal of Social and Economic Policy*, (80), pp.34-36.
- Kelly, L. 2001. *Routes to (in) justice: A research review on the reporting, investigation and prosecution of rape cases*. London: HMCPSP, pp.1-46.
- Kemmis, S., McTaggart, R. and Nixon, R. 2014. *The action research planner: Doing critical participatory action research*. Cham: Springer Publisher.
- Kent, M.L. and Taylor, M. 2002. 'Toward a dialogic theory of public relations.' *Public relations review*, 28(1), pp.21-37.
- Koss-Chioino, J.D. 2006. 'Spiritual transformation, ritual healing, and altruism.' *Zygon*, 41(4), pp.877-892.
- Kurasawa, F. 2009. 'A message in a bottle: bearing witness as a mode of transnational practice.' *Theory, Culture & Society*, 26(1), pp.92-111.
- Lacey, K. 2013. *Listening publics: The politics and experience of listening in the media age*. Hoboken: John Wiley & Sons.
- Lang, J. 2002. 'Men, masculinities and violence.' Keynote speech presented at the International Conference on Eradicating Violence against Women & Girls – Strengthening Human Rights, Berlin, Germany.
- Lawy, J.R. 2017. 'Theorizing voice: Performativity, politics and listening.' *Anthropological Theory*, 17(2), pp.192-215.
- Le Masurier, M. 2015. 'What is slow journalism?.' *Journalism practice*, 9(2), pp.138-152.

- Levinas, E. 1981. *Otherwise than being or beyond essence*. New York: Springer Science & Business Media.
- Levinas, E. 1998. *Discovering existence with Husserl*. Illinois: Northwestern University Press.
- Lipari, L. 2014. *Listening, thinking, being: Toward an ethics of attunement*. University Park: Pennsylvania State Press.
- Lugueti, C., Oliver, K.L. and Parker, M. 2020. 'Facilitation as an act of love: A self-study of how a facilitator's pedagogy changed over time in the process of supporting a community of learners.' *Journal of Teaching in Physical Education*, 40(2), pp.207-214.
- Macleod, C.I., Böhmke, W., Mavuso, J., Barker, K. and Chiweshe, M. 2018. 'Contesting sexual violence policies in higher education: the case of Rhodes University.' *Journal of Aggression, Conflict and Peace Research*, 10(2), pp.83-92.
- Macleod, C. 2023. Interview with Thandi Bombi. In possession of author.
- Macnamara, J.R. 2014. 'Journalism–PR relations revisited: The good news, the bad news, and insights into tomorrow's news.' *Public relations review* 40(5), pp.739-750.
- Macnamara, J.R. 2015. *Creating an 'architecture of listening' in organizations: The basis of engagement, trust, healthy democracy, social equity, and business sustainability*. Sydney: University of Technology Sydney.
- Macnamara, J.R. 2016. 'Toward a theory and practice of organizational listening.' *International Journal of Listening*, 32(1), pp.1-23.
- Malunga, B. 2021. 'Equal spaces or patriarchy? Examining women's participation in tax rule', in Fyn-Bruey, V. (ed.), *Patriarchy and Gender in Africa*. London: Lexington Books, pp.125-138.
- Malterud, K., Siersma, V.D. and Guassora, A.D. 2016. 'Sample size in qualitative interview studies: guided by information power.' *Qualitative health research*, 26(13), pp.1753-1760.
- Martin, V.B. 2019. 'Using popular and academic literature as data for formal grounded theory', in Charmaz, K. and Bryant, A. (eds.), *The Sage Handbook of Current Developments in Grounded Theory*. London: Sage Publications, pp.222-243.

- Masiloane, D. 2014. 'Crime statistics: a critical discussion of more policeable and less policeable crimes.' *Acta Criminologica: African Journal of Criminology & Victimology*, 27(1), pp.129-143.
- Massey, D. 2009. 'Concepts of space and power in theory and in political practice.' *Documents d'anàlisi geogràfica*, (55), pp.15-26.
- Matzopoulos, R., Prinsloo, M., Bradshaw, D. and Abrahams, N. 2019. 'Reducing homicide through policy interventions: The case of gun control.' *South African Medical Journal*, 109(11b), pp.63-68.
- Mawhinney, E.B. 2015. 'Restoring Justice: Lessons from truth and Reconciliation in South Africa and Rwanda.' *Hamline University School of Law*, 36, pp 20-52.
- Maylam, P. 1995. 'Explaining the apartheid city: 20 years of South African urban historiography.' *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 21(1), pp.19-38.
- Meintjies, S., Pillay, A. and Turshen, M. (eds.), 2002. *The Aftermath: Women in Post Conflict Transformation*. London: ZED Books.
- Metelerkamp, T. 2024. 'Supreme Court of Appeal overturns High Court rape ruling that foreplay implies "tacit consent".' *Daily Maverick*. [Online Article] Available from: <https://www.dailymaverick.co.za/article/2024-04-24-supreme-court-of-appeal-overturns-high-court-rape-ruling-that-foreplay-implies-tacit-consent/> [Accessed 15 July 2024].
- Meyiwa, T., Williamson, C., Maseti, T. and Ntabanyane, G.M. 2017. 'A twenty-year review of policy landscape for gender-based violence in South Africa.' *Gender and Behaviour*, 15(2), pp.8607-8617.
- Mills, S.W. 2010. 'Consent and coercion in the law of rape in South Africa: A feminist transformative approach.' *Canadian Woman Studies/les cahiers de la femme*, 28(1), pp.81-89.
- Mkhize, N., Bennett, J., Reddy, V. and Moletsane, R. 2010. *The country we want to live in: Hate crimes and homophobia in the lives of black lesbian South Africans*. Pretoria: HSRC Press.
- Moffett, H. 2006. "'These women, they force us to rape them': Rape as narrative of social control in post-apartheid South Africa.' *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 32(1), pp.129-144.

