

Manning the Braai: Tracing the Gendering of the Braai in the Public Discourse.

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Abstract

This research looks at the gendered nature of the braai that is reflected in public discourse. With the understanding of how food works as a medium of communication, thus possessing the ability to represent identity, ethnicity, class, nationality culture and gender, this research uses discourse analysis, analysing both textual and visual sources to explore how discourse around the braai gives it socio-cultural significance. This approach recognises language as a dynamic tool of social interaction. As such the study examines how discourses within text and images as well as cultural practices reveal broader societal structures. This study argues that the braai is ontologically masculine through an analysis of elements such as the outdoors, leisure, and meat consumption, positioning the braai as a gendered leisure activity. Tracing the evolution of the braai in heritage discourses, by situating it within post-apartheid nation building efforts, the research looks at the masculinisation of the braai through heritage discourse highlighting how this reconstructs and affirms masculinised national identities. A critical part of this research addresses the tension between Heritage Day and Braai Day by investigating the social and cultural emergence of the braai and how its social and cultural emergence, challenges and undermines social cohesion in South Africa. The marginalisation of women within the conceptualisation of the braai as heritage challenges the notion of the braai as common cultural heritage undermining the braai's positioning as a unifying cultural icon in post-1994 South Africa. This research seeks to contribute to the understanding of how cultural practices and the discourses surrounding these practices influence gendered identities, social cohesion, and nation-building efforts in post-apartheid South Africa.

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List of acronyms

| <u>Acronym</u> | <u>Title</u> |
|-----------------------|--|
| FAK | Die Federasie van Afrikaanse Kultuurvereniginge |
| SVK | Sentrale Volksmonumentekomitee |
| AKTV | Afrikaanse Taal en Kultuurvereniging |
| ACVV | Christelike Vrou Vereniging |
| MP | Member of Parliament |

Chapter One: Introduction

“Addicted to the idea of distinct simplistic heritages, we don’t know what to do with Heritage Day, so we Braai” – Haji Mohammed Dawjee.¹

A braai is the grilling of meat over hot coals or fire. The shisanyama (literally translated as ‘to burn meat’ in the Nguni language group) is also the grilling of meat over fire/hot coals. However, there are significant differences in the social and leisure practices that accompany both instances of grilling meat, as it will be explored in this research. This technique of grilling meat is not unique to South Africa; many countries across the world cook or grill meat over hot coals or gas, the most prominent of which is the American barbecue.² In America and countries like Argentina and Australia this method of cooking and eating meat is culturally significant, becoming intertwined with a national and regional identity, particularly in the case of the American South. In South Africa, the braai has become a part of South African heritage. South Africa is a relatively new country that became a republic in 1961. The region, which would become South Africa, faced multiple conflicts and contestation since 1652 and the arrival of Jan van Riebeeck and the Dutch East India Company in the Cape. The subsequent arrival of the British in the region, led to conflict and contestation between the British and the Dutch and concurrently between white and black. Over the centuries since 1652, South Africa witnessed multiple wars; the 100-year war, the First Anglo-Boer War, and the South African War (1899-1902) to name a few, multiple rebellions, as well as the rise of segregationist policies and apartheid. The nineteenth century witnessed intensified conflict between the British and Dutch over slavery, land, and resources. This resulted in the Anglo Boer War fought between 1880-1881 and the South African War between 1899 and 1902. The British military strategy of scorched earth in the South African War, which saw the large-scale destruction of Afrikaner (descendants of the Dutch) farms and livestock contributed to the poor white problem in the early twentieth century. This, along with the concentration camps established by British which housed Afrikaner women and children, would become weaponised in an emergent Afrikaner nationalism in the early twentieth century. This nationalism would be consolidated through an array of cultural organisations and cultural brokers, political parties and the media,

¹ H.M. Dawjee, 2019. <<https://www.timeslive.co.za/sunday-times/lifestyle/2019-09-22-we-dont-know-what-to-do-with-heritage-day-so-we-Braai/>>, access: 7 December 2022.

² M. Zapata, 2020. <<https://www.farandwide.com/s/best-countries-bbq-world-ca58cc58ce0546bf>>, access: 20 June 2020.

culminating in the establishment of apartheid in 1948. Apartheid was legislated segregation; segregation had existed before 1948; however, it became formalised in 1948 through a plethora of legislation enacted by the National Party government. Apartheid created a society where black, coloured and Indian South Africans became second class citizens with limited rights while white South Africans enjoyed immense privilege. Apartheid would be fought both globally and domestically, with the domestic fight rendering the country ungovernable, especially after the Soweto Uprising of 1976. In the 1980s the anti-apartheid movement was central to the growing opposition to apartheid; this combined with increasing internal resistance led to the end of political apartheid in the 1990s leading to the first democratic election in 1994.

The advent of democracy gave rise to a rainbow nation discourse driven by politicians and public figures such as Archbishop Desmond Tutu, which sought to mitigate the divisions in society. A key element of this rainbowism was the search for a common heritage and national symbols around which a national identity could coalesce. After 1994 certain discourses, for example the rainbow nation discourse, began to develop as chief modes of reading the nation.³ According to South African historian Ciraj Rasool, in this new discourse, South Africa is framed as a 'rainbow' or 'multicultural' nation, one characterized by 'diversity', having endured, and survived the conflict and violence of apartheid and informal segregation in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. South African historiography has ably charted successive forms of resistance and according to much of the post-1994 discourse, South Africa's 'diverse' people, still characterized by separate and discrete ethnicities, have been placed on a path to achieving 'reconciliation' as the basis for the new 'rainbow nation'.⁴ This has ultimately led to a production of heritage and heritage discourses centred around these themes. These dominant discourses, unsurprisingly, remain largely uncontested, with the complexity of South Africa and its history limiting and restraining the full crystallization of this discourse.

The braai, seemingly unproblematic in the face of the much harder and more complicated task of post-1994 heritage production, has become cemented as a part of South African heritage with a petition to change Heritage Day, celebrated annually on 24 September, to Braai Day gaining momentum in 2005. Heritage Day remains but has become intertwined with Braai Day, with many South Africans celebrating one or the other, but with the likelihood that a braai

³ C. Rasool, 'The Rise of Heritage and the Reconstitution of History in South Africa,' *Kronos* 26, 2000, p. 1.

⁴ C. Rasool, 'The Rise of Heritage and the Reconstitution of History in South Africa,' *Kronos* 26, 2000, p. 1.

would be part of the celebrations of those observing Heritage Day, illustrating the ubiquity of the braai.

There is something about cooking meat outdoors on fire that appeals to many, regardless of their race, cultural background, or economic status.⁵ Food can become a symbol for an idealised nationality and national identity because of how it functions symbolically as a marker of identity and community for otherwise geographically, socially, and politically disparate populations.⁶ In this sense, one can argue that food is a key element for the nation as an ‘imagined community’, a term coined by Anderson. Benedict Anderson argues that nations are neither natural nor an inevitable social unit. The concept of the nation, which has evaded a stable definition since its inception, is in fact, according to Anderson, an idea; nations are emotional and cultural phenomena, not concrete ones. Anderson thus defines the nation as an “imagined political community” where members of a nation may never meet one another but feel a “deep, horizontal comradeship” with one another.⁷ Therefore, shared heritage plays a vital role in cementing feelings of comradeship amongst members of a nation. This is why food can be such a potent symbol of a shared identity in the context of an ‘imagined community’.

The emergence of a master narrative, post-1994 that attempts to forge a national cultural identity in South Africa, has catapulted the braai as a national symbol of cohesion and unity. Food, however, as unproblematic as it might seem, including even the braai, is far from benign. How we produce, procure, and consume food all mobilise a powerful system of symbols and meanings.⁸ This is true also of the braai; considering its place in South African heritage and South African heritage production it is important to critically analyse this heritage product to assess its meaning in post-1994 heritage making, particularly as it pertains to the creation of a national, gendered identity.

The proposed study traces the gendering of the braai in public discourse and how this contributes to the construction of a gendered national heritage. As such, gender is a central aspect of this study. Gender is an important factor that influences the experiences of men and women in society and permeates through almost all aspects of social life. Judith Butler argues

⁵ The Local Global Expat, 2020. <<https://www.thelocalglobalexpat.com/post/6-interesting-facts-about-south-african-braai>>, access: 15 June 2020.

⁶ V. Reddy, ‘Masculine Foodways in Two South African Cookbooks: Springbok Kitchen (2012) and Braai (2013)’, *Agenda* 30(4), p. 51.

⁷ B. Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, p. 7.

⁸ V. Reddy, ‘Masculine Foodways in Two South African Cookbooks: Springbok Kitchen (2012) and Braai (2013)’, *Agenda* 30(4), p. 46.

that men and women act in ways that reinforce cultural scripts of what it means to be a man and what it means to be a woman, in other words, gender is performed. These cultural scripts are specific to a particular time and place and are socially constructed. If gender permeates most aspects of life including through food and food has the ability to mobilise a powerful system of symbols and meanings, surely the possible presence of gendered foodways should not be a surprise. Food is thus, an avenue through which gendered cultural scripts can be mobilised and disseminated to the public. Tracing the gendering of the braai will importantly, reveal these cultural scripts for analysis, especially as it pertains to heritage production. Assessing the role played by gender in the production of the braai as an event as well as the influence of gender in public discourse surrounding the braai is crucial in potentially understanding the way in which gender affects the post-1994 heritage and the role it might play in the conception of national and gendered identities.

Research Objective

This research aims to contribute to the growing discipline of critical food studies by tracing the gendering of the braai and its place in the post-1994 discourses on nation-building, social cohesion, and heritage celebration. The research interrogates the manner in which gendered roles are associated with the braai. For example, the popular perception is that men braai and women prepare the accompanying foods such as salads, breads, etc. To what extent is this popular gendering of the braai accurate and has this perception changed over time?

The South African braai has become a critical element in nation-building in post-1994 South Africa, with all its attendant ramifications for national identity and social cohesion. The current research engages with the braai as an expression of gendered leisure activity and heritage celebration, social cohesion, and nation-building in post-1994 South Africa. In doing so, the research looks at how the braai stands at the nexus of nation-building, social cohesion, and the gender dynamics of leisure and heritage celebration.

The research raises several critical questions such as why and how the braai has been and continues to be gendered. A second research question focuses on the way in which the braai has become symbolic of post-1994 nation-building and social cohesion through the lens of heritage discourses. A third research question that ties these different elements together focuses on how gendered and national identities coalesce around the braai as an expression of social cohesion and national heritage. Put differently, and using the braai as a performance of cultural heritage and social-leisure expression, how do national and gendered identities converge,

conflate, and become reproduced and reconstructed in a historically complex society such as the South African one?

Rationale

The term heritage can be defined as property – tangible or intangible - that is or may be inherited; an inheritance that values things such as historic buildings that have been passed down from previous generations and relating to things of historic or cultural value that are worthy of preservation.⁹ In this regard, the place of the braai in South African culture and its inclusion as a part of South African heritage warrants an investigation, particularly concerning how it has become gendered and is deployed in nationalist discourse. Given the popularity of the braai in South African social and cultural life, a historical study of the braai and its emergence in post-1994 heritage and nation-building discourse makes an important contribution to South African historiography.

Methodology

The study of food, and the cooking and eating thereof, fall broadly within the field known as critical food studies which used to be a narrowly limited subject of study, usually the purview of nutritionists and a few anthropologists.¹⁰ Food studies in recent years have expanded, breaching the borders of multiple academic disciplines, to become interdisciplinary. This has resulted in the use of mixed methods, using both qualitative and quantitative research methods. Methodological purity in a discipline with a multidisciplinary constitution such as food studies would undoubtedly limit the social researcher's ability to analyse, interpret, and explain social phenomena. The idea that there is one best method or suite of methods to which every social scientist should be committed is at odds with both processes of knowledge formation and the complexity of alimentary life.¹¹

The interdisciplinarity of food studies and the ever-increasing complexity of its research questions warrant multiple methods and sources in the production of knowledge. The methodology leans heavily on a qualitative approach such as analysis of language in social contexts, or what is termed as discourse analysis. Discourse analysis looks at meaning

⁹ Anon, Nd. <<https://www.open.edu/openlearn/history-the-arts/history/what-heritage/content-section-2.1>>, access: 22 September 2022.

¹⁰ A.V. Avakian, & B. Harber, *From Betty Crocker to Feminist Food Studies: Critical Perspectives on Women and Food*, p. 1.

¹¹A. Warde, 'Food Studies and the Integration of Multiple Methods,' *Política y Sociedad* 51(1), p. 51.

conveyed through language in context, context being the background of the particular discourse whether it be social, political, and cultural. The braai takes place in a social setting, thus, discourse analysis of representations of the braai in texts and visuals is the most appropriate methodology for understanding the meaning of the braai.

The current research uses both primary and secondary sources. Primary sources include advertising, newspapers, cookbooks, magazines, and television series such as *The Ultimate Braai Master* and *Jan Braai Vir Erfenis*. The interdisciplinarity of food studies as well as the consultation of a wide variety and range of sources across a significant period of time, to ensure a robust and focused analysis of the sources, requires the use of purposeful sampling. This means that sources that are directly relevant and that contribute the most to the understanding of the research question have been chosen. Many of the primary sources that have been collected are media sources spanning a significant time period, having implications for the ideological stance and the target audience of these media.

A quick sample of some newspaper sources reveals some interesting results; two selections of cartoons, one from the *Sowetan* newspaper and the other from *The Citizen* newspaper reveal differing attitudes on Braai Day specifically. The *Sowetan* cartoon, Figure 1 is a reference to the previous year's #Fees must Fall movement and the unifying nature of the braai.¹² The cartoon contains two pictures, one referencing Braai Day where a student, a police officer, and a university administrator are all gathered around the braai in what seems to be a harmonious setting, with the police officer's riot gear and the students' placards strewn on the ground. The next picture of the following Monday shows the student protesting, and the police officer decked in riot gear in opposition to the student. This cartoon conveys the idealised unifying nature of the braai and its supposed ability to unite South Africans despite differing views. This is a theme present around the idea of the braai as heritage.

¹² Yalo. 'Braai Day', *Sowetan*, 2016, p. 12. & Fees must fall was a student protest movement/revolt against tertiary fees and in particular against fee increases across tertiary institutions This movement began in October 2015, gaining significant momentum due to its cross-political nature. Among the demands was a decolonisation of the educational system, transformation of universities to address racial and gender inequalities in terms of staff composition, as well as insourcing of general workers



Figure 1: Braai Day, Sowetan, 2016, p. 12

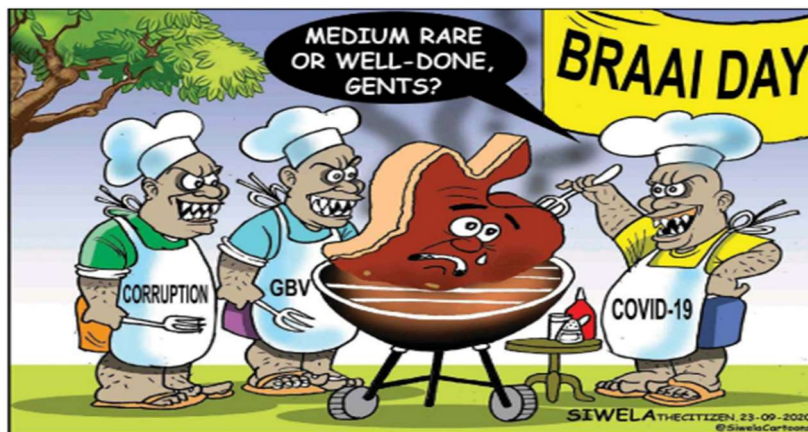


Figure 2: Braai Day, *The Citizen* 2020, p. 10

The second cartoon, Figure 2 from *The Citizen* newspaper, published a day before Heritage Day has a more negative depiction capturing Braai Day in 2020, which was a trying time for South Africa and the world amidst of the Covid-19 pandemic.¹³ Three figures, wearing identifying aprons, are standing around the braai; these figures represent gender-based violence, corruption, and Covid-19. There is a steak on the braai representing South Africa. The tagline asks, “medium rare or well-done gents”. This cartoon uses the braai as a satirical representation of how these three ‘figures’ are essentially ‘roasting’ or braaing South Africa.

Helen Walne, in an opinion piece titled “Putting our differences on the Braai” in the *Cape Argus*, argued that rather than using the braai as a tool for South Africans to mask their

¹³ Siwela, ‘Braai Day’, *The Citizen*, 2020, p. 10. & Covid-19 or Coronavirus disease is an infectious disease caused by the SARS-co-v 2 virus. Covid-19 was first detected in Wuhan China in early 2020, and quickly spread across the globe creating a global pandemic. Due to the lack of treatment many countries across the globe went into ‘lockdown’ which confined people to their homes to curb the spread of the virus. The implication in the cartoon is that of Covid-19 and it effects exacerbating the issues of corruption and gender based-violence in South Africa.

differences, South Africans should look to what tied them together. The cartoons along with the article are samples of some of the primary sources available.

The following popular articles *What makes South African "Braai" so special and different*, *10 Reasons Why South African Braais Are Better Than BBQs*, and *The ultimate guide to South African Braai* are outsider perspectives of the South African Braai both as cuisine and a food event.¹⁴ Written by tourists, they give insight into the social aspects of the braai, all referring to the social atmosphere of the braai with the idea that this food event brings people together. These articles also address some of the essential elements of the braai including fire, meat, and alcohol.

The *Ultimate Braai Master* is a South African reality television show which just completed its seventh season, where contestants are put to the test through tough cooking challenges in which the Braai is central. The participants compete for the *Ultimate Braai Master* crown through various braai challenges across 13 episodes held in beautiful South African landscapes. *Jan Braai Vir Erfenis* is an entertaining travel show with a heavy dose of ‘braaing’, South African humour, great food, and heritage. The program follows Jan Braai throughout South Africa and abroad where he visits heritage sites and other interesting places to braai, meeting interesting local people while braaing food. Jan Braai introduced the 2005 petition which called for the transformation of Heritage Day into Heritage/Braai Day. His advocacy for a National Braai Day has seen an increase of between 15-20 million South Africans taking part in the celebration of Braai Day. Jan Braai’s website under the tag of Our Braai Day Mission says the following:

The National Braai Day initiative aims to position National Heritage Day as South Africa’s annual day of celebration. We call on all South Africans to unite around fires, share our heritage and wave our flag on 24 September every year. National Heritage Day is a public holiday in South Africa. Our government set this day aside for all South Africans to celebrate our rich heritage. Across race, language, region, and religion, we all share one common heritage. It is called many things: Chisa Nyama, Braai, and Ukosa to name a few. Although the ingredients may differ, the one thing that never changes is that when we have something to celebrate, we light fires, and prepare great feasts...We encourage all South Africans to unite around fires, share our heritage, and wave our flag on 24 September every year. We liken this initiative to annual celebrations cherished by other leading nations of the world, Thanksgiving for Americans, St Patrick’s Day for the Irish, Bastille Day for the French, and Australia Day for Australians. This is a noble cause, which will contribute to strengthening South Africa as a nation through this act of nation-building and social cohesion.¹⁵

¹⁴ The Local Global Expat, 2020. <<https://www.thelocalglobalexpat.com/post/6-interesting-facts-about-south-african-Braai/>>, access: 15 June 2022. & C. Classens, 2017. <<https://theculturetrip.com/africa/south-africa/articles/10-reasons-why-south-african-Braais-are-better-than-bbqs/>>, access: 15 June 2020. & K. Birtles, 2022. <<https://www.trafalgar.com/real-word/ultimate-guide-south-african-Braai/>>, access: 20 June 2022.

¹⁵ Anon, Nd. <<https://Braai.com/about/>>. access: September 2022.

As is evident, Jan Braai and his Braai Day mission are perfectly placed to answer some of the questions raised by this research. Since 2014 Jan Braai has undertaken the National Braai Tour which takes South Africans on a tour from Cape Town to the Klein Karoo and on to the Gariep Dam. During a weeklong tour at the beginning of September 2019, over three hundred braais took place.

The braai has also been a part of many advertising campaigns for braai equipment, Father's Day campaigns, and a part of sports and alcohol advertising. Analysis determining the discourses, ideologies, and themes of these adverts is a crucial element of this research. Pertinent questions that arise as part of this analysis include for example the manner in which the braai is framed (as celebratory, linked to heritage, or merely social-leisure activity for the weekends/holidays) in these advertising campaigns, as well as identifying which elements of the braai receive greater emphasis.

The braai itself is complex and as a process involves multiple components, for example, the consumption of meat which has already been studied by various academics.¹⁶ While there is little historical scholarship on the braai, there is a significant body of literature on gender, masculinity, meat, and heritage that anchors this research. Some of these are discussed in the literature review below.

Literature Review

Gender

Gender is an important aspect of this research. To be able to trace the gendering of the braai one needs to understand how gender operates in society and how it informs the public discourse around the braai.

Judith Butler's seminal work *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* continues a long tradition of feminist scholarship by questioning the social instrument by which humanity has distinguished between the two different sexes, gender.¹⁷ One is not born a woman but rather becomes a woman says Simone de Beauvoir in her book *The Second Sex*.¹⁸ Butler's work follows this path and seeks to answer exactly how one becomes a woman or man.

¹⁶ J. Sobal, 'Men, Meat and Marriage: Models of Masculinity', *Food and Foodways* 13(1-2), 2005, pp. 135-158. & C. Adams, *The Sexual Politics of Meat: A Feminist Vegetarian Critical Theory* p. 6.

¹⁷ J. Butler, *Gender Trouble, Feminism and Subversion of Gender Identity*. p. 12

¹⁸ S. De Beauvoir, *The Second Sex*, p. 273.

