

Notes on becoming “moffie” within a macho culture in Cape Town, South Africa

Presenter:

Ms Allanise Cloete

IX IASSCS, Buenos Aires, Argentina

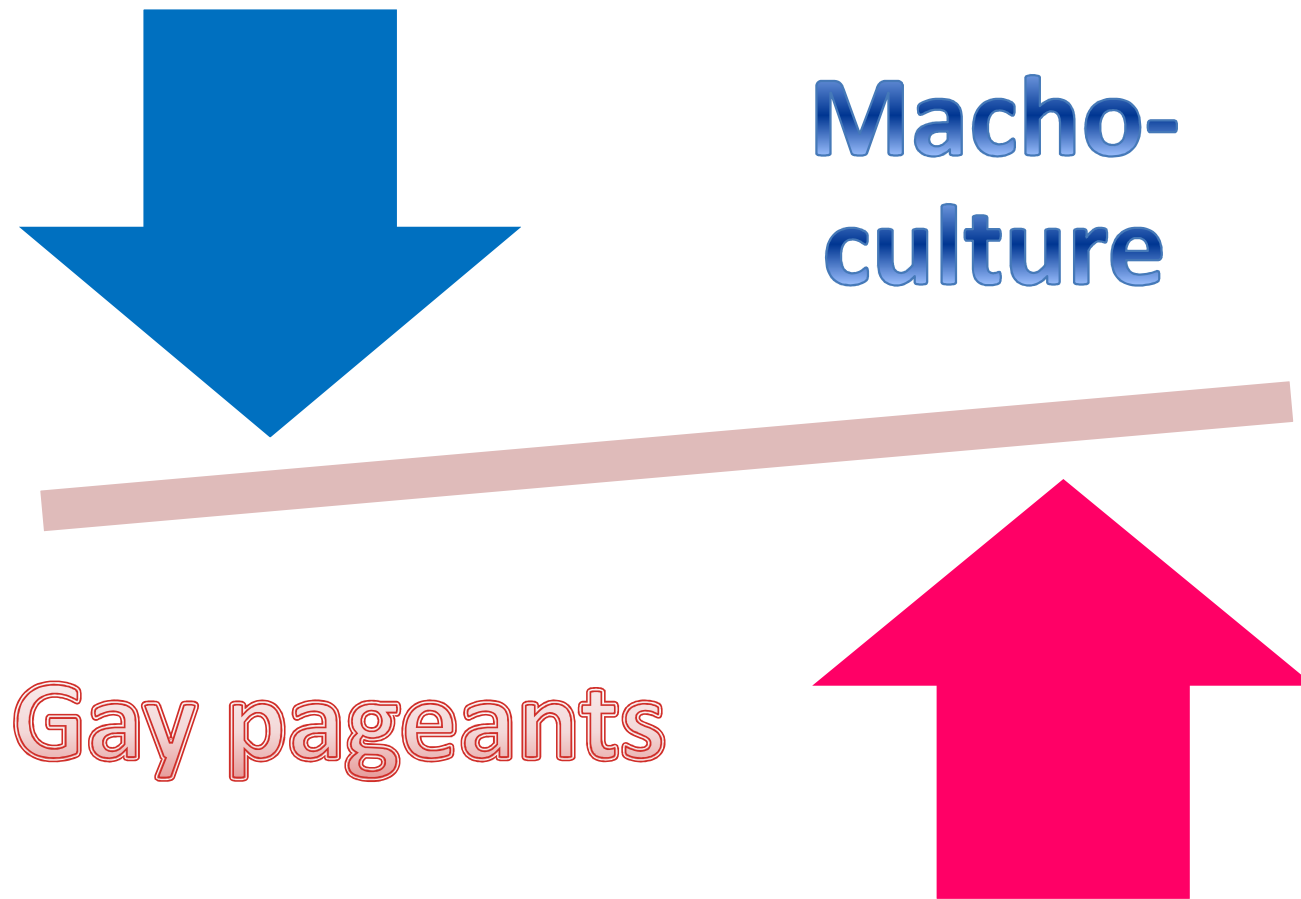


Introduction

- In South Africa legislation guarantees the right to sexual choice (Calitz, 2009).
- Both men (and women) with same sex desires have *come out* and have enjoyed more visibility and protection since these legal equalities were endorsed (Graziano, 2004 a, b).
- Men with same sex desires act in a performance of difference; i.e. a performance that contests the social role prescribed for men.
- Violence and discrimination towards same sex men and women remain persistent (Mkhize et al., 2010).
- Men tend to hide these performances of difference and have clandestine relationships with other men whilst still conforming to what is expected of them by society (Cloete et al., 2010).



The social context in which beauty pageants take place



The social context in which beauty pageants take place

- Where I grew up?
- From my childhood memories I recall
 - The hairdresser, Alexis,
 - The boy who played netball with us in the street, our next door neighbour's son who insisted on playing the girl child when we played house-house.
- Boys who played netball and house - house with us were known in the community where I grew up as “moffies”.
- “Moffie” was also used to refer to boys who cry, when they get hurt and boys who chose home economics instead of woodwork.
- “Moffie” was used to refer to boys with “soft”, “feminine” traits.



The social context in which beauty pageants take place

*“Nomme 15 gaan
saammet my huistoe
vanaand!”*



**Good evening girls, guys, ladies,
“moffies”, toffee apples...**



**Good evening girls, guys, ladies,
“moffies”, toffee apples...**



**Good evening girls, guys, ladies,
“moffies”, toffee apples...**



Performing the masculine-feminine

- *Chloe: Ja it was my first time and I I tried it and was thinking it was I think I I really made the choice to to have 'Chloe' develop so to say her own personality and I uhm due to to to to I've I've relocated a lot and so I have different circles of friends*
- *Interviewer: Uhm*
- *Chloe: Friendship circles [pause] so it was it was now that uh 'Chloe' had her own friends*

Performing the masculine-feminine