- Morgan, D.L. 2008. 'Snowball Sampling', in Given, L.M. (ed.), *The Sage encyclopedia of qualitative research methods*. Los Angeles: Sage publications, pp.815-816.
- Mudaly, R. 2013. 'The power of love: Young South Africans re-conceptualising love and sexual relationships.' *Agenda*, 27(2), pp.38-46.
- Newzroom Afrika. 2021. *Sheena Swemmer unpacks Tembeka Ngcukaitobi's judgement in Loyiso Coko's seven-year sentence*. [Online Video] Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oyLYEngLDaE> [Accessed 15 July 2024].
- Noddings, N. 2012. 'The language of care ethics.' *Knowledge Quest*, 40(5), pp.52-56.
- Norsworthy, K.L. and Khuankaew, O. 2004. 'Women of Burma speak out: Workshops to deconstruct gender-based violence and build systems of peace and justice.' *The Journal for Specialists in Group Work*, 29(3), pp.259-283.
- Nyamnjoh, F.B. 2017. 'Incompleteness: Frontier Africa and the currency of conviviality.' *Journal of Asian and African studies*, 52(3), pp.253-270.
- O'Neal, E.E., Plumert, J.M. and Peterson, C. 2016. 'Parent-child injury prevention conversations following a trip to the emergency department.' *Journal of pediatric psychology*, 41(2), pp.256-264.
- Oparinde, K. and Matsha, R.M. 2021. 'Powerful discourse: Gender-based violence and counter-discourses in South Africa.' *Cogent Arts & Humanities*, 8(1), pp.1-15.
- Orth, Z., Andipatin, M. and van Wyk, B. 2021. 'These Women are Making a Statement Against Rape and yet the only Thing Y'All can Focus on is "Eww They're Naked": Exploring Rape Culture on Facebook in South Africa.' *Gender Issues*, 38(3), pp.243-259.
- Padmanabhanunni, A. and Edwards, D. 2016. 'Rape survivors' experiences of the Silent Protest: Implications for promoting healing and resilience.' *Qualitative Health Research*, 26(6), pp.818-829.
- Pain, R.H. 1997. 'Social geographies of women's fear of crime.' *Transactions of the Institute of British geographers*, 22(2), pp.231-244.
- Palys, T. 2008. 'Purposive Sampling', in Given, L.M. (ed.), *The Sage encyclopedia of qualitative research methods*. Los Angeles: Sage publications, pp.697-698.

- Pantti, M. 2019. 'Journalism and witnessing', in Wahl-Jorgensen, K. and Hanitzsch, T. (eds.), *The Handbook of Journalism Studies* (2nd ed.) London: Routledge, pp.151-164.
- Patel, S.V. 2014. 'Engaging Broad-level Stakeholders in Improving Menstrual Knowledge and Hygiene Practices among Adolescent Girls in India: A Stakeholder Analysis.' Hons Thesis, University of North Carolina.
- Parret, H. and Bouveresse, J. (eds.), 1981. *Meaning and understanding*. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter.
- Peck, M.S. 1978. *The different drum: Community making and peace*. New York: Simon and Schuster.
- Phillips, L.D. and Phillips, M.C. 1993. 'Facilitated work groups: theory and practice.' *Journal of the Operational Research Society*, 44(6), pp.533-549.
- Phillips, N.D. 2016. *Beyond blurred lines: Rape culture in popular media*. Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield.
- Pikulski, J.J. and Chard, D.J. 2005. 'Fluency: Bridge between decoding and reading comprehension.' *The Reading Teacher*, 58(6), pp.510-519.
- Plaatjies Van Huffel, M.A. 2011. 'Patriarchy as empire: a theological reflection.' *Studia Historiae Ecclesiasticae*, 37(3), pp.1-13.
- Pilane, P. 2016. 'Campus rape plans favour perpetrators.' *Mail and Guardian* [Online Article]. Available at: <https://mg.co.za/article/2016-04-28-campus-rapeplans-favour-perpetrators> [Accessed 14 August 2023].
- Poekert, P. 2011. 'The pedagogy of facilitation: Teacher inquiry as professional development in a Florida elementary school.' *Professional development in education*, 37(1), pp.19-38.
- Posel, D. 2005. 'The scandal of manhood: "Baby rape" and the politicization of sexual violence in post-apartheid South Africa.' *Culture, Health & Sexuality*, 7(3), pp.239-252.
- Powell, A. and Henry, N. 2014. 'Framing sexual violence prevention: What does it mean to challenge a rape culture?' in Henry, N. and Powell, A. (eds.), *Preventing sexual violence: Interdisciplinary approaches to overcoming a rape culture*. London: Palgrave Macmillan UK, pp.1-21.