Centered on non-normative sexuality and gender identity Butler's book is situated in the emergence of queer theory in the 1980s and 1990s, questioning the criteria by which second-wave feminism defined women. Both Butler and previous feminist scholars separated sex from gender, a distinction previously taken for granted. Sex is the biological distinction between male and female, for example, a definition based on biology a woman can be defined by her capacity for reproduction and her reproductive organs. A woman defined by social constructivist scholars like Butler and many feminist scholars would be a person who through social construction behaves and acts in a way that conforms to the socially sanctioned ideas of femininity. For Butler, gender is a social construct because there is neither an essence that gender expresses or externalizes nor an objective ideal to which gender aspires. If gender is not fact, the various acts of gender create the idea of gender and without those acts there would be no gender at all.¹⁹

Butler argues that gender is the stylized repetition of acts over time.²⁰ This has led to her theory of gender performativity; performativity in Butler's context should not be taken to mean performance, which is deliberate and artificial, but rather performativity that produces a series of effects and is the idea that actions in the world (speech, clothing, mannerisms, etc.) create gender just as performative utterances create things through speech. A performative utterance is a statement that enacts the statement as the statement is being said, for example, if one says "I promise" they are simultaneously acting out (making the promise) and speaking at the same time (saying they are making a promise). In other words, gender for Butler is a verb, not a noun.

Males and females are thrown into man-ness and woman-ness, they are not a gender from the start. Masculinity and femininity are historically variable, for example, the colours that have been ascribed to genders, blue and pink for male and female respectively, are a relatively new construction, and these colours have not always been linked to the genders they represent contemporarily. Men and woman act in ways that consolidate an impression of being a man or woman and the phenomenon is produced and reproduced all the time. Butler's theory is very important for the current research. An aspect of the Braai, meat, which will be discussed below, has historically and contemporarily been linked to masculine gender expression. How does performative gender influence the Braai as an event and how does this play out historically in

¹⁹ J. Butler, *Gender Trouble, Feminism and Subversion of Gender Identity*, p. 190.

²⁰ *Ibid*, p. 179.

the public discourse? How might the answers to this question influence heritage celebration in South Africa?

Written in 2005 the first chapter, ‘Feminist Food Studies: a brief History’ in the book *From Betty Crocker to Feminist Food Studies: Critical Perspectives on Women and Food* by Avakian and Harber traces the development of feminist food studies. The introduction of this chapter gives insight into the scholarly interest in not only food studies, but also the excitement around feminist food studies in the 1990s and early 2000s. The chapter is divided into two sections; the first section deals with the scholarly work that contributed to the professionalisation of food studies resulting in food as a legitimate scholarly topic and the work that was done on women and food before 1990.²¹ In this section, the authors argue that European historians began recognizing the importance of food in understanding the development of civilizations in the mid-twentieth century.²² The authors mention the works of Fernand Braudel who saw history in sweeping terms, focusing on how humans changed such natural elements as the land, vegetation, and animals by introducing stock breeding and agriculture.²³ Anthropology is then singled out as the biggest factor in the development of food studies in the 1970s. The work of anthropologists, studying what was described as “primitive” and often “exotic” cultures, brought food into focus as an aid to interpreting cultural patterns.²⁴ The authors also argue that early to mid-twentieth-century cookbooks and gastronomy writers equally influenced the development of food studies. Singling out two leading female writers, the authors argue that before other writers were alert to the possibilities of food as a way to gauge human mood and behaviour, these women intuitively understood that food allowed them the scope they needed to express their views.²⁵ The legacy of these pioneering writers is the convincing case they make for food as a worthy and dignified area of study; they followed their intuitions and wrote about the qualities of good food and what it means to people.²⁶

The second section of the chapter deals with the scholarship on women and food during the period of excitement in the 1990s. The authors start by analysing the divergence from previous feminist food studies scholarship which had treated women as monolithic and frequently added women of colour to theoretical frameworks constructed from the life experiences of white,

²¹ A.V. Avakian, & B. Harber, *From Betty Crocker to Feminist Food Studies: Critical Perspectives on Women and Food*, p. 2.

²² Ibid.

²³ Ibid, p. 3.

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Ibid, p. 4.

²⁶ Ibid, p. 6.

Western women. The most exciting new scholarship on women takes as its project the contextualization of gender within other significant social formations.²⁷ Illustrating the interdisciplinarity of feminist food studies, the authors review feminist food studies scholarship within six categories delineated by theme. These categories are Sociocultural Analysis, Colonialism Political Economy Globalisation, History and/or Popular Culture, Constructions of Identity, Recipes, and Cookbooks as Creative Expressions, Eating Problems, and Disorders. Although this chapter was written seventeen years ago and mostly deals with European and Western scholarship it provides necessary insight into the development of, not only feminist food studies but also food studies in general which is important for the current research. Looking at the themes, ideologies, methodologies, and theoretical frameworks that are present in food studies scholarship is essential in understanding the origins and development of the field, where it's going, and where the current research fits in the development of this discipline in South Africa.

Braai

Reddy's 2016 *Masculine foodways in two South African cookbooks: Springbok Kitchen (2012) and Braai (2013)* deals with the South African braai through a socio-cultural analytic framework. The article builds on the foodways concept (eating habits and culinary practices of people, regions, or historical periods) by looking at two South African cookbooks centred around the braai. The introduction of the article looks at the significance of food beyond health, well-being, and survival. Reddy argues that food also operates within broader circulations of power, but more importantly references cultural, social, gendered, and economic practices concerning the culture, traditions, and history within which food emerges.²⁸ The article continues to engage with the idea of the cookbooks, and how they are written often fall short of their pedagogical aims and their perceived intention and have much to expose in terms of gendered foodways.²⁹ Reddy argues that cookbooks by their very nature have a gendered prehistory resulting from women's socially constructed role and practice in the kitchen. Cookbooks, however, are also usually gender blind as they conceal extratextual insights that point to practices and beliefs that shape the nature of men's and women's role in cooking and

²⁷A.V. Avakian, & B. Harber, From *Betty Crocker to Feminist Food Studies: Critical Perspectives on Women and Food*, p. 7.

²⁸V. Reddy, 'Masculine Foodways in Two South African Cookbooks: *Springbok Kitchen* (2012) and *Braai* (2013)', *Agenda* 30(4), p. 46.

²⁹*Ibid*, p. 47.

control over food (usually masculinized in particular cultural contexts as to who eats first and who has the choicest cuts of meat, as well as what portion sizes accrue to whom).³⁰

Braai cookbooks are a growing genre of cookbooks that focus on the braai as a food event and the role of men as cooks in this cooking practice. The two cookbooks discussed *The Springbok Kitchen: Celebrating the Love of Food, family, and Rugby*, and *Braai: Reuben on Fire* are a part of this growing genre. Reddy sees the presence of these cookbooks as constructing meanings about food labour and practice that attempt to delink hyper-masculinised practices (rugby and braai) from their broader gendered implications. For Reddy, these practices are socially and materially constructed and organized.³¹ Through an analysis of the cookbooks, Reddy argues that these cookbooks reinforce hegemonic masculinity which is produced by the braai as a food event. These cookbooks represent much-needed repair work as they obscure the gendered and feminist meanings within them.³² In terms of the current research, this article is crucial to the understanding of the Braai as a socio-cultural and gendered food event.

Allen Feldman in “Strange Fruit: The South African Truth Commission and the Demonic Economies of Violence” proposes that there is a mnemonic linkage of the ‘Braai tortures’ of the apartheid security forces with prior forms of labour coercion and the economic commodification and consumption of bodies of colour.³³ ‘Braai tortures’ were events where political opponents of the apartheid regime would be tortured by apartheid security operatives whilst they were having a braai. What is relevant to the research at hand is how the braai is associated with sports competitions, hunting, the frontier geography of the bush, relaxation, and alcohol consumption, and also with part of the political culture of white male dominance in a racially oppressive system of torture and exploitation.³⁴ Investigating whether the braai is still a part of the political culture of white male dominance is important in understanding the place of the braai in heritage, post-1994.

Heritage

A central aspect of this research is looking at how the braai fits into post-1994 heritage discourse and celebration. This section of literature looks at what the post-1994 heritage

³⁰ V. Reddy, ‘Masculine Foodways in Two South African Cookbooks: *Springbok Kitchen* (2012) and *Braai* (2013)’, *Agenda* 30(4), p. 47.

³¹ *Ibid*, p. 48.

³² *Ibid*

³⁴ *Ibid*, p. 245.

landscape is in South Africa. How heritage reinforces the idea of the nation and whether heritage is compatible with the nation as an idea or an entity, particularly in post-colonial, multicultural societies.

Ciraj Rasool's 2004 publication takes on the heritage space in South Africa post-1994. His article examines the cultural workings of heritage, public history, and identity formation under conditions of political transition in South Africa.³⁵ He argues that post-1994, a discourse or way of reading the country began to crystalize and this had significant implications for heritage production. The discourse is framed around South Africa's endurance through the conflict and violence of apartheid, its resistance to colonial and apartheid violence and oppression, and the diverse groups of South Africa being placed on a path of reconciliation as the basis for the new rainbow nation.³⁶ This discourse inspired many heritage projects in the country and encouraged South Africans to consider, narrate and visualise their society and its past, as well as their own identities as individuals within it along with this dominant discourse. Rasool illustrates some of the contestations within heritage production as well as between academic history, public history, and heritage. This article is essential to the proposed research as it gives insight into the priorities of the heritage space post-1994 and how the Braai might fit into heritage production after democratization.

Benedict Anderson's, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* looks at the rise of nationalism in the 18 and 19th centuries.³⁷ Anderson argues that the nation is a cultural construct, a result of the fall of monarchies and empires and the advances in literacy, technology, and capitalism. He looks at the features of the nation and the immense power that they hold over their citizens. For example, Anderson argues that nationalism, the ideology in which the nation is rooted, is unique in that few people would die for any other political-ism/ ideology, say liberalism, yet thousands of people have died for their nations. Why does the nation, which is yet to have a solid definition hold such power over its citizens? Anderson attempts to answer this question by arguing that those who die for their nations do so for an idea. Nations are a cultural construct, an emotional and cultural phenomenon, where citizens are bound by a "deep horizontal comradeship." This comradeship is amongst citizens who have never met one another and likely never will. Anderson thus defines the nation as an 'imagined political community which is "both inherently limited and

³⁵ C. Rasool, 'The Rise of Heritage and the Reconstitution of History in South Africa,' *Kronos* 26, 2000, p. 1.

³⁶ *Ibid*, pp. 1-5.

³⁷ B. Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. p.3.

sovereign”.³⁸ Anderson’s work is crucial in understanding how nations are bound together and the way in which heritage might help cement the bonds of comradeship that he describes.

Cristobal Gnecco’s chapter in *The Palgrave Handbook of Contemporary Heritage Research* deals with ‘Heritage in Multicultural Times’. Gnecco argues that multiculturalism is premised upon the idea that societies are heterogeneous compositions of various cultures and thus dispenses with the modern conception of society as an integrated and homogeneous totality.³⁹ For decades, according to Gnecco, we have linked the inherited past with the nation. Yet, the rhetoric of the homogeneous nation-state was replaced some while ago by that of the heterogeneous multicultural state.⁴⁰ This means that the definition of heritage is now in flux in multicultural times. Gnecco’s chapter does not seek to fix or stabilize the meaning of heritage in multicultural times, rather Gnecco interpolates the contexts in which heritage unfolds and where it intervenes and highlights heritage’s relationship with governmentality, humanism, and the market.⁴¹ In addition, the chapter explores the gains of destabilizing the dominant, multicultural conception of heritage, especially by positioning alternative conceptions of time, past, ancestors, and life.⁴² What is important in this chapter for the current research is how the chapter analyses the problems that arise with the use of heritage in a multicultural context especially when heritage has always been linked with the homogenous nation-state. Although multicultural societies are a recent phenomenon in the West and other parts of the world as a result of increased migration, South Africa has been multicultural in its makeup from its inception. This was despite successive regimes of segregation and apartheid which sought racially totalizing definitions of nationhood in South Africa, thereby denying rights to those who did not fit in the established homogenous definition of South African nationhood. How might the tensions that arise out of the use of heritage in a multicultural society like South Africa affect the master narrative of heritage post-1994 that Rasool identifies? This is an important question to consider in the research.

Meat

³⁸ B. Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. p.3.

³⁹ C. Gnecco, ‘Heritage in Multicultural times,’ in E. Waterton & S. Watson (ed.), *The Palgrave Handbook of Contemporary Research*, p. 278.

⁴⁰ Ibid, p. 263.

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² Ibid.

Meat is an essential element of the braai. The literature notes a link between masculinity and meat. It also looks at how meat is marketed to the general public and the link between meat consumption and the public consumption of the female body and what effects this has on propping up hierarchical gender stereotypes.

Hoffman and Erasmus tackle this central aspect of the braai, namely, meat. Their article seeks to determine what meat is to South Africans, from a cultural and regulatory point of view. Hoffman and Erasmus argue that meat forms an integral part of South African cuisine. In fact, for most South Africans, a meal without meat is considered not to be a meal at all.⁴³ The article begins with the development of South Africa's meat cuisine, starting with a look at the precolonial meat cuisine of the Khoisan and further elaborates on the meat cuisine of the Bantu ethnic groups of South Africa. It then looks at meat consumption, noting the importance of considering different population groups when looking at food and in particular meat consumption because each group has different beliefs, customs, and traditions surrounding meat. As a result of this, research on meat consumption in South Africa is dominated by the Black African population group, in terms of the type of meat most consumed as well as habits and beliefs around meat because they are a majority in the country. The authors highlight that meat consumption has increased since 1994 with the increase being in pork and poultry along with value-added processed meat products.⁴⁴ This increase is attributed to the price of these meat products with poultry and pork priced at 60% and 30%, respectively, lower than that of beef and lamb/mutton.⁴⁵ This trend correlates with and is driven by the low-income consumers.⁴⁶ The article continues with an explanation of the regulatory framework around meat in South Africa. This article gives insight into how meat is defined both in the regulatory framework of South Africa as well as culturally. Meat is an important aspect of the Braai and more insight into how it is defined and the ability of consumers to access a variety of meat is essential to the current research.

“Men, Meat, and Marriage: Models of Masculinity” by Sobal is an analysis of men and their consumption of meat and the symbolic meanings attached to this within marriage. Sobal uses two models to analyse the consumption of meat; these models are based on the singular masculinity and multiple masculinity perspective. These two models give insight into the

⁴³ S.W. Erasmus & C.L. Hoffman, ‘What is Meat in South Africa?’, *International Perspectives* 7(4), 2017, p. 71.

⁴⁴ *Ibid*, p. 72.

⁴⁵ *Ibid*.

⁴⁶ *Ibid*.

consumption of meat by men and how this links to the performance of gender by both men and women within a marriage. Sobal begins his analysis of male meat consumption within marriage by describing the two perspectives he uses for his analysis. Singular masculinity is described as an essentialist perspective on masculinity. Singular masculinity assumes the dominance of one set of male norms in a particular society and historical period that drive and structure men's actions, including food choices.⁴⁷ This perspective is the dominant way of thinking about gender both within academia and society. Singular masculinity is assumed both in positivist scales for gender analysis and in constructionist approaches to "doing gender".⁴⁸ This perspective is the basis for one-dimensional continuum thinking on masculinity and femininity where these two genders are in a dichotomy, and combinatorial gender conceptualizations that cross-classify masculine and feminine to permit each to vary independently and androgyny to occur.⁴⁹

The multiple masculinity perspective is the opposite of the essentialist singular masculinity perspective in that, multiple masculinity analyses are relativist perspectives that assume plural conceptions of maleness (and femaleness) and operate in a society and period, with many ways of being gendered available that offer diverse cultural scripts for particular actions.⁵⁰ Both masculinities and femininities in this perspective are assumed to be developed, learned, considered, selected, and enacted as men (and women) engage in the continuous construction of gender in everyday life, including their food choices.⁵¹ The multiple masculinities perspective is mostly rooted in constructionist thinking with recent versions drawing on contemporary cultural studies and post-modernist thinking.

Sobal begins his singular masculinity analysis of meat consumption within marriage by discussing both the history of gendering foods as well as the connection between maleness and meat. For Sobal foods are objects that are inscribed with many meanings, representing ethnicity, nationality, region, class, age, sexuality, culture, and gender.⁵² Sobal argues that research shows that the gendering of foods is culturally constructed rather than biology-based. This construction is gendered differently during different times and in different places. In the US and other post-industrial western countries beef, hamburger, potatoes, and beer have all

⁴⁷ J. Sobal, 'Men, Meat and Marriage: Models of Masculinity', *Food and Foodways* 13(1-2), 2005, p. 136.

⁴⁸ Ibid

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ Ibid, pp. 136-137.

⁵² J. Sobal, 'Men, Meat and Marriage: Models of Masculinity', *Food and Foodways* 13(1-2), 2005, pp. 136-197

been gender-typed as masculine. While foods such as yoghurt, chocolate, salads, and pasta have been gender-typed as feminine foods. Casting certain foods as either feminine or masculine food then becomes semiotic. An archetype of gendering food is the relationship between maleness and meat.⁵³

Meat has been symbolically grounded in images of men engaging in the particularly masculine activity of hunting. Men demonstrate their power by dominating other species in nature, acting as carnivores who engage in aggressive acts to bring home food as providers for their families.⁵⁴ In this regard men engage in performing masculinity by eating meat, thus achieving maleness by reflecting the behaviour of eating animals that were, or at least could be hunted with meat symbolizing the strength and virility of conquering beasts by men.⁵⁵ This conquering of animals requires a suppression of emotion which is needed in the hunting and killing of animals for their flesh. Suppression of emotion is also one of the hallmarks of hegemonic masculinity. It is for this reason that meat is the consummate male food with men hyper-masculinizing meat in male rituals.

Men maximize and women minimize meat as they perform and advertise their gender in everyday life.⁵⁶ Not eating meat is seen to be feminine. When men do not eat in a manly way, they often feel pressure to present gender “accounts” both to justify their failure to enact appropriately gendered eating and to resist being de-masculinized.⁵⁷ In these accounts, for example, a man justifies his lack of a meaty lunch by arguing that his wife packed his lunch, to help rescue a man’s masculine identity from a precarious or devalued state by placing the blame for unmasculine actions on another person or situation.⁵⁸ These accounts create a distinction between the responsibility men have over their food choices as well as the ability to control food choices and this allows men to prevent or recover challenges to the masculinity of what they eat.

Sobal argues that marriage is an institution of shared eating. However, family meals are structured around the male preference for meat with men eating the first, best, and most.⁵⁹ Marital relationships also illustrate a gendered division of labour with women doing most of

⁵³ J. Sobal, ‘Men, Meat and Marriage: Models of Masculinity’, *Food and Foodways* 13(1-2), 2005, p. 137.

⁵⁴ *Ibid*, p. 138.

⁵⁵ *Ibid*.

⁵⁶ *Ibid*, p. 139.

⁵⁷ *Ibid*, p. 140.

⁵⁸ *Ibid*.

⁵⁹ J. Sobal, ‘Men, Meat and Marriage: Models of Masculinity’, *Food and Foodways* 13(1-2), 2005, p. 145.

the food preparation. When men do cook, it is often in the form of a hypermasculine display of meat preparation. Masculine cooking is often public, outdoors, and involves fire.⁶⁰ This can often be seen when men are hosting, male rituals of hospitality frequently focus on barbecuing or grilling meat outside in settings beyond the kitchen. Through the essentialist (through a singular model masculinity) analysis of men, meat, and marriage we can conclude that there is gender typing of food in which meat is cast as a masculine food, therefore, making vegetarianism in men problematic. Young unmarried men make choices to select foods, in this case meat, that either reinforces or boosts their masculinity. Married men and women are constantly negotiating on what kind of meals should be eaten in the home however, the family meal is still male-centred.

The study conducted by researchers Charlotte De Backer, Sara Erreygers & Charlotte De Cort et al., is an investigation on whether the level of attachment to newer forms of masculinity can predict meat consumption. Men's willingness to reduce meat consumption as well as the level of attachment to newer forms of masculinity and attitudes towards male vegetarians are related aspects of their investigation.⁶¹ According to the researchers, there is a very pervasive idea in the west of "real men eat meat". Throughout European history meat has been strongly associated with power, wealth, and masculinity.⁶² For many men in the west, a meal is inadequate without meat or rather a meal is not a meal without meat. This research notes Sobal's argument that the idea that meat is masculine might be too stereotypical and that this does not apply to all men which is evidenced by the multiple masculinity scripts. This research, furthermore, agrees with much of the literature that eating meat is associated with socially constructed norms of hegemonic masculinity and cis-gendered construction of biological heterosexual men, acting masculine in relation to gender roles.⁶³ This construction of masculinity is based on notions of power, virility, and strength which are linked to eating meat. However, as has already been mentioned this construction is not accepted by all men. This norm has become less rigid with more hybrid forms of masculinity allowing men to negotiate different scripts of masculinity when negotiating food choices. De Backer et al. also make mention of the sustainability and health disparities amongst men. The management of men's masculinity through the consumption of meat not only contributes to gender disparities in meat

⁶⁰ J. Sobal, 'Men, Meat and Marriage: Models of Masculinity', *Food and Foodways* 13(1-2), 2005, p. 144.

⁶¹ C. De Backer, S. Erreygers, C. De Cort et al, 'Meat and Masculinities. Can Differences in Masculinity Predict Meat Consumption, Intentions to Reduce Meat and Attitudes Towards Vegetarians?', *Appetite* 147, 2020, pp. 1-7.

⁶²Ibid. p. 1.

⁶³Ibid, pp. 4-7.

consumption but also health disparities as a result of the consumption of meat, (gout and heart disease) and also the effect of meat-eating on the environment. The strong link between men and meat makes men resistant to reducing meat intake.⁶⁴ This has strong implications for the fight against climate change and for achieving health objectives. This study reinforces some of the conclusions made by Sobal and is important in the current study for the possible use of its methodology in looking at the connection between men and meat consumption in South Africa and how these ideas show up in the Braai and the impact that this has on public discourse around the Braai.