- *It it's the dark years you go through uh the dark times... ...and by that time I it was it was devastating it was because I had my little dream of a white picket fence wife and children and it just seemed like ... ja then it seemed like that was was ripped away from me*

Performing the masculine-feminine

- *I was never uhm gay individuals was never a prominent part of or I must say any part of my life growing up*

Performing the masculine-feminine

- *I grew up very close with my mother and my mother is extremely religious...uhm to an extreme where she she doesn't watch TV and uhm doesn't does the whole uh dressing up closing...no open shoes...dresses until the ankles...so it's quite I grew up quite uh sheltered...existence ja life so uhm*

Performing the masculine-feminine

- *How did I come into being a mechanic uhm I grew up in a household where the our family time would be spent around a car...so we used to uhm growing up (thu...s Thursday's) the the hobby (thu...s Thursday's) the household hobby was building up especially beetles...and selling them because if we sell them then we can go on holiday...so everyone pitched in and made it extra nice...so that uhm I I grew up with that my father is totally passionate about his work*

Performing the masculine-feminine

Chloe: *But ja so ja is in in the work field there's always uh I try to keep keep the the the almost uhm femme sides to a uhm a minimum...uh because it's usually*

Interviewer: *There are female mechanics aren't there?*

Chloe: *There are female*

Interviewer: *Female bodies*

Chloe: *Ja ja there are there's quite a few... but I found that uh generally people uhm underestimate you... people underestimate your capabilities or...as soon as you have if you look a certain part they assume that you you are best at doing hair than... than fixing their car*

Performing the masculine-feminine

*It's just I would I would ref-ref-refrain from using uh
gay terminology in front of customers*

Performing the masculine-feminine

Chloe: Seeing that people do they they want to have they want to be uhm almost they're more comforted if they believe that you are totally capable of doing the job and for some reason they think it's for a mechanic one one uhm aspect of being a mechanic is being butch

Interviewer: Uhm...

Chloe: And you can't be a a proper mechanic if you're not butch



THANKS!!!

ACloete@hsrc.ac.za