- Preissle, J. 2008. 'Ethics', in Given, L.M. (ed.), *The Sage encyclopedia of qualitative research methods*. Los Angeles: Sage publications, pp.274-276.
- Ratcliffe, K. 1999. 'Rhetorical Listening: A Trope for Interpretive Invention and a "Code of Cross-Cultural Conduct".' *College composition and communication*, 51(2), pp.195-224.
- Ratele, K. 2016. *Liberating masculinities*. Cape Town: HSRC press.
- Ratele, K. 2022. *Why men hurt women and other reflections on love, violence and masculinity*. New York: NYU Press.
- Ratele, K. 2023. Interview with Thandi Bombi. In possession of author.
- Read-Hamilton, S. 2014. 'Gender-based violence: a confused and contested term.' *Humanitarian Exchange Magazine*, 60, pp.5-8.
- Reddy, L. 2018. 'The #Totalshutdown march is not a protest for poor, black women.' *Daily Maverick* [Online Article] Available at: <https://www.dailymaverick.co.za/opinionista/2018-08-02-the-totalshutdown-march-is-not-a-protest-for-poor-black-women/> [Accessed 15 July 2024].
- Reynolds, J. 2002. *Thich Nhat Hanh As Adult Educator*. Paper presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements for HRD 646 at the University of Southern Maine, Gorham.
- Robin, C. 2004. *Fear: The history of a political idea*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Ryan, K.M. 2011. 'The relationship between rape myths and sexual scripts: The social construction of rape.' *Sex roles*, 65(11), pp.774-782.
- Sahay, S. 2023. 'Organizational listening during organizational change: Perspectives of employees and executives.' *International Journal of Listening*, 37(1), pp.12-25.
- Seidman, J. 2022. Interview with Thandi Bombi. In possession of author.
- Scully, P. 1995. 'Rape, race, and colonial culture: the sexual politics of identity in the nineteenth-century Cape Colony, South Africa.' *The American historical review*, 100(2), pp.335-359.
- Schein, E.H. 1987. *Process consultation. Vol. 1: Its role in organization development*. New York: Addison-Wesley.
- Servaes, J. (ed.), 2007. *Communication for development and social change*. New Delhi: Sage Publications.

- Shipley, S.D. 2010. 'Listening: A concept analysis.' *Nursing forum* 45(2), pp. 125-134.
- Sikweyiya, Y. and Jewkes, R. 2011. 'Perceptions about safety and risks in gender-based violence research: implications for the ethics review process.' *Culture, health & sexuality*, 13(9), pp.1091-1102.
- Singh, S., Mudaly, R. and Singh-Pillay, A. 2015. 'The what, who and where of female students' fear of sexual assault on a South African university campus.' *Agenda*, 29(3), pp.97-105.
- Soja, E.W. 1989. 'The reassertion of space in critical social theory.' *Postmodern Geographies*. New York: Verso.
- South African Government¹. 2024. Domestic Violence Amendment Act 14 of 2021. 2 December 1998. [Online]. Available at: <https://www.gov.za/documents/domestic-violence-act> [Accessed 19 April 2024].
- South African Government². 2024. "Gender-based Violence Resource Guide." [Online]. Available at: https://www.gov.za/sites/default/files/images/GBV%20_booklet.pdf [Accessed 19 April 2024].
- South African Legal Information Institute (SALII). 2024. 'Media summary of judgement delivered in Supreme Court of Appeal.' [Online] Available at: <https://www.saflii.org/za/cases/ZASCA/2024/59.html> [Accessed 15 July 2024].
- South African Police Service¹. 2024. Police recorded crime statistics: Republic of South Africa. 2021. [Online]. Available at: https://www.saps.gov.za/services/older_crimestats.php [Accessed 19 April 2024].
- South African Police Service². 2024. Police recorded crime statistics: Republic of South Africa. 2022. [Online]. Available at: https://www.saps.gov.za/services/older_crimestats.php [Accessed 19 April 2024].
- South African Police Service³. 2024. Police recorded crime statistics: Republic of South Africa. 2021. [Online]. Available at: https://www.saps.gov.za/services/older_crimestats.php [Accessed 19 April 2024].
- Storkey, E. 2015. *Scars across humanity: Understanding and overcoming violence against women*. Illinois: InterVarsity Press.