Carla Tsampiras examines gender, meat, and violence in food marketing in and from South Africa and argues that the representations of women and other bodies of other species as being available for consumption (visual or otherwise) are an expression of the gendered social processes associated with food production and consumption.⁶⁵ What Tsampiras reveals is how representations of food, particularly meat, in marketing can repetitively create visual aggressions that are associated with the female form being constantly under scrutiny and available for public consumption. Tsampiras, without completely placing blame on violence against women on violence against animals, illustrates a link between the careless and crass representations of animal bodies in food marketing to how female bodies have been represented in marketing. The implication of this is that visual representation of convenience food deploys stereotypical hyper-masculinities and hyper-femininities which are used to reinforce hierarchies of gender, species, and economic systems and the violence associated with them. The core of this analysis is identifying the different types of interconnecting violence inherent in overarching processes linked to the production of meat and notions that violence is acceptable against certain types of bodies. Tsampiras argues that violence against non-human species is widely accepted and not necessarily consciously considered. This lack of conscious consideration which is illustrated by food marketing has implications for interpersonal violence among human beings.

Tsampiras' argument in this article echoes that of Carol Adams whose controversial book *The Sexual Politics of Meat: A Feminist Vegetarian Critical Theory* argued that the objectification of animals in representations of meat enables the oppression of women and the dominance of

⁶⁴ C. De Backer, S. Erreygers, C. De Cort et al, 'Meat and Masculinities. Can Differences in Masculinity Predict Meat Consumption, Intentions to Reduce Meat and Attitudes Towards Vegetarians?', *Appetite* 147, 2020, p. 1-7.

⁶⁵ C. Tsampiras, "' Hot Chicks on Board" – Gender, Meat, and Violence in Food Marketing in, and from, South Africa', *Gender Questions* 9(1), 2021, p. 1.

humans over animals. Adams identified a link between this objectification of animals used for meat and the objectification of women in cultural representations which enables violence against both animals and women. Tsampiras looks at three food marketing pieces, the one which succulently illustrates Tsampiras argument will be discussed here. Tsampiras looks at the frozen food transport company, Fresh Farm. The company's vehicles have slogans such as "Breasts are Bigger and Better" and "Hot chicks on Board". Some say, "We rule the roost", "Wing Commander" or "We won't chicken out on you", toying with anthropocentric ideas about dominance and what the hens and roosters that are consumed as "chicken" are like.⁶⁶ Tsampiras' article is thus a contribution towards scrutinising hegemonic knowledge and ideas about gender roles and how South African marketing companies link them to the marketing of meat.

Chapter Outline

Chapter 1: Introduction; this chapter discusses the research objective, methodology, and discussion of selected secondary scholarship.

Chapter 2: Flames of the Past: The historical and social birth of the braai. This chapter focuses on the historical emergence of the braai and its antecedents such as the Dutch *braden*, meaning to roast. Defining the braai also has to contend with the concept of shisanyama and as such, this chapter also discusses the distinctions between a braai and shisanyama and the cultural and social associations of each.

Chapter 3: Gendered Flames: The embodied masculinity of the braai. How is the Braai as a ritual gendered? The chapter discusses the specific elements of the braai and how these are gendered through action and embodiment rather than discourse. In other words, how is the braai performed as a gendered activity?

Chapter 4: Playing with fire: Sport, Leisure, and the Masculinisation of the Braai from 1970-2024: This chapter traces the gendering of the braai through an analysis of textual and visual discourses focusing on leisure, and leisure as organized sport spectatorship that shape or reinforce the gendering of the braai.

⁶⁶ C. Tsampiras, "' Hot Chicks on Board" – Gender, Meat, and Violence in Food Marketing in, and from, South Africa', *Gender Questions* 9(1), 2021, p. 6.

Chapter 5: Brewing Identity: The Braai, Alcohol and Heritage from 1976-2021. This chapter traces the ways in which the braai continues to be gendered even when framed as collective heritage and central to a national identity. In this regard the chapter focuses on the implications of the gendering of the braai in heritage and national identity building. The chapter argues that as the braai has become the preeminent domain of South African men, this masculinisation extends to the masculinisation of both heritage and national belonging.

Chapter 6: Conclusion

Chapter Two: Flames of the Past, the Historical and Social Birth of the Braai

A crucial part of tracing the gendering of the braai in public discourse is understanding what constitutes the braai as well as its origins. This is important in understanding how the braai has evolved from a meat cooking method, a pastime and leisure, to a symbol of post-apartheid reconciliatory heritage in South Africa. This chapter seeks to define the braai by tracing its origins and antecedents. A critical aspect of defining the braai is also engaging with the concept of shisanyama and as such, the chapter discusses the distinctions between a braai and shisanyama and the cultural and social associations of each. The chapter uses a combination of both primary and secondary sources, including books, journal articles, newspaper articles, print media, in tracing the origins of the braai and establishing its distinctive elements that distinguish it from the shisanyama.

Catching fire, the historical origins of the braai

The origins of the braai, in its simplest conception of cooking meat on fire, lie in the evolution of humankind and the emergence of man-made fire. The story of humankind's development from Australopithecus Afarensis to Homo Sapiens is the story of progress and change. Over millennia humanity's ancestors went through significant changes, responding to various environmental factors. Crucially, humankind's ability to control fire has led to many changes in the development of humans and is crucial in tracing the origins of the braai.⁶⁷ Southern Africa's, in particular, South Africa's abundance of fossil hominid sites has furthered the world's understanding of human development through millennia. The caves of the Sterkfontein Valley in the Cradle of Humankind have been a particularly valuable source of knowledge on the development of humans. It is in these caves that the earliest representation of human beings was discovered, the Australopithecus Africanus (A. Africanus).⁶⁸ Looking at the changes in the anatomy of humankind's ancestors gives incredible insight into the origins of cooking meat on fire. While the earliest representations of humankind had many different anatomical characteristics that differ from modern humans, this chapter focuses only on those characteristics that illustrate the type of diet each representation followed as this is important in tracing the origins of the braai.

⁶⁷ R. Wrangham, *Catching Fire: How Cooking Made Us Human*, pp. 1-5.

⁶⁸ Anon, 2023, <<https://www.maropeng.co.za/content/page/australopithecus>>, access: 15 May 2023.

The *A. Africanus* lived approximately 2.5 million years ago and demonstrated several anatomical traits that shed light on early diets. First, their dental structure points to a diet rich in both soft and hard foods.⁶⁹ In comparison to previous hominins, *A. Africanus* possessed smaller incisors and canines, which may have indicated less reliance on cutting and ripping difficult foodstuffs such as meat because of its tough and fibrous nature, especially when eaten raw, which would have been the norm as hominins had not yet mastered the control of fire. The size and thickness of their premolars and molars, however, indicated a capacity for breaking down and grinding tough plant material.⁷⁰ Additionally, a strong mastication ability is shown by their robust jaw and massive chewing muscles. The size and form of the jaw also reveals a diversified diet that includes crunchy items like nuts and seeds. Additionally, *A. Africanus*'s cranial capacity suggests that it had a fractionally larger brain than previous hominins, implying some degree of dietary flexibility and cognitive ability. *Homo Habilis*, which lived approximately 2.5 million years ago had a facial anatomy that included a projecting lower face and larger teeth, notably larger molars, which may have indicated a diet heavy in tough foods. Their jaws and teeth also revealed traits typical of both meat-eating and plant-based diets. While the relatively small and less powerful canines point to a decreased reliance on hunting and the eating of meat, the existence of large, robust molars with thick enamel shows an adaptation to grinding and chewing tough, fibrous plant material. These *Homo Habilis* anatomical characteristics show that the diet likely included a mix of plant items and some meat, with a focus on plant-based foods.

Homo erectus, which evolved from *Homo Habilis*, lived approximately between 1.9 million and 143,000 years ago and had a dental structure pointing to a diet that included both plant and animal meals. The smaller molar size is one of the most notable physical traits of *Homo erectus*.⁷¹ *Homo erectus* had smaller molars with thinner enamel than earlier hominins, indicating a change to a more processed, less abrasive diet, characterized by meat. Another important aspect of *Homo erectus* is that it had a smaller, less protruding face. Along with a more vertical forehead and a larger braincase, which decreased facial prognathism (an extension or bulging out, protrusion of the lower jaw mandible) suggests a possible change in

⁶⁹ B. Wood, & M. Collard. 'The Human Genus', *Science* 284(5411), 1999, pp. 67-71. & R. Wrangham, *Catching Fire: How Cooking Made Us Human*, pp. 1-5. & L.C. Aiello, & P. Wheeler, 'The Expensive-Tissue Hypothesis: The Brain and the Digestive System in Human and Primate Evolution', *Current Anthropology* 36(2), 1995, pp. 199-221.

⁷⁰ R. Wrangham, *Catching Fire: How Cooking Made Us Human*. pp. 1-5.

⁷¹ R. Wrangham, & R.N. Carmody, 'Human Adaptation to the Control of Fire', *Evolutionary Anthropology: Issues, News, and Reviews* 19(5), 2010, pp. 187-199.

nutrition and food preparation techniques.⁷² This means that *Homo erectus*'s diet had evolved from previous hominins with softer meals that required less strenuous mastication. This is indicated by the flatter face of *Homo erectus* with decreased anterior projection reflecting a diminished reliance on powerful chewing forces. Richard Wrangham argues that these dental changes represent one of the most transformative moments in human development.⁷³

In 2012 archaeologists found what they believed to be the earliest tentative evidence of man-made fire dated at approximately one million years ago in Wonderwerk Cave in the Northern Cape.⁷⁴ This falls within the period of *H. Erectus* living in Southern Africa, thus, it is believed that *Homo Erectus* was the first modern human ancestor to control fire. Evidence of pre-historic man-made fire is available in cave systems across South Africa such as in Swartkrans and, Klassies River. More interesting is the presence of charred animal bones, with some bones showing the presence of butchery marks, the manual stripping of meat from animal bones.⁷⁵ The animal bones and the flesh that surrounded them found at these ancient dwelling sites were intentionally cooked in cooking fires, as opposed to being unfortunate victims of grass or forest fires. Scientists have been able to determine that bones were charred as a result of man-made fires; forest fires tend to burn at much lower temperatures than fires kindled for cooking. Using evidence of controlled fires found in cave systems in South Africa and the anatomical changes of the *Homo Erectus* which indicate smaller molars and smaller guts, Wrangham argues that *Homo Erectus* was the first to cook food, especially meat.⁷⁶ The ingestion of softer, prepared foods that need less mechanical processing while chewing is compatible with the reduction in the molar size of *Homo erectus*. The cooking of food would have made it more pleasant, simpler to digest, and maybe enhanced nutrient availability. This is because cooking food changes its nutritional value by increasing the amount of energy the human body obtains from food.⁷⁷ Wrangham argues that this increase in energy resulted in biological advantages that allowed humans to survive and reproduce better than they had before. The change in molar morphology is consistent with the archaeological evidence of controlled fire use by *Homo erectus*. Whether intentional or by accident *Homo erectus* was the first ancestor of humankind

⁷² R. Wrangham, *Catching Fire: How Cooking Made Us Human*, pp. 1-5. & R. Wrangham, & R.N. Carmody, 'Human Adaptation to the Control of Fire', *Evolutionary Anthropology: Issues, News, and Reviews* 19(5), 2010, pp. 187-199.

⁷³ R. Wrangham, *Catching Fire: How Cooking Made Us Human*, p. 6.

⁷⁴ J. Gowlett, & R. Wrangham 'Earliest Fire in Africa Towards the Convergence of Archaeological Evidence and the Cooking Hypothesis', *Azania: Archaeological Research in Africa* 48(1), 2013, pp. 5-30.

⁷⁵ J. Gowlett, 'The Origins of Human Fire Use', *Pontifical Academy of Sciences*, 2013, pp. 171-197.

⁷⁶ R. Wrangham. *Catching Fire: How Cooking Made Us Human*, pp. 1-15.

⁷⁷ *Ibid*, p. 9.

to cook meat using fire with the oldest evidence of fire being used for cooking meat found in the presence of charred antelope bones in Swartkrans which is in the Sterkfontein valley now known as Maropeng, in the Cradle of Humankind.⁷⁸

The braai and shisanyama, stripped of all cultural, leisure and social associations is, essentially, this ancient and rudimentary form of meat cooking made up of fire and meat which has been refined over thousands of years by humankind's ancestors with evidence of pre-historic fire-making and burnt animal bones found across the world, concluding that the cooking of meat over fire has been in practice for most of human history.

The earliest representatives of humankind gave rise to the first humans on planet Earth, the Khoisan who have the oldest unchanged DNA of all population groups in the world.⁷⁹ As the oldest living people, and the original inhabitants of South Africa, the Khoisan were the first anatomically modern humans to 'braai' their meat with pieces of meat skewered onto a sharpened hardwood, seared over an open flame, and eaten undone. Renata Coetzee has done extensive research on the food culture of the Khoi Khoin who she credits as having South Africa's oldest food culture.⁸⁰ Coetzee also credits the Khoi with developing the first cooking skills on South African shores, and those cooking skills began with roasting, using fire but placing the meat on a rock. The Khoi had five different methods of roasting meat, namely, flame roasting or vlambraai, where an open fire was used to grill meat using a spit, this technique was basic, and the meat was eaten virtually raw.⁸¹ A second method of roasting was to place food or meat such as untjies (intestines) directly on or under the coals. The third method was roasting on stones where small fatty meat (vlekvleis) was placed directly on top of small, heated stones or large stones particularly when roasting the rib of a small buck or goat (kliprib). The next method was placing small shells (whelks) on hot coals to act as plates and then roasting, usually fish on the shells. The final method came about after the making of clay pots had been mastered; food was then fried or boiled in melted sheep fat, or the oil rendered from seals or whales.⁸² In later years, after gaining the ability to process iron ore, iron grids

⁷⁸ C.K. Brain, 'Evidence from the Swartkrans Cave for the Earliest Use of Fire,' *Nature* 336, 1988, pp. 464-466.

⁷⁹ T. Crowe, 2016, 'How the Origin of the Khoisan Tells Us That 'Race' Has No Place in Human Ancestry'. *The Conversation*, 2016, Available at: <<https://theconversation.com/how-the-origin-of-the-khoisan-tells-us-that-race-has-no-place-in-human-ancestry-53594>> access: 21 September 2024

⁸⁰ R. Coetzee, *Kukumakranka: Khoi-Khoi Culture, Customs, and Creative Cooking*, p. 74.

⁸¹ *Ibid*, p. 77.

⁸² *Ibid*.

were used to grill food over hot coals and the roosterkoek (griddle cake) is derived from this method according to Coetzee.⁸³

The contemporary braai method is similar to the first Khoi roasting method, the vlambraai. However, the heat from the vlambraai method would quickly sear meat without fully cooking it through. This would have been much harder to chew as raw meat is generally much tougher than cooked meat. The modern braai is a combination of grilling meat over hot coals using some type of iron griddle. This reduces the heat and allows for the meat to be turned over multiple times for more thoroughly cooked meat that is tender enough to chew. This way of cooking meat over a flame has become intertwined with South African culture and heritage and has gathered social, cultural and leisure connotations over the years.⁸⁴ A distinction, however, needs to be made between the braai – cooking over hot coals or open flame as a leisure activity - and the more utilitarian use of the open flame in rural South Africa for heating and cooking. It is clear that the braai, in its simplest definition without the associations accrued over the years, has its origins in the development of humankind, and the transformative moment where the earliest representatives of humankind first decided to cook the animals that they had hunted. What we know today as the braai, can be traced back to the Khoisan, the oldest modern humans who fire-roasted their meat.⁸⁵ This rudimentary form of meat cooking was then continuously refined by South Africa's original inhabitants, the Khoisan. Braaing has since evolved from a rudimentary wood fire for 'chops and wors' into a whole culture of state-of-the-art equipment, recipe books, gadgets, and gizmos.⁸⁶

Beneath the flames, the social and cultural emergence of the braai from 1930-2020

The ever-popular braaivleis is part of South African tradition. Who would not agree that it is the most delicious way to eat meat and one of the most sociable and easiest ways to entertain? The braaivleis has a special place in our traditional way of entertaining – partly because of South Africa's pleasant, sunny climate. Not that wind or rain will stop us because where there's a will there's a way! — Homemaking Division, Directorate of Cultural Affairs, Department of Education and Culture of the Administration for White Affairs in 1984

⁸³ R. Coetzee, *Kukumakranka: Khoi-Khoi Culture, Customs, and Creative Cooking*, p. 77.

⁸⁴ H. Biller, E. Storkey, & J. Kay, *Braai*, p. 4.

⁸⁵ S. Tafoya, 'Khoi Kindled SA's Braai Habit', <<https://www.timeslive.co.za/news/south-africa/2017-11-10-khoi-kindled-sas-braai-habit/>>, access: 17 February 2023.

⁸⁶ H. Biller, E. Storkey & J. Kay. *Braai* p. 4.

The word ‘braai’ comes from the Afrikaans word braaivleis, which comes from the Dutch words braden vleesch meaning to grill meat.⁸⁷ Shisanyama is a Zulu word, recognizable to all Nguni language speakers, meaning to grill meat. Like the braai, it is simply cooking meat over a fire. Shisa means hot in Zulu and refers both to the fire cooking the meat and to the ‘heat’, or animated atmosphere of any occasion, while nyama means meat. Descriptions of the braaivleisaand during the 1930s reveal a change in the way the braai has come to be known and conducted. The braai during this period usually consisted of the lighting of multiple communal fires where individuals laden with forked prongs would skewer boerewors sausages, braaing for themselves or their families.⁸⁸ This differs from contemporary events, where the braai happens in more intimate social settings within individual families and friends. Braaivleisaand gatherings would sometimes attract hundreds of people, meeting in convivial atmosphere where sports, music (boer orchestras), plays, dancing, and all sorts of other entertainment rounded out these braai evenings. Vetkoeks, pancakes, mealies, pap, sosaties, mosbolletjies, potatoes, bread, fruit salads, were usual accompaniments of the braai at these evenings.⁸⁹ It is unclear when braden vleesch turned into braaivleis however, the braaivleis comes into public prominence in the 1930s.⁹⁰ A *Sunday Times* correspondent writing in 1932, in an article titled ‘*Call of the Barbecue: The only thing that pays today*’ writes that,

The only function in aid of funds that is at all remunerative here in these days of financial stringency seems to be the Braaivleisaand, a South African version of the barbecue, that is enjoying great popularity lately... Many townspeople came, and armed with improvised toasting forks, were to be seen at the long row of fires burning merrily on the veld, roasting choice cutlets. Other titbits, like vetkoek, pancake, green mealies, and coffee, were served as the fires, where groups of cheerful people had congregated, in a shed nearby an Afrikaans play was staged, and Afrikaans games were played on the grass before the fires. About 250 people were present, and the whole affair was a big social and financial success.⁹¹

From this article, the braaivleisaand is cast as a recently popular event suggesting its recent popularity (1930s) assured financial success for charitable events and or functions. The surge in popularity of the braaivleis and the braaivleisaand during the 1930s is directly tied to the

⁸⁷ G. Herald. 2011. ‘Now What is Braaivleis All About?’, <<https://www.georgeherald.com/News/Article/LifeStyle/now-what-is-braaivleis-all-about-20170710>>, access: 18 February 2023.

⁸⁸ Correspondent, ‘Call of the Barbecue’, *Sunday Times*, 1932, p.11

⁸⁹ Anon, ‘Braaivleisaand in Aid of Stamp Funds’, *Rand Daily Mail*, 1938, p.14.

⁹⁰ Anon, ‘Vote of No Confidence After Storming Platform’, *Rand Daily Mail*, 1935, p. 6. & Anon, ‘Extracten uit de Engelsche Couranten’, *Cape Town Gazette and African Advertiser* 20(1012), 1825, p. 3.

⁹¹ Correspondent, ‘Call of the Barbecue’, *Sunday Times*, 1932, p.11. & Anon, ‘Voortrekker Rally in Market Square’, *Rand Daily Mail*, 1933 p. 6. & Correspondent, ‘Call of the Barbecue’, *Sunday Times*, 1932, p.11. & Correspondent, ‘Braaivleisaand at Middelburg’, *Rand Daily Mail*, 1933, p.12. & Correspondent, ‘Braaivleisaand, 13 Sheep, Ox and Pig Slaughtered’, *Sunday Times*, 1933, p. 10 & Correspondent, ‘Gala Events at Rustenburg’, *Rand Daily Mail*, 1935, p. 7.

increasing mobilization of Afrikaner identity. The braai, therefore, emerges socially and culturally in the ideological hothouse of growing Afrikaner nationalist sentiment in the 1930s and 1940s.⁹² Like many countries in the world, South Africa entered the 1930s grappling with the effects of the Great Depression, which would further entrench the poor white problem.⁹³ Albert Grundlingh argues that Afrikaner nationalism gained support within a context of increasing urbanisation fuelled by rural Afrikaner poverty and secondary industrialisation during the period between the two world wars, as well as the continuing British imperial influence in South Africa. The poor white problem became a significant concern between the 1920s and 1940s for South Africa due to its effective weaponisation by special interests, mainly proponents of Afrikaner nationalism.⁹⁴ The Great Depression forced more rural Afrikaners to urbanize. Many of these new urbanites were unskilled, lacking the necessary skills to assert themselves in a new competitive environment, which led them to low-paid work. Exemplifying this concern was the Chairperson and moderator of the Dutch Reformed Church in the Free State, Rev. P van Heerden, at the churches' Stellenbosch conference in 1922, urging for quick action in addressing the plight of poor whites. In his speech he argued that the poor white person was a brake on the wagon of the people's prosperity (volksvoorspoed), they needed to be saved for the sake of their families and the people (volk).⁹⁵

The popularity of the braaivleisaand coincided with the rise of Afrikaner nationalism which promoted a specifically ethnic nationalism. The Dutch Reformed Church played a critical role in the development of Afrikaner nationalism, and this utterance reveals the role the church played in highlighting the poor white problem through a lens of nationalism. According to the 1932 report of the Carnegie Commission of Enquiry into White Poverty, 200 000 to 300 000 whites living in the cities in the Transvaal could be classified as very poor.⁹⁶ For proponents of Afrikaner nationalism, impoverished Afrikaners had to be rescued from this situation as the presence of poor white Afrikaners in particular, destabilised ideas of racial exclusivity and the

⁹² F. Freschi, 'From Volksargitekuur to Boere Brazil: Afrikaner Nationalism and the Architectural Imaginary of Modernity, 1936-1966', in B. Schmahmann & L. van Robbroeck (eds.), *Troubling Images: Visual Culture and the Politics of Afrikaner Nationalism*, p.66.

⁹³ A. Minnaar, 'The Effects of the Great Depression (1929-1934) on South African White Agriculture', *South African Journal of Economic History* 5(2), 1990, pp.83-108.

⁹⁴ J. Seekings, 'Not a Single White Person Should Be Allowed to Go Under': Swartgevaar and the Origins of South Africa's Welfare State, 1924-1929', *The Journal of African History* 48(3), 2007, pp.375-394.

⁹⁵ R. Vosloo, 'The Dutch Reformed Church and the Poor White Problem in the Wake of the First Carnegie Report (1932): Some Church-Historical and Theological Observations', *Studia Historiae Ecclesiasticae* 37(2), 2011, pp. 67-85.

⁹⁶ A. Grundlingh, 2012, <<https://www.sahistory.org.za/archive/book-4-industrialisation-rural-change-and-nationalism-commissioned-department-education>>, access: 15 September 2024.

strict racial hierarchies which were being established and espoused by Afrikaner nationalist activists. According to Baines the plight of poor whites – Afrikaners, was regarded with concern by both political leaders and moral guardians of the Afrikaner volk, and so welfare organisations were established for purposes of upliftment.⁹⁷ The ideology of “helpmekaar” which translated to English means “help one another” was one of the vehicles used for the upliftment of poor Afrikaners. Historically, the helpmekaar movement had two goals. The first goal was to rescue Afrikaner rebels, who participated in the Rebellion of 1914-1915, and their families from financial ruin.⁹⁸ The second goal of the organisation was that it sought to promote the general development, upliftment, and welfare of the Afrikaans-speaking section of the South African population and to facilitate the development of a distinct Afrikaner culture.⁹⁹ While the social elevation of the Afrikaner captured in the second goal was mainly promoted through education, the principle of helpmekaar developed into a central ideology, fuelling a socio-political welfare drive in the 1930s and 1940s. In this regard, the braaivleisaand acted as one of the many ways, in which organisations infused with the ideology of helpmekaar, as well as regular civilians, obtained funding for various welfare-based institutions and charitable organisations, including functions and events.

Between the *Rand Daily Mail* and the *Sunday Times* there are 154 stories of braaivleisaande held by social welfare groups, municipalities, political parties, and groups in support of various causes between 1932 and 1952.¹⁰⁰ This underscores the popularity of the braaivleisaand. From gathering of funds to build schools and hospitals, funds for women’s groups, political party funding, political group funding, funds for the Red Cross and refugees, the braaivleisaand became the most popular way of fundraising. Impoverished Afrikaners had to be rescued for the sake of the volk, and a strategy of ethnic mobilization with the promotion of a volkskapitalisme were regarded as possible solutions to this problem.¹⁰¹ Through group identification and co-operation, it was hoped that the position of Afrikaans-speakers could be improved.¹⁰² This nationalist strategy had three essential ideological building blocks, namely,

⁹⁷ G. Baines, ‘Propagating Afrikaner Nationalism: The Voortrekker Stamps as Icons of an Ideology, c.1933–1949’, *Nations and Nationalism* 29(3), 2023, pp.1024–1040.

⁹⁸ A. Ehlers, ‘The Helpmekaar: Rescuing the “Volk” Through Reading, Writing and Arithmetic, c. 1916–c 1965’, *Historia* 60(2), 2015, pp. 87-100.

⁹⁹ A. Ehlers, ‘The Helpmekaar: Rescuing the “Volk” Through Reading, Writing and Arithmetic, c. 1916–c 1965’, *Historia* 60(2), 2015, pp. 87-100.

¹⁰⁰ Correspondent, ‘Call of the Barbecue’, *Sunday Times*, April 17, 1932, p.11. & Anon, ‘Festivities Will Mark Edenvale’s Jubilee’, *Rand Daily Mail*, 1952, p.10.

¹⁰¹ A. Grundlingh, 2012, <<https://www.sahistory.org.za/archive/book-4-industrialisation-rural-change-and-nationalism-commissioned-department-education>>, access: 15 September 2024.

¹⁰² Ibid.

the promotion of a common language, an emphasis on what was perceived to be a common past and the unity of a common understanding of religion.¹⁰³ Leading this strategic endeavour was the Afrikaner Broederbond which worked ceaselessly to promote the exclusive interests of true Afrikaners on behalf of the volk.¹⁰⁴ Uniting Afrikaners under the banner of Afrikaner nationalism, who, despite successive waves of nationalistic fervour prior to the 1930s, had not yet solidified into a stable ethnic consciousness, would require long-term political promotion across multiple levels. This long-term political promotion went hand in hand with cultural promotion. Leerssen argues that nationalism begins as a cultivation of culture, with Smith arguing that all nationalism has a cultural dimension aimed at ensuring the solidarity of a national community.¹⁰⁵

A significant way in which Afrikaner nationalists sought revitalize culture was through an emphasis placed on history, a key aspect of Afrikaner nationalism. Significant events like the Great Trek, the Day of the Covenant, the first Anglo-Boer War, and the concentration camps during the South African War (1899-1902) were central to this narrative. These events were framed in almost religious terms, portraying Afrikaners as a divinely chosen people, tasked with bringing civilization and Christianity to southern Africa. The centenary celebrations of the Great Trek in 1938 played a crucial role in shaping Afrikaner identity during the 1930s. In the early 1930s cultural brokers and an array of Afrikaner heritage organisations began to rally stakeholders to commemorate the upcoming Great Trek Centenary.¹⁰⁶ Die Federasie van Afrikaanse Kultuurvereniginge (FAK) would capitalise on this ground-swell of public opinion, throwing its weight to lobby the government to make the centenary a momentous occasion.¹⁰⁷ The FAK took the initiative in establishing the Sentrale Volksmonumentekomitee (Central People's Monuments Committee), colloquially known as the monument movement, to coordinate the activities of those heritage organisations that wished to pool resources and make a concerted effort to pay tribute to the Voortrekkers.¹⁰⁸ The SVK was not a government agency or advisory group but steered its own independent course, particularly through funding drives.

¹⁰³ A. Grundlingh, 2012, <<https://www.sahistory.org.za/archive/book-4-industrialisation-rural-change-and-nationalism-commissioned-department-education>>, access: 15 September 2024

¹⁰⁴ Ibid.

¹⁰⁵ A.D. Smith, 'The "Sacred" Dimension of Nationalism', *Millennium – Journal of International Studies* 29(3), 2000, pp. 791–814. & J. Leerssen, 'Nationalism and the Cultivation of Culture', *Nations and Nationalism* 12(4), 2006, pp. 559–578.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid.

The braaivleis makes an appearance in this regard; one of the SVK's funding drives was through the hosting braaivleisaande in the 1930s.¹⁰⁹

The Great Trek, a central event in Afrikaner history, was honoured by a symbolic journey of nine ox wagons traveling slowly from Cape Town to the north. This symbolic reenactment was organised by the Afrikaans Taal en Kultuurvereniging, the Afrikaans Language and Cultural Organisation. (AKTV), which was the cultural arm of the Afrikaner Broederbond. This event became an unprecedented cultural and political spectacle, with enthusiastic crowds, dressed in period Voortrekker clothing, greeting the procession as it neared towns and cities. Streets were renamed after Voortrekker heroes, and many people were deeply moved by the event. Though the "second Trek" was carefully planned, even the organizers were surprised by the overwhelming public reaction. This symbolic journey reflected the economic struggle of Afrikaners, many of whom had fallen into poverty during the Great Depression. For former rural Afrikaners now living in cities, the centenary Trek, rooted in an idealized, heroic rural past, stirred hopes for a better, more prosperous future and evoked nostalgia for a vanishing rural way of life. Central to the 1938 celebrations was the feeling that Afrikaners were alienated in their own country, victims of British capitalism and a foreign political system, and that the solution lay in unified action on economic, political, and cultural fronts.¹¹⁰ Despite class divisions, the celebrations acted as a unifying force, marking a rare moment of cross-class ethnic solidarity.¹¹¹ Through these celebrations and the remembrance of their ancestors' struggles, Afrikaners found a reflection of themselves in history, drawing inspiration for a future nation.

The Afrikaner festival held a year before the centenary celebrations in 1937 provides a clear understanding of the braai amongst Afrikaners, as an Afrikaner tradition. The festival was held over two days in Wembley Stadium in Johannesburg and was attended by hundreds, with the *Rand Daily Mail* describing how people from around the Union had gathered adding that 'bearded farmers from the Free State, men from the lonely regions of the Drakensberg, from distant parts of the Cape and the Transvaal as well as from many towns in the Union had assembled'.¹¹² Voortrekker descendants and heroic figures from the South African War, like

¹⁰⁹ A.D. Smith, 'The "Sacred" Dimension of Nationalism', *Millennium – Journal of International Studies* 29(3), 2000, pp. 791–814. & J. Leerssen, 'Nationalism and the Cultivation of Culture', *Nations and Nationalism* 12(4), 2006, pp. 559–578.

¹¹⁰ A. Grundlingh, 2012, <<https://www.sahistory.org.za/archive/book-4-industrialisation-rural-change-and-nationalism-commissioned-department-education>>, access: 15 September 2024.

¹¹¹ Ibid.

¹¹² Anon, '50 Fire Logs at Braaivleisaand', *Rand Daily Mail*, 1937, p.12.

General W. J. Kolbe and General H. C. Muller, and Spionkop hero, Captain Henri Slegtkamp also attended the festival. A braaivleisaand took place on the opening evening of the festival with 50 log fires lit around the stadium. As the fires continued to burn during the night men women and children gathered around the fires with families and friends. The *Rand Daily Mail* reports that around these fires “the men talked of the past and of the present. They told of the “privations and of the adventures of pioneers. Some of the older men criticised these modern times”.¹¹³ Accompanying the article is an image of a woman eating boerewors sausage; captioned under the image is the following, “she roasted it herself”: Eating a sausage roasted at the braaivleis at the Wembley Stadium last night’. The gendered nature of the braai becomes more explicit on page 46. *The Rand Daily Mail’s* emphasis on the woman braaing it herself implies that this was unusual at this time. The paper continues, saying, “this old Afrikaner custom was revived, and hundreds of people enthusiastically participated”.¹¹⁴ The article provides a programme for the festivities, with the following day’s festivities beginning with The Great Trek procession, featuring nine old wagons, antique cars, and floats. The braai in this article is described as an Afrikaner custom, that, along with the symbolic reenactment of the event of Trek all reinforce the idea that the braai was central to Afrikaner identity.

This tying of the braaivleis to an Afrikaner past is prominent in the 1930s as evidenced by the article below titled, “*Braaivleisaand, 13 Sheep, Ox and Pig Slaughtered*” from the Sunday Times in 1933, which says,

It is estimated that more than 1,000 adults and children attended the braaivleisaand (barbecue evening) on the Rooth Square last evening, organized by the women's societies. Thirteen sheep, one ox, and a pig were slaughtered and prepared, as well as bread, potatoes, and mealie meal (maize meal). Mrs. Hofmeyr, wife of the Rev. G.W.S. Hofmeyr, was dressed as a typical Voortrekker, and the whole scene was reminiscent of veld (countryside) life. At the annual kinderfees (children's festival) on the square this morning, there was another huge crowd of town and country children, who were entertained throughout the day. The proceedings will be rounded off tomorrow by a children's service in the Dutch Reformed Church.¹¹⁵

What is described by the newspaper is a symbolic representation of an Afrikaner past. The event evokes imagery of the Voortrekkers highlighted by Mrs Hofmeyr’s typically Voortrekker attire, and the overall atmosphere, which is described as reminiscent of veld life, transporting the attendees back to a romanticised heroic past by fostering a connection to their Afrikaner ancestors. Food, the braai, in this atmosphere becomes a cultural marker, further reinforcing

¹¹³ Anon, ‘50 Fire Logs at Braaivleisaand’, *Rand Daily Mail*, 1937, p.12.

¹¹⁴ Ibid.

¹¹⁵ Correspondent, ‘Braaivleisaand, 13 Sheep, Ox and Pig Slaughtered’, *Sunday Times*, 1933, p. 10.

this connection to a romanticised past and serving as a reminder of their shared heritage. Concluding this children's festival with a church service in the Dutch Reformed Church adds a religious dimension to the festivities. This all adds to a sense of cultural nationalism where the braaivleisaand, the atmosphere and the festivities all work to solidify an Afrikaner identity, community, and sense of purpose. Afrikaner women played a crucial role in fostering Afrikaner nationalism; this can be seen in the central role Mrs Hofmeyr plays at this braaivleisaand.

Moreover, organisations like the Afrikaanse Christelike Vrou Vereniging (ACVV) not only formed an integral part of the development of a welfare state in South Africa but was also central in promoting the concept of the self-sacrificing *volksmoeder* as a key part of the national ethos.¹¹⁶ It was the *volksmoeder's* duty to pass on the proper aspirations and values to the younger generation and create a home environment where Afrikaner ideals could flourish. However, her influence was not limited to the household; she was also expected to take an active, supportive role in advancing broader nationalist politics.¹¹⁷ Mrs Hofmeyr represents this *volksmoeder* ideal within this braaivleisaand which, focused on shared cultural traditions and fostering a sense of cultural identity.

In the lead up to the trek celebrations in 1938, the Federasie van Afrikaanse Kultuurvereniginge (FAK) established the Voortrekker movement, which was responsible for the preparations for coordinating and organising the Trek celebrations held fundraising events to help fund the celebrations. The function of the FAK was to coordinate social, literary, artistic, and economic objectives of the Afrikaner population.¹¹⁸ Grundlingh argues that in order to foster a nationalism amongst Afrikaners, identification with the group had to be complete and had to be carried out on all levels of society. A complex network of Afrikaner organisations was established during the 1930s and existing organisations like the FAK were strengthened. Across the board, from financial institutions like Sanlam and Volkskas, through to youth movements like the Voortrekkers, organisations which bore an Afrikaner imprint were established during this period.¹¹⁹ Important in this respect was the umbrella FAK, which saw to it that all Afrikaner cultural formations, products and expression took a decidedly nationalistic turn.

¹¹⁶ C. van der Westhuizen, '(Un)sung Heroines: The Rise and Fall and Rise of the Afrikaner Nationalist Volksmoeder in South Africa', *Matatu* 50(2), 2020, pp. 258.

¹¹⁷ Ibid

¹¹⁸ J.A. Templin, 'The Ideology of a Chosen People: Afrikaner Nationalism and the Ossewa Trek, 1938', *Nations and Nationalism* 5(3), 1999, pp. 397-417.

¹¹⁹ A. Grundlingh, 2012, <<https://www.sahistory.org.za/archive/book-4-industrialisation-rural-change-and-nationalism-commissioned-department-education>>, access: 15 September 2024.

Unsurprisingly, the FAK, which was the cultural arm of the Afrikaner Broederbond held many braaivleisaande in aid of funds. By operating through the Federation of Afrikaans Cultural Associations (FAK) and a myriad other grouping upon which it exerted considerable influence, the Broederbond focused attention upon the plight of poor whites, the economic dominance of English-speakers and the centrality of Christian-nationalism as an organizing creed. With the FAK, braaivleisaande were more than just fundraising events as evidenced by the braaivleisaand held on September 9, 1933, described by the *Rand Daily Mail* below,

Six hundred people attended the "Braaivleisaand" organised by the Pretoria District division of the Voortrekker movement, held in the grounds of the Pretoria Afrikaans High School for Girls, last night. Voortrekkers from all the groups in Pretoria participated. The function, which provided a novel entertainment, was a great success. The visitors bought "boerewors" and other food at the various stalls, and the sausages were roasted at the campfires. The young Voortrekkers, who were in the charge of Commandant J. E. W. Beyer, revelled in the novelty of preparing a meal which was traditional of the Voortrekker. The campfire ceremony was then held. The company was formed in a circle, the Voortrekker leaders, holding torches, and the Voortrekker "laws" were read out by Mr. Beyer. At a signal, the torchbearers set fire to a huge wood stack in the centre. As the bonfire burned up, the Voortrekkers sang Langenhoven's "Die Stem Van Suid Afrika" and other traditional Afrikaans songs. The Voortrekkers will hold another big function in Pretoria to-day. All the groups will join in a procession through the principal streets to the City Hall, where a bazaar will be held.¹²⁰

The *Rand Daily Mail* describes this event as 'novel entertainment', suggesting that this was an effort at creating new traditions that resonate with Afrikaner identity exemplified by the effort to recreate elements of the Voortrekker lifestyle to a new generation. The campfire ceremony with the reading of the Voortrekker laws and the lighting of the bonfire evokes an imagined Voortrekker past during the Great Trek. This ritualistic re-enactment serves to connect the present-day Afrikaners with their pioneering ancestors, fostering a sense of shared history and struggle. The ritualistic nature of the campfire ceremony adds a layer of cultural invention, linking it with Afrikaner nationalism especially in the context of the singing of Die Stem which has nationalistic themes and evokes feelings of collective identity. This process of cultural invention and historical reinterpretation was central in bolstering Afrikaner nationalism in the early twentieth century, particularly during the 1930s. As Hobsbawm and Ranger argue, the invention of tradition served to 'establish continuity with a suitable historic past.'¹²¹ In this instance, the lighting of campfires and the cooking of boerewors recall a heroic past which is kept alive through ritual enactment. Past and present merge to reinforce continuity and group solidarity. That the braai features in this symbolic and ritualistic cultural creation links it to an

¹²⁰Anon, 'Voortrekker's Camp-Fire Ceremony', *Rand Daily Mail*, 1933(b), p.12.

¹²¹ E. Hobsbawm, & T. Ranger, *The Invention of Tradition*, p.1.

Afrikaner identity. The Voortrekker movement held multiple braaivleisaande like this in 1933, with another held in November at Market Square attracting a large crowd.¹²²

The centenary celebration of the Great Trek was a seminal event in South African history and was ultimately the most galvanizing moment for Afrikaner nationalism, propelling the movement which had been on the ascendency in the decades prior to 1938. The 1938 Centenary of the Great Trek spearheaded a historical patchwork of festivals and evoked strong feelings of Afrikaner nationalism that swept like a wave through the towns and cities of the country, proving to be successful in capturing and enhancing the spirit of Afrikaner nationalism.¹²³ The nationalist celebrations surrounding the Centenary Trek of 1938 played a major part in unifying nationalist opinion. The braai makes its presence from the very beginning of the Trek Centenary

The two Voortrekker wagons, ordered by the South African Railways and Harbours for the Voortrekker Centenary celebrations, are expected to arrive in Cape Town about the end of the month. They will be displayed at the Castle and a small fee will be charged to visitors, with the money going to the Centenary Funds. A big programme has been arranged for the departure of the wagons on Monday, August 8, when speeches will be given at Van Riebeeck's Monument and at Goodwood, where the wagons are to be outspanned for the first night of the trek. A description of the day's activities will be broadcast. The wagons, accompanied by a procession of people dressed in Voortrekker style, will proceed from the monument through Adderley Street and Darling Street to the Castle, where a salute of two guns will be fired. Companies of men on horseback as well as the Peninsula Voortrekkers will take part in the procession. A "braaivleisaand," at which Mr. Conradie will be the chief speaker, will be held at Goodwood on Monday evening. The committee hopes to collect a considerable sum of money for the Centenary Funds during its trek to the north.¹²⁴

Braaivleisaande were held at several places along the trek route, with a *Sunday Times* correspondent writing that through these braaivleisaande the Voortrekker atmosphere of a century ago would be vividly recaptured.¹²⁵ The linking of the braai to Afrikaner history, tradition and custom was common in the English press of the time.¹²⁶ The biggest of the braaivleisaande was held in Pretoria on the grounds of the University of Pretoria on 14

¹²²Anon, 'Voortrekker Rally in Market Square', *Rand Daily Mail*, 1933(a), p. 6.

¹²³ P. Labuschagne, 'South African National Festivals, 1938-1966 with a Special Focus on the 1966 Republic Festival', *South African Journal of Cultural History* 33(1), 2019, pp. 120-142.

¹²⁴ South African Press Association, 'Mr Pirow Asked to Ride on Voortrekker Wagon', *Rand Daily Mail*, 1938, p. 13.

¹²⁵Correspondent, 'Ox-Wagons Begin Big Trek Today', *Sunday Times*, 1938, p. 8.

SAPA, 'Concrete Cast Taken of Trek Wagon Spoor', *Rand Daily Mail*, 1938, p. 18.

Anon, 'Cult Spreads to the Church', *Rand Daily Mail*, 1938, p. 12.

SAPA, 'Wagon at Bristow', *Rand Daily Mail*, 1938, p. 12

Anon, 'Trek Monument Site: Laager Division Plan', *Rand Daily Mail*, 1938, p.18 &

SAPA, 'Wagon Towed by Tractor', *Rand Daily Mail*, 1938, p. 13.

SAPA, 'Crowd of 2000 at George Celebrations', *Rand Daily Mail*, 1938, p. 20.

¹²⁶ Correspondent, 'Braaivleisaand, 13 Sheep, Ox and Pig Slaughtered', *Sunday Times*, 1933, p. 10.

Anon, 'Voortrekker's Camp-Fire Ceremony', *Rand Daily Mail*, 1933, p. 12.

Anon, 'Voortrekker Rally in Market Square', *Rand Daily Mail*, 1933, p. 6.