- Swemmer, S. 2021. “‘Foreplay’ judgement shows how problematic judicial views around consent in rape cases persists.’ *Daily Maverick* [Online Article] Available at: <https://www.dailymaverick.co.za/opinionista/2021-10-14-foreplay-judgment-shows-how-problematic-judicial-views-around-consent-in-rape-cases-persists/> [Accessed 15 July 2024].
- Tacchi, J., Slater, D. and Hearn, G. 2003. *Ethnographic Action Research Handbook*. New Delhi: UNESCO.
- Tandrayen-Ragoobur. V. 2021. ‘Building the patriarchy index for Sub-Saharan Africa: Perceptions and acceptance of violence matter most’, in Fyn-Bruey, V. (ed.), *Patriarchy and Gender in Africa*. London: Lexington Books, pp.63-80.
- Thornberg, R., Perhamus, L. and Charmaz, K. 2014. ‘Grounded theory’, in Saracho, O. (ed.), *Handbook of research methods in early childhood education: Review of Research methodologies, Volume 1*. Maryland: University of Maryland, pp.405-439.
- Tolsi. N. 2022. Interview with Thandi Bombi. In possession of author.
- Treanor, B. 2006. *Aspects of alterity: Levinas, Marcel, and the contemporary debate*. New York: Fordham University Press.
- United Nations. 2024. *Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women*. 20 December 1993. [Online]. Available at: <https://www.ohchr.org/en/instruments-mechanisms/instruments/declaration-elimination-violence-against-women> [Accessed 19 April 2024].
- Valentine, G. 1989. *Women's fear of male violence in public space: a spatial expression of patriarchy*. PHD Thesis, University of Reading.
- Valentine, G. 1990. Women's fear and the design of public space. *Built Environment* (1978-), 16(4), pp.288-303.
- Van den Hoonaard, D.K. and Van den Hoonaard, W.C. 2008. ‘Data Analysis’, in Given, L.M. (ed.), *The Sage encyclopedia of qualitative research methods*. Los Angeles: Sage publications, pp.186-188.
- Waks, L. 2007. ‘Listening and questioning: The apophatic/cataphatic distinction revisited.’ *Learning Inquiry*, 1(2), pp.153-161.
- Waks, L.J. 2018. ‘Humility in teaching.’ *Educational Theory*, 68(4-5), pp.427-442.

- Walsh, S. 1999. 'Other-Worldliness in Kierkegaard's Works of Love – A Response.' *Philosophical Investigations*, 22(1), pp.80-85.
- Warren, M.E. 2009. 'Governance-driven democratization.' *Critical policy studies*, 3(1), pp.3-13.
- Wasserman, H. 2013. 'Journalism in a new democracy: The ethics of listening'. *Communicatio*, 39(1), pp.67-84.
- Wasserman, H. 2022. 'The Incompleteness of Knowledge Production: An Interview with Francis Nyamnjoh'. *African Journalism Studies*, 43(3), pp.1-9.
- Watson, J. and Mentor-Lalu, V. 2015. 'Rupturing the norms: The social and political response to the rape of Anene Booysen', in Verwoerd, M. and Lopes, C. (eds.), *Sexualized violence in the national debate*. Cape Town: Heinrich Boll Foundation Southern Africa, pp. 19-33.
- Willan, S., Ntini, N., Gibbs, A. and Jewkes, R. 2019. 'Exploring young women's constructions of love and strategies to navigate violent relationships in South African informal settlements.' *Culture, health & sexuality*, 21(11), pp.1225-1239.
- Wilson, T.D. 2014. 'Violence against women in Latin America.' *Latin American Perspectives*, 41(1), pp.3-18.
- Wolf, B. 2013. 'Gender-based violence and the challenge of visual representation.' *Comunicació: revista de recerca i d'anàlisi*, pp.193-216.
- Wood, K. and Jewkes, R. 1998. *'Love is a dangerous thing': micro-dynamics of violence in sexual relationships of young people in Umtata*. Pretoria: Medical Research Council.
- Yusof, S.H., Hassan, F., Hassan, M.S. and Osman, M.N. 2013. 'The framing of international media on Islam and terrorism.' *European Scientific Journal*, 9(8), pp.104-121.
- Zelizer, B. 2003. 'Photography, journalism, and trauma', in Zelizer, B. and Allen, S. (eds.), *Journalism after September 11*. London: Routledge, pp.66-86.