December 1938, attracting 13000, which was the last stop before reaching the final destination at Monument Hill.¹²⁷ Speaking at the biggest celebration of Trek centenary thus far was C.F. Schmidt rector of the University of Pretoria and the architect of the Voortrekker Monument G. Moerdyk, on the rugby field attendees sang Afrikaans hymns and folksongs, while eight wagons which had made it to the University were raised on dais in the middle of the rugby field surrounded by republican banners.¹²⁸

Aside from the trek celebrations the popularity of the braai reached its zenith in 1938. Joining in the atmosphere created by the trek celebrations many other braaivleisaande were held drawing large crowds; 3000 people attended a braaivleis in Brakpan to commemorate the 25-year anniversary of the Kommando school, while 5000 attended a braaivleis on the grounds of the Helpmekaar High school in Johannesburg in aid of Voortrekker Monument funds.¹²⁹ Two thousand pounds (907 kg) sausages, 4000 pancakes, thousands of mosbolletjies (sweet buns), hundreds of chickens, large quantities of fruit salad, cool drinks, and coffee, which would prove inadequate for 5000 people were served at this event. So big was the demand for meat for braaivleisaande during 1938 that farmers were unable to keep up with the demand. Written in the May 25th edition of the *Rand Daily Mail* in 1938, the Councillor of Dundee, W.T. Ramage blames the falling numbers of beasts to the Dundee abattoirs for slaughtering, to the great number of braaivleis political occasions held during 1938 which had inundated the farmers¹³⁰

The braaivleisaand became a common celebratory practice, often accompanying charitable fundraisers for orphanages, political party fundraisers, and part of the celebrations of the Voortrekker Monument.¹³¹ This celebratory practice of the braai formed part of white South African identity and experience and in particular Afrikaner identity and experience.

In an article looking at the rise and fall of Christian nationalism with a particular focus on the evolution of Doppe intellectuals, Tamarkin explores the changing role and ideologies of Doppe intellectuals in South African Afrikaner nationalism. Tamarkin argues that these thinkers were crucial in developing and spreading Christian nationalism, which aimed to protect the Afrikaner volk (people) and their way of life. This would change after 1948, when

¹²⁷ Special Representative, '13000 At Pretoria Braaivleis', *Rand Daily Mail*, 1938, p. 15.

¹²⁸ Ibid.

¹²⁹ Anon, '5000 Attend Braaivleis', *Rand Daily Mail*, 1938(d), p. 5. & Anon, '3000 At Brakpan Braaivleisaand', *Rand Daily Mail*, 1938(e), p. 3.

¹³⁰ Anon, "'Braaivleis' Have Held Up Farmers', *Rand Daily Mail*, 1938(f), p.12.

¹³¹ Anon, '5000 Attend Braaivleis', *Rand Daily Mail*, 1938, p.5.

the National Party came to power and instituted apartheid practices, altering their perception of nationalism. This forced Dopper intellectuals to separate themselves from the government and condemn both nationalism and apartheid as a result of the growing conflict between their conception of Christian ideals and the association of nationalism with apartheid.¹³² What is crucial about this article is that Tamarkin argues that while Dopper intellectuals divorced themselves from the ethnonationalism of apartheid they did not lose their Afrikaner identity, writing “Their Afrikaner identity did not die. They still spoke Afrikaans, read Afrikaans literature, went to Afrikaner churches, preached their ideas in Afrikaans, and continued to love hunting and braaivleis”.¹³³ Tamarkin thus sees the braai as a part of Afrikaner identity. This view that the braai is a part of Afrikaner identity is supported by Karen Von Veh in *The Politics of Memory in South African Art* who writes about the braai, “the braaivleis has traditionally been the recreational domain of white, particularly Afrikaans, men”.¹³⁴ Tracing the psychological development of Afrikaner cultural identity Kotze and Griesel argue that the braai is a re-enactment of how the Voortrekkers cooked their meals in the veld.¹³⁵ The Trek was central to Afrikaner mythology which started to take shape after the South Africa war. This mythology was important in the development of Afrikaner nationalism. The period after the South African War left Afrikaners with a fractured sense of belonging; Kotze and Griesel argue that it is during this period in the history of Afrikaners that the emergence of some of the characteristics of the patrivalent cultural pattern became evident, arguing,

In static masculine terms, the ethnic mobilisation of the volk necessitated the creation of a much stronger social order and structure within which the core of the Afrikaner’s cultural identity – Afrikanerdom’s ideologies, shared systems of meaning, and theories of truth – could prosper. This was achieved by the reinforcement of shared cultural symbols for example, a national anthem and a South African flag, a common sense of history and heritage for instance braaivleis, a distinct language, Afrikaans replaced Dutch as one of the official languages.¹³⁶

What this shows is that in the 1930s, the braai became a cultural symbol of Afrikaner identity. This becomes evident considering the Afrikaner nationalist fervour of the 1930s culminating the numerous braai celebrations that marked the centenary of the Great Trek. The potency with

¹³² M. Tamarkin, ‘The Rise and Fall of Christian-Nationalism: The Ideological Evolution of Dopper Intellectuals’, *In die Skriflig* 54(2), 2020, pp. 1-6.

¹³³ Ibid.

¹³⁴ K. Von Veh, ‘The Politics of Memory in South African Art.’, *UnisaPress*, 2019, pp, 1-24.

¹³⁵ M. Kotzee, & L. Griessel, ‘A Post-Jungian Perspective on the Psychological Development of Afrikaner Cultural Identity: Original Research,’ *Koers the Bulletin Christian Scholarship* 77(2), 2024, pp. 1-10.

¹³⁶ Ibid.

which the braai becomes attached to Afrikaner identity during the centenary celebrations can be seen in what appears to be the first instance of the commercialisation of the braai through appeals to ethnic identity. Contained in Figure 3, the phrase “Traditional as our braaivleisaand” *Chateau* brandy emphasises the braaivleisaand as cultural ritual deeply tied to Afrikaner history and heritage. This emphasised by the invoking of the Great Trek, through the opening line of the text in the ad “Game roasted on open coals – and a glass of the Aristocrat’s special brandy brought with them from the Cape – that was the evening meal of the old Voortrekkers”. The advert continues in this vein, “In the Braaivleisaand of today the necessity of a century ago has become the traditional celebration of a happy event” This aligns the advert to discourse of the period which symbolically, rooted, the centenary Trek in a heroic and rustic past.¹³⁷ Accompanying the text is an image which portrays a braaivleisaand foregrounding a couple dressed like aristocrats, which de-historicises the Trek but fits into the tagline of the advert “The Aristocrat”. Interestingly, the braai’s depiction in the image is not gendered, however, portrays the communal nature of braaivleisaande during the 1930s.



Figure 3: Chateau, The Aristocrat, *Rand Daily Mail*, 1938, p. 15.

The link between the braai and a specific ethno-nationalist Afrikaner identity continued beyond the 1930s. What is pertinent to note though is the manner in which the South African English

¹³⁷ A. Grundlingh, 2012, <<https://www.sahistory.org.za/archive/book-4-industrialisation-rural-change-and-nationalism-commissioned-department-education>>, access: 15 September 2024.

press, and in particular, the *Sunday Times* and the *Rand Daily Mail* in their reportage of the Afrikaner cultural events of the 1930s, introduced the braai and its connection to Afrikaner ethnic nationalism and identity into public discourse. This public discourse, as will become evident in the discussion below, became entrenched in subsequent years, also through a variety of media.

The Africanisation of the braai continued into the Second World War and beyond the borders of South Africa. The *Sunday Times* wartime ‘Springbok Diary’ column of 1 October 1944 reports on a braaivleisaand in the Italian countryside. The event was organised by the ‘N.C.O.s of the South African Armoured Brigade’. According to the article, there was much singing of Afrikaans songs, which the ‘Tommyes’ wanted to learn, especially Sarie Marais, an Afrikaans song with strong cultural roots in the South African War.¹³⁸ The ‘internationalisation’ of the South African braai is again alluded to in a *Rand Daily Mail* article of February 1947. The headline, ‘Royal Family Surprise Nat. M.P.s at ‘Braaivleis’ reports on the visit paid by the British King, Queen and their two daughters to the Kirstenbosch Botanical Gardens in Cape Town where National Party MPs were braaing. Accompanied by General Smuts, the Queen (Elizabeth) is reported as saying that she was already familiar with the braai and was looking forward to sampling it during their visit to the Free State.¹³⁹

The development of the shisanyama in South African public life is much different from that of the braai. While the braai was used in the mobilisation of Afrikaner identity in the 1930s and 1940s, the shisanyama, which appears to be present in at least one South African township in the 1940s, goes largely unnoticed in the white press of the time. A translated passage from *Umteteli wa Bantu* in 1948 makes reference to the “tshisanyama”.¹⁴⁰ E. Bizana in an article titled ‘Ema Mpodweni’, speaks of the economic progress he sees in Pondoland, writing that there is an increase of shops, including bakeries and tea rooms.¹⁴¹ Among these new businesses he mentions are many ‘tshisanyama’s’ in operation. As a result of this he writes that one would never go hungry.¹⁴² This shows that the concept of a shisanyama, while popularised in the 1990s, does not emerge in the 1990s, going against the common perception of its emergence in post 1994 South Africa, which is discussed later in the chapter.

¹³⁸ G.E. Pauli, ‘Springbok Diary’, *Sunday Times*, 1944, p. 9.

¹³⁹ Anon, ‘Royal Family Surprise Nat. M.P.S at ‘Braaivleis’, *Rand Daily Mail*, 1947, p. 1.

¹⁴⁰ E. Bizana, ‘Ema Mpodweni’, *Umteteli wa Bantu*, 1940, p. 10. & G. Steingo. *Kwaito's Promise: Music and the Aesthetics of Freedom in South Africa*, p. 200.

¹⁴¹ Ibid.

¹⁴² Ibid.

By the 1950s the improvised nature of the braaivleisaand characterised by homemade fork prongs, sticks for braaing sausages, log fires which in 1949, were covered by drain grids, had given way to more sophisticated tools for braaing in the braai stand.¹⁴³ Disappearing drain grids in Paarl were attributed to their use as braai grills in a town council meeting, with a councillor, A.J. du Plessis, saying that, “it was unfortunate that the heavy iron grids covering the drains were also useful as grills and consequently tended to disappear in the braaivleis season now at its height”.

A *Rand Daily Mail* article from 1965 also links the braai to a distinct South Africanness.¹⁴⁴ The article features a new invention of a water-braaiier which was meant to minimise or entirely eliminate the charring of meat from dripping fats. What is more relevant for this discussion is the article’s claim that the braai was ‘South Africa’s No. 1’ eating pastime’. Here the braai is given the status of a national pastime. In this instance, and given the time period, the South African ‘nation’ and by extension, any ‘national pastime’ were both exclusive to white South Africans.

The explicit linking of the braai to Afrikaner culture is also evident in a 1971 feature in the April edition of the *Rand Daily Mail*. The feature focuses on a first (so claimed in the article) braai cookbook titled *Beer and Braai*. The article claims that the book is a must-have for ‘anyone living in this country where outdoor entertaining is so popular.’¹⁴⁵ The article highlights a recipe for salt-ribs which was purportedly handed down from President Brand’s wife. A more explicit link to Afrikaner culture is made in the reference to the Argentine Asado or roasting of a whole animal on a spitfire. The article claims that this practice was brought to South Africa by Afrikaners who had migrated to Argentina after the South African War and had returned by the 1930s, bringing this practice with them. While a degree of cultural fusion is evident in the adoption of the Asado, it is a fusion that has been mediated by other Afrikaners, those who had lived in Argentina, and thus made acceptable.

A radio jingle for Chevrolet Constantia in 1974 accurately captures how the braai was seen as part of South African identity, pre-democracy. This appears to be the moment where the braai

¹⁴³ Anon, ‘Drain Grids Go in Braaivleis Season’, *Sunday Times*, 1949, p. 12.

¹⁴⁴ Anon, ‘Braai That Cooks Over Water’, *Rand Daily Mail*, 1965, p. 13.

¹⁴⁵ Anon ‘Beer and Braai’, *Rand Daily Mail*, 1971, p. 8.

is cemented as a unifying symbol of all white South Africans. This radio jingle called to a South African identity as evident in the text below,

South Africa, what's your favourite meal? Braaivleis! Sport? Rugby! Weather? Sunshine! And what's your greatest car, South Africa? Chevrolet! Let's see, that's braaivleis, rugby, sunny skies, and Chevrolet, huh? Right! Well, you sure sound like South African to me! We are! We love braaivleis, rugby, sunny skies, and Chevrolet, braaivleis, rugby, sunny skies, and Chevrolet.... You know, that's so good, I think you'd better tell me again! We love braaivleis, rugby, sunny skies, and Chevrolet, braaivleis, rugby, sunny skies, and Chevrolet.... In case you're wondering, this message was brought to you by braaivleis, rugby, sunny skies, and South Africa's greatest car! They go together in the good old RSA - Braaivleis with rugby, sunny skies and Chevrolet Makes sense to me... Braaivleis, rugby, sunny skies, and Chevrolet That's right...¹⁴⁶

This advert was a localised version of the American “Baseball, Hotdogs, Apple Pie and Chevrolet” advert. Poel argues that Chevrolet’s TV advertisements combined the spirit of patriotism and family with adventure and recreation.¹⁴⁷ According to Newman, Chevrolet’s campaigns served to remind the consumer that Chevrolet was very close to the pulse of the American heart.¹⁴⁸ Thomas and Wolfersberger also argue that the American advert almost made it unpatriotic to drive any other car but a Chevrolet,

For instance, at about the same time *The Others* was on television, there was a TV advertising campaign for Chevrolet which ran “Baseball, hot dogs, apple pie, and Chevrolet”; while these words were being sung, the ad showed Chevrolet cars and people playing baseball and eating hot dogs and apple pies. By implication and association, Chevrolet cars were thus presented as being “as American as apple pie.” In fact, after viewing the ad, it might have felt almost unpatriotic to have bought anything other than a Chevy—especially a foreign car.¹⁴⁹

Shortly after the American advert, Chevrolet Australia released its own version, “Football, meat pies, kangaroos, and Holden cars”, appealing to an Australian national identity.¹⁵⁰ In a similar vein, ‘Braaivleis, Rugby, Sunny skies and Chevrolet’ are being used to appeal to a South African national identity and has since been used to describe or characterise a South Africanness.¹⁵¹ The advert became very popular amongst South Africans, especially the white population, who identified with the message it carried; South Africa, a country where its

¹⁴⁶ Chevrolet. 1974. <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x1wvQ7ERXhY>>, access: 12 November 2023.

¹⁴⁷R Poel, ‘Baseball, Hot dogs, Apple pie and Chevrolet Flies?’, *Michigan History Magazine*, 104(5), 2020, pp.46-50.

¹⁴⁸ R.J. Newman, *Here's the pitch: The Amazing True, New, and Improved Story of Baseball and Advertising*, p.173.

¹⁴⁹S. Thomas & W. Wolfersberger, ‘The Importance of Social Imagery in Interpreting Societally Devalued People to The Public’, *Rehabilitation Literature* 43(11-12), 1982, pp.356-358.

¹⁵⁰ Ibid.

¹⁵¹Anon, ‘We lost our marbles’, *Sunday Times*, 1984, p4. & C. St Leger, ‘Health Nut SA, 1988: Gone is the braaivleis and Chevy mentality. Now Salad, Jogging and Exercise’, *Sunday Times*. 1988, p.19. & Anon, ‘What’s behind the name’, *Sunday Times*, 1990, p.4. & I. McGregor, ‘Branding – Advertising Focus. A Survey’, *Financial Mail*, 1992, p 65. & T. Walters, ‘Dung and Dusted’, *Sunday Times*, 2012, p.200.

citizens enjoy the 'good things' the country offers, lovely food, sport, sunny weather, and comfortable cars.¹⁵² This jingle accurately captures how the braai fits into white South African identity. Historically, advertising in South Africa followed the social division engineered by the apartheid government. Black South Africans were not seen as a part of South Africa. This was characterised by spatial segregation, the segregation of amenities, education, transport and even of sports teams. Black athletes were not allowed to compete internationally for the country of their birth, with local sports leagues also being segregated by race. Advertising followed this strict division by pitching products separately to white and black consumers.¹⁵³ The Chevrolet advert is clearly pitched toward white South Africa as many black and non-white South Africans were not living the carefree aspirational life that the advert projected. In addition, some of the signifiers of a South African identity in the advert, particularly rugby, was the preserve of white South Africans. Worsnip, writing in the *Witness* newspaper says the following on rugby and its connection to the apartheid state and white identity.

Rugby was resourced, encouraged, and managed by a government that wanted to maintain it for the benefit of the white race group, to the detriment of another sport - football. At schools, around the braai, on television, in church and on the farm - everywhere - white boys were encouraged to play rugby. And when they did so, they were provided with extraordinary incentives, scholarships, prizes, and laudation. It was promoted everywhere. It became part of white identity.¹⁵⁴

What can be surmised from this is that the braai was used to appeal to a South African identity, a white South African identity in particular.

..

This Springbok Radio Chevrolet advert, in its sentiment and intonation, is clearly addressed to a white South African audience. Given the racialised social and economic inequalities and disparities of 1970s South Africa, the appeal of rugby and sunshine, linked to the braai, is clearly meant for a white audience. Likewise, the predominant market for the Chevrolet car in the 1970s would have been the white population. This racialisation of the braai, linked to a distinctly white South Africanness is consistent with the apartheid context of the 1970s. The multiracial nature of advertising post-1994, as discussed below, is in stark contrast to this 1970s advert as well as other apartheid-era adverts with the braai as a central motif. More importantly

¹⁵² C. L van W Scheepers. 'Ethnicity, Cultural Diversity and Poverty in South Africa: Archaeological Perspectives from Iron Age Palestine' *OTE* 23(1), pp. 161-177.

¹⁵³ S.A Holmes, 'South African TV Ads Switch to Black and White', 1994, <<https://www.nytimes.com/1994/06/19/business/south-african-tv-ads-switch-to-black-and-white.html>>, access: 15 February 2023.

¹⁵⁴ M. Worsnip, 'Legacy of 2010', *Witness*, 2009, p.8.

the advert marks the moment the braai transcends its Afrikaner symbolism and becomes a unifying symbol for white South Africa.

By the mid-1980s, public discourse around the braai was beginning to shift towards more inclusivity. This is clearly obvious in the ‘Soweto News’ section of the *Rand Daily Mail*. Two different columns in the October edition of the Soweto News section titled Kitchen Craft¹⁵⁵ and Thandi’s Home Hints¹⁵⁶ emphasise health issues associated with the braai. Kitchen Craft begins by identifying the braai as inclusive of all South Africans through the phrase ‘We all enjoy a braai out in the open’ and goes on to link (braai)meat consumption to heart disease. The inclusive tone continues with the phrase ‘no need to abandon this traditional way of eating’ before going on to offer health tips and alternatives to red meat. These alternatives include fish and chicken with accompanying recipes in Kitchen Craft and Thandi’s Home Hints.

Changing discourses around the braai accelerated post-1994, informed by the rainbow nation discourse of multi-culturalism and inclusivity. During this period the shisanyama evolved from simply being a way to say braai in Zulu, to a township phenomenon that has come to characterize township leisure and entrepreneurship. Shisanyamas are usually, but not always located in a township.¹⁵⁷ The concept of a suburban shisanyama is so extraordinary it makes the news.¹⁵⁸ While shisanyama as a way of cooking has been in existence for centuries when it was simply a rudimentary way of cooking meat, in the early 1990s it developed into what was thought to be a new phenomenon when Soweto butcheries began setting up braai stands on outside pavements in Soweto. This acceleration of the concept can be attributed to the changes in society which might have diminished barriers for black entrepreneurs. The shisanyama as commercial practice in the 1990s quickly led to an entirely new form of sociality. In contemporary Soweto, shisanyamas range from a single braai stand outside a butchery to massive social occasions where thousands of people gather around dozens of fires. Mnguni and Giampiccoli define the shisanyama as follows:

In most cases shisanyamas are completely self-organized, with no top-down arrangement. A few people gather outside a butchery and others join them until the pavement outside becomes a full-fledged party. At other times, the gathering does not build any momentum and remains small and intimate. shisanyama s include food, they occur less frequently typically once or twice a week, and they occasionally evolve into street parties known locally as bashes, hosting thousands of people. At root, these are meat parties. They are spatially organized around meat,

¹⁵⁵ Anon, ‘Kitchen Craft’, *Rand Daily Mail*, 1984(a), p. 12.

¹⁵⁶ Anon, ‘Thandi’s Home Hints’, *Rand Daily Mail*, 1984(b), p. 13.

¹⁵⁷ E. Mzobanzi Mnguni, & A. Giampiccoli, ‘Unpacking Street Food Tourism in South Africa: A Literature Review and a Way Forward,’ *African Journal of Hospitality, Tourism and Leisure* (11)3 2022, pp. 1085-1098.

¹⁵⁸ Cape Town Etc. 2019. <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ogittqPOcZ8>>, access: 20 April 2023.

are named after meat, and end once the meat has been consumed. Music plays a central role at all shisanyamas. At large gatherings, music is supplied by cars or other sound sources, sometimes including DJs.¹⁵⁹

While this definition captures some of the social aspects and elements that make up the shisanyama, it misses some of the developments of the shisanyama in recent years. The shisanyama has become fully commercialised with the development of township economies, and in rare instances, suburban entertainment centers and eateries centred around the grilling of meat.¹⁶⁰ Given South Africa's high unemployment rate, the shisanyama has also become an income-generator for small-scale entrepreneurs who set up informal stands on pavements in suburbs such as Sunnyside, Pretoria, amongst others. The government of South Africa has contributed to this commercialisation by approaching shisanyamas as gateways to township development and entrepreneurship. This development is centred around marketing the shisanyama as an authentic township experience for tourism.¹⁶¹ The South African tourism website, tapping into the unity through braai discourse, begins an article on shisanyamas as follows,

South Africa is a country that's diverse in its culture and language, and if there's one thing that brings South Africans together it's food. Not just any food, but braai (barbecued) meat that's been prepared at a shisanyama.¹⁶²

Both the braai and the shisanyama are thus, claimed to bring South Africans together. The unifying factor of the shisanyama is claimed to be the fact that it transcends class distinctions.¹⁶³ In addition, the shisanyama is said to be a part of black South African heritage. Owner and founder of the biggest shisanyama in Thembisa, Imbizo, Rita Zwane traces the concept of the shisanyama, as coming from 'our African identity, culture, and heritage.'¹⁶⁴ South African Tourism distinguishes the shisanyama by the 'vibe, the food, and the spirit'. The vibe or atmosphere of the shisanyama can be described as a combination of a club and restaurant with alcohol, music, and food, meat being central to the experience of the shisanyama. Shisanyamas,

¹⁵⁹ G, Steingo. *Kwaito's Promise: Music and the Aesthetics of Freedom in South Africa*, p. 201.

¹⁶⁰ SME, 2022. <<https://smesouthafrica.co.za/a-guide-to-launching-a-shisanyama-business/>>, access: 15 March 2023.

¹⁶¹ South African Tourism, 2023. <<https://www.southafrica.net/za/en/travel/article/shisa-nyama-the-vibe-the-food-the-spirit>>, access: 15 April 2023. & SME, 2022. <<https://smesouthafrica.co.za/a-guide-to-launching-a-shisanyama-business/>>, access: 15 March 2023.

¹⁶² K. Mokhema, 'Shisa Nyama: The Vibe, the Food, the Spirit', 2023, <<https://www.southafrica.net/za/en/travel/article/shisa-nyama-the-vibe-the-food-the-spirit>>, access: 15 April 2023.

¹⁶³ K. Mokhema, 'Shisa Nyama: The Vibe, the Food, the Spirit', 2023, <<https://www.southafrica.net/za/en/travel/article/shisa-nyama-the-vibe-the-food-the-spirit>> access: 15 April 2023.

¹⁶⁴ C. Abrahams *et al.*, *The Great South African Cookbook*, p.132.

although popular with the majority of South Africans, rarely feature in advertising in South Africa. The atmosphere of the shisanyama is likely to be and has been captured by various music videos spanning different genres and decades and by artists familiar with shisanyamas.¹⁶⁵ Figure 4, captured at Eyadini Lounge, one of the biggest shisanyamas in Durban, illustrate the atmosphere of the shisanyama.



Figure 4: Eyadini Lounge, <https://www.viberate.com/venue/eyadini-lounge/>

The social aspect of the braai in post-1994 discourse was epitomized by gendered sociability that crosses the racial divide.¹⁶⁶ The men gather around the fire and tend to the meat. The women gather in the kitchen and tend to everything else: drinks, salads, bread, and pap.¹⁶⁷ This division plays itself out in images of the braai in print media. The following images obtained from news websites are used to illustrate the gendered nature of the braai, its recasting as a multicultural activity that binds South Africans together, and how some elements of its earlier symbology pre-1970 remain. These images in the main show both change and a preservation of the braai's symbolism through their visual discourse.

¹⁶⁵ D.R. Malinga, 2013, <<https://youtu.be/45iLPxFrw8A>>, access: 10 March 2023. & Mc Kenzie, 2014 <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EGexYGSStmzs>>, access: 10 March 2023. & Mdu, 2006. <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SGdnA5NROIY>>, access: 10 March 2023.

¹⁶⁶ K. Barret. 'Eating Around the World,' *Alternatives Journal*, 43(3), 2017, pp. 38-41.

¹⁶⁷ K. Barret. 'Eating Around the World,' *Alternatives Journal*, 43(3), 2017, pp. 38-41.



Figure 5: 5000 Gather at the coals, *IOL*, 2012
<https://www.iol.co.za/lifestyle/food-and-restaurants/5-000-gather-at-the-coals-1389634>

Figure 5 obtained from the IOL news website is the “first ever National Braai Day celebration” in 2012, celebrated on Heritage Day at Hamilton’s Rugby Club in Greenpoint Cape Town.¹⁶⁸ The celebration was organised Good Hope FM and the beer brand Savana. The 5000 people who attended the event were joined by Jan Braai, real name Jan Scannell, who had established the National Braai Day initiative. On the initiative, Scannell argued that it was about “uniting South Africans around one thing that they all enjoyed the – a good braai”.¹⁶⁹ To ensure that the less fortunate could enjoy a good braai, Scannell joined forces with Savana which donated a one ton of meat, rice and vegetables to a non-profit organisation, Foodbank, which distribute the food countrywide.¹⁷⁰ What is important to note in this picture is that only men are braaing, the only woman in the image appears to be holding out a tray for another ‘braai master’. In the foreground of the image is a lone black man manning on another braai grid.



Figure 6: British Pathe, 1958, <https://cutt.ly/leVVTtG5>

¹⁶⁸ N. Maditla, ‘5000 Gather at the Coals’, 2012. <<https://www.iol.co.za/lifestyle/food-and-restaurants/5-000-gather-at-the-coals-1389634>>, access: 13 December 2024.

¹⁶⁹ Ibid.

¹⁷⁰ Ibid.



Figure 7: British Pathe, 1958, <https://cutt.ly/IeVVTtG5>

The imagery of a lone black man braaing in Figure 5 closely resembles images seen in, Figures 6 and 7, from a 1958 braaivleis hosted by the United Party in East London branch. The man in the image which is a still from a video found on British Pathe is described as a native helper.¹⁷¹ There is another black man grilling sausages who is being observed and assisted by a white woman. The attendees of this event appear to be all white. It almost appears as if he is being managed by the white woman. What is evident is an absence of significant change in race relations between what is represented in Figure 5 and Figures 6 and 7. This is a salient point given that the braaivleis depicted in Figure 5 is post-1994 yet it fails to represent the inclusivity and collective heritage that both the braai and the rainbow discourse sought to amplify as part of nation building. Furthermore, as seen from Figure 7, the video illustrates a maintenance of gendered hierarchies particularly around the braai. Figure 7, show women, described as tea ladies, serving, and distributing tea to the attendees of between five and nine hundred people, while men at the event socialised.¹⁷²

¹⁷¹ British Pathe, 'England: The Braaivleis on Reflection', 1958, <<https://cutt.ly/IeVVTtG5>>, access: 13 December 2024.

¹⁷² British Pathe 'England: The Braaivleis on Reflection', 1958, <<https://cutt.ly/IeVVTtG5>>, access: 13 December 2024.



Figure 8: South Coast Herald, 2020, <https://www.citizen.co.za/south-coast-herald/news-headlines/2020/09/24/braai-safely-festive-season/>

Figure 8 obtained from the *South Coast Herald*, accompanies an article on how to braai safely.¹⁷³ The article contains an interview from ER24's Andre Bronkhorst who gives advice on how to braai safely, focusing on fuel, wood, and the supervision of children during braais. The visual discourse of this image is what is pertinent. The picture depicts three men, black, white, and Indian in what is arguably a multi-racial and multi-cultural assemblage. The white and Indian men are holding toddlers in their arms. The clothes the toddlers are wearing would suggest two male children. There are no women in this picture, except for a woman's head in the background, only men and their children braaiing and standing close to the fire. These pictures illustrate the gendered nature of the braai which will be discussed in detail in the next chapter. Suffice it to say here, that this generational mix of men and boys emphasises the manner in which the braai is not only masculinised but also 'taught-by-example' to younger male children. The multi-racial dynamics between the three men suggest a degree of equality that was not evident in the image preceding this one. The image is clearly meant to represent the rainbow nation enjoying the braai as a multi-racial and multi-cultural heritage. Like Figure 5, this image also captures change over time in the public discourse around the braai as both masculine and a part of South African heritage.

The depiction of the braai in print and film media portrays the braai as almost always happening in the suburbs of South Africa seen in the primary sources in chapter four and five. This is

¹⁷³ Anon, 'How to Braai Safely This Heritage Day', 2020., <<https://www.citizen.co.za/south-coast-herald/news-headlines/2020/09/24/braai-safely-festive-season/>>, access: 5 May 2023.

illustrated by both the pictures above as well as two television commercials, the Castle Lager Braai o'clock commercial, and the #Happy Heritage Day braai commercial from King Price.¹⁷⁴ pre-1994 the braai was a symbol of white, in particular Afrikaner identity. This has been argued successfully by multiple scholars and is evident in pre-democracy advertising which will be discussed in more detail in chapters four and five. The braai is thus, a repurposed, white, in particular Afrikaner symbol of South African heritage, that has been constructed as a defining contemporary South African practice.¹⁷⁵ This has seen the braai become a repurposed symbol for not just common South African heritage but as a commercialised premium leisure activity.¹⁷⁶ The practice is no longer constructed as the preserve only of Afrikaners and is in fact one of the few 'cultural' practices that is shared among all cultural and racial groups in South Africa. The repurposing of the braai is successful in part because South Africans of all races place a premium on eating large quantities of meat cooked on an open fire, according to Archbishop Desmond Tutu, who was an ardent supporter of Braai Day and the Braai4Heritage campaign.¹⁷⁷

Conclusion

Cooking meat over an open fire or coals is a universal practice with a long history. The evolution of this universal practice into a distinctly South African practice known as the braai can be traced to the construction of a public discourse in the 1930s. This public discourse clearly linked the braai to Afrikaner history rooted in the Great Trek, with claims that the Voortrekkers cooked meat over open fires and coals along the trek route. The construction of a narrative that Afrikanerised the braai went hand in hand with constructions of an Afrikaner ethnic nationalism and group identity. As evident from the primary sources cited, the braai was a staple feature of Afrikaner sociality from the 1930s onwards, deployed in celebrations marking important events in Afrikaner history, such as the Great Trek. The braaivleisaand also became a site of political engagement and propaganda, especially during WWII when politicians would use the braaivleisaand to excoriate the Ossewa Brandwag as a subversive force.¹⁷⁸

¹⁷⁴ Castle Lager, 2021, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WAu_YO8Z0TA>, access: 10 May 2023. & A. Powell, 2013. 'Voice of America: South Africans Meet on Heritage Day to...Eat Meat', <<http://www.voanews.com/content/southafrican-heritage>>, access: 5 May 2023.

¹⁷⁵ D. Oplan, 2014. <<http://www.everyculture.com/Sa-Th/South-Africa.htm>>, access: 18 February 2023.

¹⁷⁶ A. Powell, 2013. 'Voice of America: South Africans Meet on Heritage Day to...Eat Meat', <<http://www.voanews.com/content/southafrican-heritage>>, access: 5 May 2023.

¹⁷⁷ N. Xulu, 'Women Get Up Stand Up', *The Times*, 2008, p. 21

¹⁷⁸ Anon, 'Senator Slates O.B.', *Rand Daily Mail*, 1941, p.17.

It was also used as part of the help-mekaar discourse that was a feature of the PACT Government's attempt to address the poor white problem of urbanised Afrikaners who were largely unskilled. Also, during the 1930s, the braai became a staple for fundraising, not only to supplement the finances for the celebration of the Great Trek Centenary held in 1938, but also for churches and schools as well as the Christmas Stamp Fund.¹⁷⁹ Even as a fundraising event, the discourse around the braai emphasised community and cultural and racial solidarity. The linking of the braai to a distinctly white, largely Afrikaans, South Africanism continued into the 1940s and beyond as evidenced by the primary sources cited.

The public discourse around the braai changed in accordance with the changing political and social context of South Africa, heralded by the first democratic elections in 1994. Advertising and media reportage post-1994 shows a shift in public discourse away from a particular racial demographic to one of multi-racial and multi-cultural inclusion. The braai went from a distinctly Afrikaner social, leisure activity with roots in the Great Trek, to one that has been increasingly framed as a common South African heritage that is accessible to all South Africans. Efforts to conflate and rename Heritage Day as Braai Day (as will be discussed in depth in a later chapter) reflect a conscious effort to repurpose the braai into a commonly shared pastime. More importantly, these efforts also seek to de-historicise the braai and render invisible the historical links to Afrikaner nationalism, Afrikaner cultural and racial identity that emerged in the public discourse of the 1930s. The shisanyama, though infused with different cultural meanings, is frequently conflated with the braai as inclusive heritage. The spirit of the shisanyama is characterised by its ability to bring people together, much like the braai but with a different kind of sociality, historical trajectory and cultural symbolism.

¹⁷⁹ Anon, 'Christmas Stamp Fund', *Rand Daily Mail*, 1948, p.2.

Chapter Three: Gendered Flames: The Embodied Masculinity of the Braai.

The braai carries with it a complex set of symbols that historically embody masculinity which are reproduced through the ritualised reproduction of the braai. The act of cooking meat over a fire is deeply embedded in various cultures around the world, transcending the mere preparation of food to embody a symbolically rich performance of masculinity. Whether it is Asado in Argentina, the Barbie in Australia, Barbecue in the United States, and the Braai in South Africa, ontologically the practice of cooking meat over a fire is a potent site for the expression of masculine ideals that are both constructed and reaffirmed through the elements of this practice, the outdoors, leisure, and meat consumption. This chapter articulates how the braai as a ritual is gendered. The chapter argues that the outdoors, leisure, and meat consumption as central elements of the braai embody performative masculinity. Furthermore, the chapter analyses how these elements are gendered through action and embodiment rather than discourse. In other words, how is the braai performed as a gendered activity?

What makes the braai a masculine domain? How is masculinity actioned and embodied through the braai? How does braaing become an expression of masculinity? This chapter engages with these questions by examining the way in which the braai as universal method of cooking meat over coals or open fire imbues performed masculinity. The Argentinian asado is one such example. Asado is a culinary event, similar in its gendered nature to the braai, where men and women occupy different spaces during an asado.¹⁸⁰ It is usually prepared and consumed on a Sunday or holiday where men get to discuss political issues, sports and sporting events or work life.¹⁸¹ Asado has come to be a meal that is associated with Argentina as a nation, much like the braai in South Africa.¹⁸² However, as discussed in Chapter Two, the asado entered South African braai tradition in the 1930s via returning Afrikaners who had migrated to Argentina after the South African War. According to Tobin, asado is symbol of Argentine national identity which, privileges men over women.¹⁸³ Tobin argues that asado is both manly in a nationalistically Argentine way and Argentine in a chauvinistically manly way.¹⁸⁴ At an asado

¹⁸⁰ A. Pegorer, 'Performing Gender: Rituals and Myths in Milongas of Buenos Aires,' *Body, Movement and Dance in Global Perspective International Conference*, Hong Kong, China, July 2008.

¹⁸¹ Ibid.

¹⁸² J.P. Tobin, 1996. *Manly Acts*. Rice University. A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements for a Degree Doctor of Philosophy.

¹⁸³ Ibid.

¹⁸⁴ J.P. Tobin, 1996. *Manly Acts*. Rice University. A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements for a Degree Doctor of Philosophy

women are usually preparing salads in the kitchen and wash the dishes and are virtually excluded from the fire. Describing the social atmosphere of the asado DeLessio-Parson writes,

A traditional Argentine asado in La Plata lasts hours. Outdoors, the asador ([male] barbecue-master) lovingly cooks meat over a charcoal flame, joking with men who look on, drinks in hand. Indoors, women chat as they prepare salads and set the table, decking it with bottles of Tinto (red wine). Children play between these gendered spaces. Everyone then sits down together and, as they meet with the meat carried over from the grill, someone declares, 'A round of applause for the asador!' The ritual of the asado unfolds with wine generously poured and plates of meat celebratorily shared, feeding friendships and family bonds.¹⁸⁵

DeLessio-Parson writes that the importance of asado in Argentina and its social atmosphere exemplify what she calls the meat-masculinity nexus defined by the linkages between meat preparation and consumption and the performance of masculinity in food space.¹⁸⁶ Evidently men are at the forefront of the culinary event while women play supporting roles in the backstage.¹⁸⁷ While the origins of the asado are uncertain, it is linked to the skilled horsemen gauchos who spent their time corralling herds of cows.¹⁸⁸ The asado establishes male bonding and identity, perhaps related to these iconic figure of gauchos or Argentine cowboys who flourished in the 19th century shortly after the country's independence from Spain.¹⁸⁹

Barbecue in the USA is another example of this masculinised cooking method, highlighted as one of the most masculine forms of cooking, perhaps due to its spatial and thus symbolic disassociation from the feminised sphere of the domestic kitchen.¹⁹⁰ Meat consumption tied to traditional forms of masculinity is one reason amongst others that the American barbecue is masculinised. Other reasons are that the barbecue fits into the predominately leisurely character of men's home cooking, and is connected to male homosociality, and male bonding.¹⁹¹ Like the asado and the American barbecue, the Australian 'barbie' similarly emphasizes meat consumption, fire, and the outdoors. Women largely do indoor cooking and outdoor cooking is the job of men.¹⁹² The Aussie barbecue's association with masculine outdoors represents a

¹⁸⁵ A. DeLessio-Parson, 'Doing Vegetarianism to Destabilize the Meat Masculinity Nexus in La Plata, Argentina', *Gender, Place and Culture* 24(12), 2017, pp. 1729-1748 & A. Pegorer, 'Performing Gender: Rituals and Myths in Milongas of Buenos Aires', *Body, Movement and Dance in Global Perspective International Conference*, Hong Kong, China, July 2008.

¹⁸⁶ A. DeLessio-Parson, 'Doing Vegetarianism to Destabilize the Meat Masculinity Nexus in La Plata, Argentina', *Gender, Place & Culture* 24(12), 2017, pp. 1729-1748.

¹⁸⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸⁸ V. Menaldi, 'The Gauchos as Possible Heirs of the Moriscos: The Case of the Argentine Asado', *Journal of Iberian and Latin American Studies* 30(1), 2024, pp. 41-54.

¹⁸⁹ Ibid.

¹⁹⁰ J. Leer, 'Gender and Barbecue the Gendering of Tradition, Innovation and Space in the Netflix Series Chef's Table: BBQ', *Anthropology of Food* 16, 2020, pp. 1-17.

¹⁹¹ Ibid.

¹⁹² Y. Chenga & S. Liu 'Examining National Identity Australian Barbecue Culture', *Advances in Social Science, Education and Humanities Research* 294, 2018, pp. 333-336.

method of food preparation that maintains a perception of manhood.¹⁹³ An Australian study exploring the ways in which performative masculinity across various socioeconomic strata and cultural dispositions pertaining to heteronormative positioning that drive food choice, found that young Australian men indicated that meat was an important component of meals. In addition, not only was the inclusion of red meat important but the process of being able to cook or barbecue meat was highly valued as well, indicating some long-held popular notions that men have an affinity for consuming red meat and cooking it in age-old ways, such as on an open fire.¹⁹⁴ While these different forms of cooking meat over fire are spread out geographically across the world, they bear resemblance to the braai. All of these forms of cooking meat over fire present as masculine through the elements which act as vehicles of masculine expression.

Engaging with masculinity in this chapter requires a brief discussion and a definition. Masculinity in South Africa is complex owing to South Africa's complicated history with race, gender, and class. The expression of masculinity in South Africa is thus deeply influenced by South Africa's colonial and apartheid past. This historical context resulted in the development of a 'patchwork of patriarchies' where more traditional forms of masculinity coexist with modern forms of male authority leading to complex power dynamics within families and communities.¹⁹⁵ South African masculinities are described as being 'in transition or in crisis as South Africa undergoes political and social changes post-1994. This transition represents, a space of ambiguity, multiplicity, and contradiction in how masculinities are renegotiated and contested.¹⁹⁶ However, Morrel has used hegemonic masculinity to explain the nature, form, and dynamics of male power in South Africa, proposing not one but three different hegemonic masculinities located within South Africa.¹⁹⁷ Morrel proposed that South Africa has a 'white' masculinity, represented in the political and economic dominance of the white ruling class. An 'African', rurally based masculinity that resided in and was perpetuated through indigenous institutions such as chieftainship, communal land tenure, and customary law. Finally, a 'black' masculinity that emerged in the context of urbanization and the development of geographically separate and culturally distinct African townships. In outlining multiple masculinities Morrel

¹⁹³ Ibid.

¹⁹⁴ J.A. Carrol *et al.*, 'Meat, Masculinity, and Health for the "Typical Aussie Bloke": A Social Constructivist Analysis of Class, Gender, and Consumption', *American Journal of Men's Health*, 13(6), 2019, pp. 1-12.

¹⁹⁵ R. Morrel *et al.*, 'Hegemonic Masculinity/Masculinities in South Africa: Culture, Power, and Gender Politics', *Men and Masculinities* 15(1), 2012, pp. 11-30.

¹⁹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁹⁷ Ibid.

recognizes the multiple levels on which masculinities can be hegemonic, in terms of expressing cultural ideals as disjunction between the exercise of particular types of power.¹⁹⁸ The contention of this chapter is that the braai event presents a hegemonic masculinity that incorporates while simultaneously transcending the different masculinities highlighted above, reflecting normative behavioural ideals for men and promoting a stereotypical masculinity.

Becoming and being a man in the outdoors

There are three elements that tie the braai to masculinity namely, the outdoors, leisurely cooking, and meat consumption. The first and most important element is the outdoors; the braai happens outdoors, in gardens, beaches, national parks and other environments outside the home kitchen. Historically, the outdoors, is understood as a masculine space.¹⁹⁹ Usually seen as the site for masculine-coded leisure activities like fishing and hunting, the outdoors is perceived to be a site through which hegemonic masculinity is constructed, reinforced, and performed.²⁰⁰ The outdoors is imagined as a realm associated with ruggedness and resilience setting the stage for braaing as a predominately male-dominated activity.²⁰¹ The association of masculinity with the outdoors stems from historical and cultural narratives which see men as providers and conquerors of nature, with Warren arguing that masculinity is often connected with the outdoors due to the prevailing cultural messages that celebrate the idealized form of masculinity, which is associated with rugged individualism and a conquering mentality.²⁰²

The braai in the setting of the outdoors thus evokes images of primitive survival harking back to an era where hunting and fire-making were essential skills, thus reinforcing traditional masculine roles. There are many examples of historical and cultural narratives that reinforce this link between the outdoors and masculinity. Visagie's investigation of the representation

¹⁹⁸R. Morrel *et al.*, 'Hegemonic Masculinity/Masculinities in South Africa: Culture, Power, and Gender Politics', *Men and Masculinities* 15(1), 2012, pp. 11-30.

¹⁹⁹ L. Koenig-Visagie, 'Active, Adventurous and Heroic: Visual Constructions of Masculinity in the Afrikaans Church', *Gender Questions* 10(1), 2022, p. 1.

²⁰⁰ T. Bartoletti, & B.C. Schär, 'Formative Spaces of Empire: Masculinities and Outdoor Experiences ca. 1860–1960', *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* 52(2), 2024, pp. 215–230. & B. Humberstone & B. Clayton, 'Culture of Masculinity and Modern Outdoor Life', in P. Becker *et al.* (eds.), *Abenteuer, Erlebnisse und die Pädagogik: Kulturkritische und Modernisierungstheoretische Blicke auf die Erlebnispädagogik*, pp. 237–242.

²⁰¹ B. Humberstone & B. Clayton, 'Culture of Masculinity and Modern Outdoor Life', in P. Becker *et al.* (eds.), *Abenteuer, Erlebnisse und die Pädagogik: Kulturkritische und Modernisierungstheoretische Blicke auf die Erlebnispädagogik*, pp. 237–242.

²⁰² J. Kenway & A. Hickey-Moody, 'Spatialized Leisure-Pleasures, Global Flows and Masculine Distinctions', *Social and Cultural Geography* 10(8), 2009, pp. 837–852 & K. Warren, 'Should People of Colour be Encouraged to Participate in Current Outdoor Adventure Programs', in M. Wagstaf & B. Martin (eds.), *Controversial Issues in Adventure Programming*, pp. 111–125.

of gender in the visual culture of three predominately white Afrikaans churches in Gauteng, found that the visual representations of masculinity from the visual communications of these churches emphasized physical activity such as camping, sporting activities, adventurism, ‘outdoorism’, male bonding activities, and the domination of nature.²⁰³ Visagie’s study focused on newsletters, brochures, announcement pamphlets and websites and visual material from 2007 and 2008, a period marked by notable developments in South African gendered Christian culture, aligning with the peak of Angus Buchan’s Mighty Men Ministry, which gained significant momentum following the release of his biographical film, “Faith Like Potatoes”, in 2006.²⁰⁴ Emerging from Visagie’s analysis are themes of a rugged and heroic masculinity embodied through physical activity, sports, and leisure all of which take place outdoors, making the outdoors the space through which to express an active, adventurous and heroic masculinity.²⁰⁵

Visagie argues that the churches in her study are part of the longer, transnational tradition of muscular Christianity and are linked to a white, heteropatriarchal history of settler colonialism and Afrikaner nationalism. She argues that Afrikaners have historically aligned themselves socio-politically with Western whiteness, and the culture in these churches is oriented towards Western beliefs and practices. The predominant Western influences that link masculinity to the outdoors is the early Outward-Bound Movement, with its focus on “muscular Christianity” and character building, which played a crucial role in shaping outdoor adventure traditions in the UK and North America and Scouting which began in the early 1900s; both were concerned by the state of masculinity in the United Kingdom. These institutions began during a period in the West where masculinity was perceived to be in decline.²⁰⁶ To counteract this declining masculinity, Baden Powell, founder of the Boy Scouts, provided boys with outdoor activities like camping and tracking, both stemming from his military background.²⁰⁷ Interestingly, Baden Powell attributed the decline of masculinity to the decline of the British Empire which, provided the opportunity for an expression of a frontier masculinity.

²⁰³ L. Koenig-Visagie, 'Active, Adventurous and Heroic: Visual Constructions of Masculinity in the Afrikaans Church', *Gender Questions* 10(1), 2022, p. 1.

²⁰⁴ Ibid.

²⁰⁵ Ibid.

²⁰⁶ B. Humberstone & B. Clayton, 'Culture of Masculinity and Modern Outdoor Life', in P. Becker et al. (eds.), *Abenteuer, Erlebnisse und die Pädagogik: Kulturkritische und Modernisierungstheoretische Blicke auf die Erlebnispädagogik*, pp. 237-242.

²⁰⁷ Ibid.

Hog writes that on the frontiers of the British Empire, men could exercise the courage, self-reliance, and physical prowess that they were unable to act out at home, moreover, in doing so they could achieve the manly independence they desired.²⁰⁸ Thousands of miles away from family and friends during the first phases of imperialism and subsequent colonisation, most men had to rely on their own wits. This was both an attraction of the frontier and a necessity it imposed. Many found gratification in the vigorous and often severe outdoor life the frontier imposed on them and took pride in their physical achievements.²⁰⁹ The frontier was depicted as an alternative to a metropolitan society that had become degraded, corrupt, and feminised. On the frontier, provided he possessed the virtues and put in the necessary hard work, a man could transform himself and the environment he found there.²¹⁰ Hog argues that the frontier was a place where British men could perform their manliness.²¹¹

Baden Powell, in his establishment of the Boy Scouts, sought to recreate the frontier in the outdoors where through outdoor activities and education boys could transform themselves into the idealised masculinity of the early 20th century.²¹² The outdoors as a site for the expression of masculinity becomes very clear when despite attempts for girls to join the scouts Powell refused and instead created the Girl Guides. Baden Powell, influenced by his Victorian mother, deemed it improper for girls to be Scouts, leading to the creation of the Girl Guides. He believed that the future safety of the nation depended on the character of women as mothers and wives, guiding the men. Baden Powell said of the Girl Guides:

If we want the future manhood of the country to be men of character - which is the only guarantee of safety of the nation - it is essential in the first place that the mothers, and the future wives (the guides of those men), should be women of character...²¹³

Scouting and the Boy Scouts became the vehicle for the construction of a British manhood which takes place in the outdoors. This linking of the outdoors to a transformation from boyhood into manhood is a particularly relevant in the South African context when it comes to the Xhosa cultural practice of initiation, Ulwaluko. The Xhosa initiation process, known as

²⁰⁸ R. Hogg, 'Performing Manliness: "Unmanly" Men on British Frontiers in the Mid-Nineteenth Century', *Journal of Australian Studies* 35(3), 2011, pp. 355-372.

²⁰⁹ Ibid.

²¹⁰ Ibid.

²¹¹ R. Hogg, 'Performing Manliness: "Unmanly" Men on British Frontiers in the Mid-Nineteenth Century', *Journal of Australian Studies* 35(3), 2011, pp. 355-372.

²¹² B. Humberstone & B. Clayton, 'Culture of Masculinity and Modern Outdoor Life', in P. Becker *et al.* (eds.), *Abenteuer, Erlebnisse und die Pädagogik: Kulturkritische und Modernisierungstheoretische Blicke auf die Erlebnispädagogik*, pp. 237-242.

²¹³ Ibid.

Ulwaluko, is a deeply significant rite of passage which marks and is a critical part of the transition from boyhood to manhood.²¹⁴ Ulwaluko has been practised for more than a thousand years among the Xhosa, an indigenous tribe predominantly residing in the Eastern Cape Province of South Africa.²¹⁵ For the Xhosa people, Ulwaluko, has long been seen as a tradition that has stood the test of time and is regarded as a sacred and necessary step toward proper or real manhood.²¹⁶ This journey is intricately connected to the outdoors, both symbolically and practically. There is both symbolic and practical connection between the outdoors and manhood in Ulwaluko.

Symbolically, elements of the Ulwaluko process are richly tied to the natural environment. The ritual begins with the seclusion of the initiate (one who undergoes the cultural circumcision ritual) from his immediate surroundings to a temporary hut built of grass.²¹⁷ This seclusion represents a profound departure from boyhood, as the initiates are removed from their familiar surroundings and placed in a raw, primal setting. The construction of the Iboma, a traditional domed hut made from dry grass and saplings, further emphasizes this return to basic living conditions, perpetuating the themes of survival and self-sufficiency. This outdoor setting also connects the initiates to their ancestors, who underwent similar rites in nature. This continuity with the past is a vital aspect of the ritual, reinforcing respect for tradition and ancestral practices. Symbolic actions such as bathing in the river and daubing river clay on their bodies, serve as acts of purification and rebirth, linking the initiates to the elements and the cyclical nature of life.²¹⁸

On a practical level, the initiation process requires the Abakwetha (initiates) to acquire and demonstrate essential survival skills. They are responsible for building and maintaining fires, gathering firewood, and constructing their shelters. These tasks are crucial for their warmth, cooking, and overall survival. The initiates' physical and mental endurance is rigorously tested through their exposure to the elements. Spending extended periods outdoors, particularly during the cold winter or hot summer months, challenges their ability to withstand discomfort.

²¹⁴ A. Mdokwana, 'Ulwaluko: A Critical Site for Black Theological Reflection', *HTS Teologiese Studies/Theological Studies* 80(1), 2024, pp. 1-7.

²¹⁵ T. Magodyo *et al.*, 'The Role of Xhosa Traditional Circumcision in Constructing Masculinity', *South African Journal of Psychology* 47(3), 2017, pp. 344-355.

²¹⁶ T.R. Mavundla *et al.*, 'Rationalization of Indigenous Male Circumcision as a Sacred Religious Custom: Health Beliefs of Xhosa Men in South Africa'. *Journal of Transcultural Nursing* 20(4), 2009, pp. 395-404.

²¹⁷ T. Magodyo *et al.*, 'The Role of Xhosa Traditional Circumcision in Constructing Masculinity', *South African Journal of Psychology* 47(3), 2017, pp. 344-355.

²¹⁸ R. Bullock, 2015. 'It's Hard to Be a Man' < <https://africageographic.com/stories/xhosa-circumcision-ritual-south-africa-its-hard-to-be-a-man/> >. access: 15 July 2024.

This endurance is seen as a crucial aspect of their development, preparing them for the hardships of adult life. The use of traditional healing methods and natural remedies, such as dressing wounds with Ischwe leaves, fosters self-reliance and adaptability, further emphasizing the practical skills necessary for manhood.

This sacred ritual begins with the seclusion of the initiates to a secluded area from the larger community i.e., the “bush” or the “mountain.” The bush and the mountain, while both in the outdoors, are different. The use of *entabeni* (mountain), refers to the distance, darkness, and seclusion away from people/familiarity and the ‘bush’ analogy signifies the connection between wildlife, nature and cosmology.²¹⁹ It is noted that the ‘bush’ or the ‘mountain’ embodies the actual enactment where successful manhood is achieved.²²⁰ After circumcision, a part of this ritual, initiates secluded in the bush are deprived of water and eat half boiled maize; this continues for a week after circumcision. While in seclusion initiates are instructed on courtship, social responsibility, marriage practices, sexual education and adult life and its responsibilities, by elder men in the community.²²¹ Stuit argues that the pull of the rural is particularly strong in the context of Ulwaluko, for which young men return to their homesteads in order to be circumcised, formally introduced to their ancestors and psychologically prepared for the responsibilities of their adult lives.²²² The rural, when returned to, becomes a form of cleansing in the context of Ulwaluko and is seen in positive contrast to the corruptive ways of the city. The mountain offers a spiritual base that gives access to full personhood and manhood for those who have undergone the ritual successfully. It offers a newly gained responsibility and knowledge that is then meant to feed back into society at large.²²³ That the transformation from boyhood to manhood should take place in the outdoors within this practice illustrates a historical and cultural tie between outdoors and the expression of Xhosa masculinity. On the seventh day after the circumcision initiates participate in a ritual called Ukojiswa. Ukojiswa is the roasting of goat meat over an open fire to celebrate the successful healing of the initiates’ circumcision wound. This is particularly relevant to the focus of this chapter as both the

²¹⁹ A. Siswana, 2016. ‘Ulwaluko kwa Xhosa: Young Xhosa Men's Lived Experiences in the Context of Traditional Male Initiation’, Rhodes University. A Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfilment for the Degree of Master of Arts.

²²⁰ Ibid.

²²¹ Ibid.

²²² H. Stuit, ‘(Re)Turn to the Rural’, *Regeneration: Environment, Art, Culture* 1(1&2), 2024, pp. 1-18.

²²³ Ibid.

outdoors and the consumption of meat, especially braaied meat, are linked to a ritual transformation from boyhood to manhood.²²⁴

The intersection of masculinity and the outdoors, particularly within the context of “nature” as a form of therapy for men, can be seen through the Mythopoetic Men’s Movement. This movement, according to Humberstone and Clayton was spearheaded by figures such as Robert Bly who in his book *Iron John: A Book About Men*, advocates for men to reconnect with a primal sense of masculinity by retreating into forest environments.²²⁵ Drawing on Jungian psychology, Bly argues that men have become “soft” due to their disconnection from their fathers and exposure to feminine influences, and thus must undergo forest-based therapeutic workshops to rediscover their ‘hairy wild man’ within. This approach, however, reinforces conservative and essentialist notions of gender by dichotomizing masculinity and femininity.²²⁶ Critics like Tracey and Ehrenreich highlight the dangers of Bly’s ideology, likening it to the militaristic and ritualistic masculinity celebrated in Nazi youth movements.²²⁷ Despite Bly’s distress at such comparisons, the mythopoetic movement’s retreats often perpetuate hegemonic masculinity by maintaining rigid gender boundaries.²²⁸ The use of nature as a therapeutic and reaffirming space for traditional masculinity illustrates the ontological connection between masculinity and the outdoors.

Nature as a space can carry ideology by embedding social expectations and meanings into physical locations. According to Cresswell, place is a blend of spatial and social dimensions, encompassing natural elements, social relations, and symbolic meanings.²²⁹ A place acts as both a meaningful focus and an external context for actions, perceived geographically, socially, and subjectively. ‘Nature’ represented by landscapes such as forests and mountains, integrates these elements, influencing how people interact with and interpret these spaces. Macnaghten and Urry emphasize that the physical world is culturally shaped through social practices, leading to contested meanings and power struggles over these “natural” places and the social

²²⁴ B. Brandth, ‘Tough and Tender’? Agricultural Masculinities and Fathering Activities’, *NORMA* 14(4), 2019, p. 226.

²²⁵ B. Humberstone & B. Clayton, ‘Culture of Masculinity and Modern Outdoor Life’, in P. Becker *et al.* (eds.), *Abenteuer, Erlebnisse und die Pädagogik: Kulturkritische und Modernisierungstheoretische Blicke auf die Erlebnispädagogik*, pp. 237-242.

²²⁶ Ibid

²²⁷ D.J. Tracey, *Remaking Men: Jung, Spirituality and Social Change*, p.88.

²²⁸ B. Humberstone & B. Clayton, ‘Culture of Masculinity and Modern Outdoor Life’, in P. Becker *et al.* (eds.), *Abenteuer, Erlebnisse und die Pädagogik: Kulturkritische und Modernisierungstheoretische Blicke auf die Erlebnispädagogik*, pp. 237-242.

²²⁹ T. Cresswell, *In place/out of place: Geography, Ideology and Transgression*, p. 4.

relations within them. Encounters with nature often involve conforming to or challenging established gender identities, thus engaging with ideological norms.²³⁰ Ultimately, the meanings and identities formed in natural places arise from these practices and interactions. As such, natural places are involved in the production and reinforcement of ideology. That natural places can be involved in the production and reinforcement of ideology illustrate how the outdoors as a place is embedded and encoded with narratives that celebrate an idealized form of masculinity as seen through highlighted examples in this section. The outdoors in this regard is a place where an idealized Xhosa masculinity is produced in terms of Ulwaluko and where a frontier and primal masculinity is reinforced through the Boy Scouts and the Mythopoetic Man's Movement, thus masculinizing the outdoor space. The braai as an essentially outdoors activity produces and reinforces masculinity through its performance. Thus, the braai is ontologically linked to masculinity through one of its elements, the outdoors.

Nasab, Waters and Carr, using a longitudinal photographic analysis, examine gender roles in family leisure food practices in New Zealand. The authors of this study examine the relation between gender and food preparation as part of leisure, reviewing more than a century of family leisure photographs. Looking at food preparation in leisure experiences, the authors differentiate between the ordinary and extraordinary family meal.²³¹ Leisure is identified as a liminal, non-ordinary experience beyond the mundane; the food experiences within it are clearly non-ordinary.²³² The braai can thus be defined as an extraordinary family meal despite its ubiquity and popularity. Picnics, family gatherings, birthday parties and Christmas parties and other food experiences related to leisure are also defined as non-ordinary. The authors found the family leisure photographs represented the highly gendered nature of family roles related to both childcare and food provisioning during leisure.²³³ According to the authors, after World War II, a barbeque culture emerged in New Zealand, with photographs indicating a shift where men took on the traditionally 'manly' role of cooking meat outdoors, while women continued to be tasked with the 'womanly' cooking indoors.²³⁴ The preparation of the ordinary family meal cooked indoors has always historically been the responsibility of women. In the family structure that was normalized in the Western world and throughout the rest of the world

²³⁰ T. Cresswell, *In place/out of place: Geography, Ideology and Transgression*, p. 4.

²³¹ P. Saadat Abadi Nasab *et al.*, 'Examining Gender Roles in Family Leisure Food Provisions: A Longitudinal Photographic Analysis', *Leisure/Loisir* 45(3), 2021, p. 502.

²³² *Ibid.*

²³³ P. Saadat Abadi Nasab *et al.*, 'Examining Gender Roles in Family Leisure Food Provisions: A Longitudinal Photographic Analysis', *Leisure/Loisir* 45(3), 2021, p. 518.

²³⁴ *Ibid.*

for most of the twentieth century, men were providers and women were nourishers, responsible for feeding the family.²³⁵ This role was so entrenched in the 1950s; the American publication, *The Betty Betz Teen-Age Cookbook* (1953) informed its readers: “If a girl is reasonably attractive and a good cook as well, she has better odds for marriage than her playgirl friend who boasts that she ‘can’t even boil water’”.²³⁶ According Innes, Betz’s teachings were more than just about cooking but were also, about teaching young girls lessons about gender behavior that were expected to last a lifetime.²³⁷ Looking at other prominent juvenile cookbooks Inness concludes that through these cookbooks girls learnt a host of lessons that prepared them for their adult roles as the primary domestic preparers and servers of food, with the most fundamental lesson being that girls learned early that they should cook for boys but not expect boys to cook for them. Thus, in the family structure that was normalized in the West and throughout the world for most of the 20th century, men were providers and women were nourishers, responsible for feeding the family.²³⁸ Therefore, according Nasab, Waters and Carr, women, despite a shift in gender roles in New Zealand, wherein more men participated in food preparation, women still bore the most responsibility for food preparation in ordinary food experiences. This is because the increase in men’s participation in food preparation was in extraordinary food experiences which reinforced gender divisions in food preparation.²³⁹

It has been argued that coupled (whether in a traditional heteronormative marriage or live-in partnerships) men’s engagement with cooking is regarded by men as a hobby or as a leisure activity.²⁴⁰ Drawing on Devault who argues that cooking is a way in which women construct themselves as ‘recognizably womanly’, Hollows, looking into the meanings that men bring into their cooking through the cooking show *The Naked Chef*, argues that cooking in the *Naked Chef* is constructed as ‘recognizably manly’ through association with ‘recognizable masculinities’.²⁴¹ Hollows looked at how Jamie Oliver, a professional chef, navigated the tensions between the domestic cook and the masculine professional chef and how his image as well as his approach to cooking on *The Naked Chef* contributed to constructing a form of

²³⁵ P. Saadat Abadi Nasab *et al.*, 'Examining Gender Roles in Family Leisure Food Provisions: A Longitudinal Photographic Analysis', *Leisure/Loisir* 45(3), 2021, p. 503.

²³⁶ S. A. Innes, *Dinner Roles: American Women and Culinary Culture*, p. 37.

²³⁷ *Ibid.*

²³⁸ P. Saadat Abadi Nasab *et al.*, 'Examining Gender Roles in Family Leisure Food Provisions: A Longitudinal Photographic Analysis', *Leisure/Loisir* 45(3), 2021, p. 503.

²³⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 518-519.

²⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 505. & M. Szabo, 'Foodwork or Foodplay? Men’s Domestic Cooking, Privilege and Leisure', *Sociology* 47(4), 2013, p. 630.

²⁴¹ J. Hollows, 'Oliver’s Twist: Leisure, Labour and Domestic Masculinity in *The Naked Chef*', *International Journal of Cultural Studies* 6(2), 2003, p. 229.

masculine lifestyle which associates cooking with leisure as well as a paid profession.²⁴² Hollows argues that Oliver does this by constructing cooking as a masculine leisure activity rather than a domestic chore which is seen as feminine responsibility, creating a symbolic disassociation from the feminized sphere of the domestic kitchen.²⁴³ Oliver's construction of cooking as leisure is contradictory precisely because male chefs on cooking shows are portrayed as professional and skilled, framing cooking as art form, emphasizing creativity and a passion for cooking through competitive cooking shows.²⁴⁴

Male cooking is therefore more than just leisure. In these instances, male cooking is monetised and glamourised, emphasising the 'extraordinariness' of their cooking. This contradiction between how cooking shows promote male cooking as leisure while featuring professional chefs, lies in the disparity between the portrayal of cooking in the media and its perception in everyday life. While the portrayal of male cooking on these shows emphasises creativity and prestige, with male chefs often receiving significant recognition and being celebrated for their expertise and creativity and often achieving celebrity status, in contrast, everyday domestic cooking, often performed by women, is seen as a necessary chore rather than a creative, skillful, or prestigious activity. Cooking at home is unpaid labour, a responsibility that must be handled alongside other household chores and is not typically framed as a pleasurable activity but as a necessary duty rarely garnering the same level of recognition or prestige as cooking on these shows. Domestic cooking is thus undervalued and viewed as reinforcing traditional gender roles. Consequently, while cooking shows celebrate male chefs and elevate their status, they simultaneously highlight the undervaluation of routine domestic cooking, especially when performed by women, thus creating a contradiction between professional cooking seen as the realm of men and domestic cooking seen as the realm of women.

More significant is the contradiction of the portrayal of professional skilled male chefs cooking for leisure. This contradiction is purposeful because it reinforces gender norms that suggest men engage in cooking only when it is a prestigious or enjoyable activity connecting cooking to notions of male leisure, rather than the daily obligation of women and by so doing solve the contradiction of cooking being seen as feminized. Nasab, Waters and Carr argue that men's

²⁴² J. Hollows, 'Oliver's Twist: Leisure, Labour and Domestic Masculinity in The Naked Chef', *International Journal of Cultural Studies* 6(2), 2003, p. 230.

²⁴³ J. Hollows, 'Oliver's Twist: Leisure, Labour and Domestic Masculinity in The Naked Chef', *International Journal of Cultural Studies* 6(2), 2003, p. 229.

²⁴⁴ A. McIntosh *et al.*, 'Media Images and the Gendered Representation of Chefs', *Research in Hospitality Management* 10(1), 2020, pp. 1-6.

involvement with food preparation for family leisure is similar to their connection with outdoor/masculine activities.²⁴⁵ The involvement with food as a leisure activity in connection with outdoor/masculine activities has an important function. It ensures that men do not cross the traditional definitions of masculinity. Inness argues that cooking outside is an activity that men are allowed to pursue without social stigma because it was strongly identified with masculinity. Research into men's involvement in the South African family illustrates the social stigma attached to "women's work", where men's involvement in the traditional female arena of homemaking is seen as deviant in contrast to women's ability to cross their traditionally sanctioned role within the gendered division of labour without social stigma.²⁴⁶

Ratele and Shefer et al, argue that gender roles are reinforced consistently through everyday activities where boys construct and perform masculinity. While acknowledging the possibility of change in the views of the boys in their study which, involves focus group interviews of boys aged 14-16, the authors argue that boys associate cooking with femininity, underpinned by a belief that boys should not necessarily engage with cooking.²⁴⁷ The boys in the study view the task of cooking as a woman's job and that men should only assist with this task.²⁴⁸ Outdoor cooking, unlike cooking in a kitchen confers and affirms manliness. One can see how masculinity is always, to some degree, constructed in relation to femininity.²⁴⁹ While most of the literature and studies presented here originate outside of South Africa and taking into consideration that social values around cooking and food are place-specific, the literature discussed illustrates the connection between outdoor cooking and masculinity.

Meat and masculinity

There is an accepted notion that food can signal masculinity or femininity. Meat is one those foods which has been historically found to signal masculinity. Writing about French society, sociologist Pierre Bourdieu observes that "meat, the nourishing food par excellence, strong and strong making, giving vigour, blood, and health, is the dish for . . . men."²⁵⁰ There are two

²⁴⁵ P. Saadat Abadi Nasab *et al.*, 'Examining Gender Roles in Family Leisure Food Provisions: A Longitudinal Photographic Analysis', *Leisure/Loisir* 45(3), 2021, p. 518.

²⁴⁶ C.M. Montgomery *et al.*, 'Men's Involvement in the South African Family: Engendering Change in the AIDS Era', *Social Science & Medicine* 62(10), 2006, p. 2415.

²⁴⁷ K. Ratele *et al.*, 'We Do Not Cook, We Only Assist Them': Constructions of Hegemonic Masculinity Through Gendered Activity', *Journal of Psychology in Africa* 20(4), 2010, p. 560.

²⁴⁸ *Ibid.*

²⁴⁹ L. Koenig-Visagie, 'Active, Adventurous and Heroic: Visual Constructions of Masculinity in the Afrikaans Church', *Gender Questions* 10(1), 2022, pp. 3.

²⁵⁰ S. A. Inness, *Dinner Roles: American Women and Culinary Culture*, p. 26.

reasons for this, one biological and the other sociological. Men's slightly bigger bodies and more muscle mass in comparison to women, require more protein to fulfil the caloric and energy requirements for their bodies. Sociologically, animal flesh is a consummate male food, and a man, eating meat is an exemplar of maleness.²⁵¹

Meat, and beef in particular, has played a prominent role in South African political, economic, and social life particularly from the late 19th to the 20th century. The establishment of mining compounds to house African labour in the early 1880s, necessitated a range of needs that mining companies had to fulfil. Among these needs was the provision of food which accounted for a significant proportion of operating costs. These provisions consisted of maize, meat, with smaller quantities of beans, vegetables, bread, beer, and other more minor items rounding off the supply of food.²⁵² While maize accounted for most of the diet, meat came to play a significant role in the mining industry and its economic system, along with compounds. Meat was a crucial indicator of strength as hard labour encompassed by mining could not be performed on a mielie meal diet.²⁵³

Compounds in Kimberley first began rationing meat to workers providing 1 pound of low-quality meat per day.²⁵⁴ By 1896 the first regulations for the feeding of "Bantus" in compounds was established; these regulations provided for a maximum allowance of 17.5 lbs of mealie meal and 2 lbs of meat per labourer per week.²⁵⁵ However, this diet proved to be inadequate with multiple experts urging for authorities to augment this diet or provide foods with increased nutritional value. This was prompted by concerns of labour efficiency following increasing deaths attributed to poor nutrition.²⁵⁶ By 1921 mining compounds were required to provide 3 to 3.7 pounds of meat per miner, per day.²⁵⁷ The supply of meat to the mines led to confrontations between farmers who wanted a more profitable beef market, randlords who needed a cheap supply of beef for workers and the state which sought to ensure the continued profitability of the mines. This proved crucial for the randlords who needed to balance

²⁵¹ J. Sobal, 'Men, Meat, and Marriage: Models of Masculinity', *Food and Foodways* 13(1&2), 2005, pp. 135-158.

²⁵² G. Wilmot, 'Grounds for a Strike: South African Gold Mining in the 1940s', *African Economic History* 16(1), 1987, pp. 1-22

²⁵³ R. Turrell. 1982, 'Kimberley's Closed Compounds: A Model for Southern African Compounds', African Studies Institute Seminar Paper.

²⁵⁴ R. Morrell, 'Farmers, Randlords and the South African State: Confrontation in the Witwatersrand Beef Markets, ca. 1920-1923', *The Journal of African History* 27(3), pp. 513-532.

²⁵⁵ Safety in Mines Research Advisory Council (2003) *Nutrition and Occupational Health and Safety in the South African Mining Industry*. Council for Scientific and Industrial Research, Part 1, p. 25.

²⁵⁶ *Ibid*, p. 24.

²⁵⁷ *Ibid*, p. 28.

operation costs, profit and most importantly employee satisfaction. In this regard meat shortages had the potential to upend this delicate balance.

Supply of meat to mine workers or the lack of it, had on numerous occasions resulted in labour unrest particularly among African miners.²⁵⁸ So significant were concerns of supply shortages that mining companies in the early 1920s refused to award supply contracts to small cold-storage companies, particularly in light of the decision of African miners to strike in 1920, wherein complaints about meat rations featured prominently.²⁵⁹ Meat rationing in the 1940s owing to wartime conditions led to many strikes, culminating in the strike of about eighty thousand African gold miners in August 1946.²⁶⁰ Miners were unhappy about food prepared from frozen and canned meat which were used to substitute meat shortages.

Meat continued to play a role in the effective functioning of mines with issues like the portions of meat rations having the ability to provoke major riots. In 1977 and 1979, rioting broke out at mines in Welkom and Carletonville owing to meat rationing and inadequate quantities of meat during meals.²⁶¹ A thousand rioting miners in Prieska set fire to eight administrative buildings and then stormed the kitchen, roasted, and ate the meat supply. Aside from obvious nutritional needs, the potency with which meat supply issues managed to mobilise mine workers might be related to socio-cultural reasons. For example, a former food inspector to Johannesburg Consolidated Co. Ltd. observed that some miners, particularly Xhosa miners, did not like vegetables, which they believed to be for women and children, they considered meat and beer to be fit diets for men.²⁶² This attitude might have been more widespread especially when increased quantities of vegetables, mainly beans along with bread, served as substitute for the meat and maize shortage in the early 1940s, which did not satisfy miners.²⁶³

Rationing involved serving miners with cooked meals, some containing meat and a provision of 3 pounds of raw meat which miners would cook themselves on the fires in their compound

²⁵⁸ Southern Africa Labour, and Development Research Unit. (1980) *Conflict on South African Mines, 1972-1979*. School of Economics, University of Cape Town, pp. 8, 56, 80.

²⁵⁹ R. Morrell, 'Farmers, Randlords and the South African State: Confrontation in the Witwatersrand Beef Markets, ca. 1920-1923'. *The Journal of African History* 27(3), pp. 513-532.

²⁶⁰ F. Malunga, 'In Search of Better Wages: A Challenge to Mining Capitalism and State Power, 1943', *Historia* 51(1), 2006, pp.117-139. & G. Wilmot, 'Grounds for a Strike: South African Gold Mining in the 1940s', *African Economic History* 16(1), 1987, pp. 1-22.

²⁶¹ Southern Africa Labour, and Development Research Unit. (1980) *Conflict on South African Mines, 1972-1979*. School of Economics, University of Cape Town, pp. 8, 56, 80.

²⁶² Safety in Mines Research Advisory Council. (2003) *Nutrition and Occupational Health and Safety in the South African Mining Industry*. Council for Scientific and Industrial Research, Part 1, p. 28.

²⁶³ G. Wilmot, 'Grounds for a Strike: South African Gold Mining in the 1940s', *African Economic History* 16(1), 1987, pp. 1-22.

rooms.²⁶⁴ It was this fresh meat that was the first to be substituted for canned meat due to the financial stringency of the time.²⁶⁵ Moodie and Ndatshe argue alcohol was an essential aspect of African labourers' social lives; alcohol was viewed as an essential adjunct to sociability, through heavy but socially controlled drinking.²⁶⁶ Making reference to the frequency of meat feasts, dances and beer drinking between harvests and ploughing season among the Mpondo people who made up a significant number of miners, Moodie and Ndatshe argue that this intense sociability was carried over to the mines. They provide the following account from an interview they conducted, which illustrates the social significance of meat on the mines,

On Saturdays, miners were allowed to visit their home friends from other mines, or we were visited on our mines. We bought them beer and meat and sat in a semi-circle and talked about home events and our girlfriends as all the young men always talked.... That's how we enjoyed ourselves on the mines.

Despite the demise of the mining compound system, meat continued/continues to be a part of mining and mineworkers' lives. A report in 2003 titled 'Nutrition and occupational health and safety in the South African mining industry' found that pap and meat were the two favourite foods among mine workers, 50.9% and 39.1% respectively, while fruit and vegetables sat at 9%.²⁶⁷ The combination of pap and meat appears to have at least transcended mining food culture, becoming a staple of the shisanyama.²⁶⁸ In 2023 a viral black twitter discussion revealed gendered understanding around the preparation of braai meat and pap.²⁶⁹ Twitter user @TshepiMoremong posted that she had been invited to a braai by a man, who then proceeded to ask her via text to "help with the pap." Moremong did not take kindly to the request and responded that she was a guest. From the texts that Moremong posted to her followers on Twitter/X, it appeared that the intention behind the invitation to the braai was solely to get her

²⁶⁴ C.R. Diamond, 1969. 'African Labour Problems on South African Gold Mines with Special Reference to the Strike of 1946'. University of Cape Town. A dissertation submitted in fulfilment of a Master of Arts.

²⁶⁵ D. O'Meara, 'The 1946 African Mine Workers' Strike and the Political Economy of South Africa', *Journal of Commonwealth and Comparative Politics* 13(2), 1975, pp. 146-173. & T.D. Moodie, T.D V. Ndatshe, *Going for Gold: Men, Mines, and Migration*, pp. 164-165.

²⁶⁶ Ibid.

²⁶⁷ Safety in Mines Research Advisory Council. (2003) *Nutrition and Occupational Health and Safety in the South African Mining Industry*. Council for Scientific and Industrial Research, Part 1, p. 28.

²⁶⁸ V. Madwantsi, 'The Great Debate: Pap or Garlic Rolls for Braais? X Users Weigh In', <<https://www.iol.co.za/sunday-tribune/lifestyle/the-great-debate-pap-or-garlic-rolls-for-braais-x-users-weigh-in-a6f3f988-b277-42b9-9b86-546e83dcd450>>, access: 8 December 2024.

²⁶⁹ Black Twitter is a virtual community of black twitter users, and the term can be used both in the United States and in South Africa. The term is so specifically defined in this thesis as it relates to the discussion on meat and pap in the mines giving context to the virtual discussion on the braai on black twitter, it also illustrates the meat-masculinity nexus in black spaces, which is under discussion in the chapter.

to prepare pap and, on this basis, she declined the invitation.²⁷⁰ Her posts garnered hundreds of comments, with support for her decision split mostly along gender lines. Some men and a few women who commented felt that the request was reasonable and that cooking the pap would have showed gratitude for the invitation. One Twitter user’s outrage at her refusal to cook pap as guest prompted the following comment, “*I’m hosting a braai and as a woman you don’t wanna help me by cooking pap? Real women are finished.*”²⁷¹ Many engaged in this discussion, framed cooking pap as a strictly female domain, while braaing was a male one.

Piatti-Farnell argues that the braai is dictated by specific social norms, with women rarely involved in the cooking of the braai, thus maintaining a prehistoric cultural association with men and grilled meat. Piatti-Farnell references how braai’s function with men gathering around the fire with trays of beef, while women prepare the accompaniments, reinforcing the social norms depicted of the braai above. Piatti-Farnell also argues that the braai highlights beef’s longstanding ability to act as an unbreakable bonding agent, further emphasising the social role meat played in the mining compounds.

The advertisement below by the Meat Board illustrates these social and cultural perceptions and attitudes towards meat consumption in South Africa.



Figure 9: Meat Board advert, *Drum*, 1980, p. 3

²⁷⁰ V. Madwantsi, ‘The Great Debate: Pap or Garlic Rolls for Braais? X Users Weigh In’, <<https://www.iol.co.za/sunday-tribune/lifestyle/the-great-debate-pap-or-garlic-rolls-for-braais-x-users-weigh-in-a6f3f988-b277-42b9-9b86-546e83dcd450>>, access: 8 December 2024.

²⁷¹ Ibid.

In a historical context where food choices have often been linked to social and cultural identities, this 1980 advertisement from *Drum* magazine presents a striking example of how meat consumption has been marketed through the lens of masculinity.²⁷² This advertisement leverages cultural ideals and gender norms to promote beef, effectively intertwining the concepts of strength, health, and masculine duty with the consumption of meat. The advertisement features a prominent image of an athletic man playing football, surrounded by cheering spectators, with children engaging in the sport in the background. Football, a sport traditionally associated with physical strength, agility, and masculine prowess, serves as a powerful visual cue linking meat consumption to athletic success and overall fitness.²⁷³ The image of male children playing football also reinforces the notion that consuming meat is essential for developing strong, healthy, and active future athletes.

The accompanying slogan, *Meat makes a man*, succinctly encapsulates the core message of the advertisement. It implies that meat is a fundamental component of achieving societal ideals of manliness, which include strength, vitality, and dominance. This direct association between meat and masculinity is further reinforced by the tagline, *give them beef, and watch them grow up healthy and strong* with the accompanying image of the development of an athletic boy. Here, meat is positioned as not only beneficial for individual health but also as a critical element in ensuring the well-being and strength of the male children within the family. The textual content of the advertisement reinforces these visual messages with a series of nutritional claims. It highlights the benefits of meat, particularly beef, stating that it is packed with essential nutrients like protein, iron, and vitamins necessary for growth, healthy blood, and overall activity. By emphasizing these health benefits, the advertisement supports the idea that meat is indispensable for maintaining a strong and active body, aligning with traditional notions of masculinity centered on physical robustness.

Advertising is only effective through an understanding of the social and cultural context of any given society.²⁷⁴ The advertisement taps into deep-seated cultural values by portraying beef as not just food but a symbol of health, vitality, and manliness. By featuring athletic imagery, using sports, a domain often associated with masculinity; to create a direct link between meat

²⁷² R.A. Rogers, 'Beasts, Burgers, and Hummers: Meat and the Crisis of Masculinity in Contemporary Television Advertisements', *Environmental Communication* 2(3), 2008, pp. 281-301.

²⁷³ S.N. Harding, 'Boys, When They Do Dance, They Have to do Football as well, for Balance: Young Men's Construction of a Sporting Masculinity', *International Review for the Sociology of Sport* 57(1), 2002, pp. 19-33.

²⁷⁴ M. Brettel, & A. Spilker-Attig, 'Online Advertising Effectiveness: A Cross-Cultural Comparison'. *Journal of Research in Interactive Marketing* 4(3), 2010, pp.176-196.

consumption and athletic prowess and emphasizing the physical benefits of meat, the advert appeals to men's desires to be perceived as strong, capable, and physically superior. Furthermore, the advertisement reinforces traditional gender roles by targeting men who have traditionally been family providers. It appeals to the cultural expectation that men should ensure their families are well-nourished and healthy. The assertion that "meat makes a man" extends to the idea that providing meat makes a man a good provider. This aligns with the societal norm that men, as providers, should ensure their families consume meat to stay strong and healthy. By suggesting that failing to provide meat could result in weaker, less healthy family members, the advertisement indirectly questions the masculinity of those who do not prioritize meat consumption.

The strategic use of imagery, slogans, and nutritional claims in the advertisement creates a strong, positive association between beef and masculinity. This not only promotes beef consumption but also leverages societal norms and values to make the product more appealing to its target audience. By associating meat with desirable masculine traits and responsibilities, the advertisement encourages men to see beef as essential to their identity and role within the family and society. This advertisement for beef illustrates how marketing strategies can effectively use cultural and gender norms to promote food products. By linking meat consumption to masculinity and the associated values of strength, health, and familial responsibility, the advertisement creates a compelling narrative that positions beef as an indispensable part of a man's diet and his ability to provide for and protect his family. This intersection of meat consumption and masculinity not only highlights the power of advertising in shaping consumer behaviour but also reflects broader societal values and norms which link masculinity to meat consumption and the impact this had on the braai as masculine.

Meat consumption as an element of the braai conjures up historical narratives of the male hunter. Arsenault argues that philosophical repudiation by which humanity as a category emerges is always formed in opposition with the concept of the animal and this carries with it a gendered dimension. The human/animal dichotomy carries strong gendered connotations in which animality is contrasted not only with humanity, but with expression of masculinity that define the human in the human/animal dichotomy with man and animal.²⁷⁵ The presence of meat implies the death of an animal at the hand of a man, an exercise of power. By extension

²⁷⁵ J. Arsenault, 'Brute Violence and Vulnerable Animality: A Reading of Postcoloniality, Animals, and Masculinity in Damon Galgut's *the Beautiful Screaming of Pigs*', *Postcolonial Text* 7(4), 2012, pp. 1-23

meat consumption symbolizes power over animals and other humans.²⁷⁶ Tied into male ontology, meat consumption is a symbolic exercise of male virility and power. Meat carries with it a complex set of symbols associated with humanity's collective historical imagination to prehistoric times where men had to hunt for food.

Lamenting the addition of value added tax of food items Andy Cohen in, *The Macho Cook*, a food column in *Scope* magazine, captures this historical imagination,

Once upon a time man lived in a never-ending supermarket called paradise where he stalked the freshest food – not with a trolley, but with a spear, bow and arrow, blowpipe, and boomerang. Even on the fishy side, life was a gas, as he could gaff or dive after crayfish, salmon or trout with no licence inspector spoiling his shopping spree.... Hallowed, thus, are the days when daily routine consisted of basic professions called hunting and fishing and produced same-day rewards that incorporated the satisfaction you get from cooking the day's catch over natural charcoal in the presence of grateful dependents.²⁷⁷

This prehistoric way of life has seen a recent valorisation with the emergence of survivalism and the popularity of shows like *Naked and Afraid*, *Survivor* and *The Island* that simulate the prehistoric human survival, both locally and internationally whilst tapping into the Mythopoetic Man's Movement which seeks to return "soft modern men" to a primal masculinity characterized by endurance, self-sufficiency and reliance performed in the outdoors. These shows simulate prehistoric survival by removing participants from the comfort of their homes and placing them in the wilderness where they are given only basic tools of survival. Participants then have to hunt for their own food. Bates argues that the hunt in literary tradition has always been associated with heroic masculinity. She further states,

The image of the manly hunter thus, has a long history and the degree of purchase it continues to hold is the result, no doubt, of centuries of familiarity and respectful imitation that have come to embed it firmly in the cultural memory and endow with a kind of self-evidence if not tautology: heroes are hunters and hunters are heroes.²⁷⁸

Reacting to a church trophy hunting controversy, Christian Bakkes, an environmental activist, writes of an Afrikaner hunting and fishing obsession.²⁷⁹ Tracing the history of this obsession he writes that hunting and fishing are deeply ingrained in Afrikaner DNA and served to define Afrikaners for centuries. Continuing, he states that in the early days in Africa, it was too "tame" the land and provide sustenance for our families. Goodrich, looking at biltong hunting, a

²⁷⁶ S. A. Inness, *Dinner Roles: American Women and Culinary Culture*, p. 26.

²⁷⁷ A. Cohen. 'The Macho Cook', *Scope*. 1991, p. 16.

²⁷⁸ C. Bates, *Masculinity, and the Hunt: Wyatt to Spenser* p. 4.

²⁷⁹ C, Bakkes. 2022. "Those Who Kill Animals in a Church Trophy Hunt Would Do Well to Read the Green Bible". <<https://www.dailymaverick.co.za/opinionista/2022-09-05-those-who-kill-animals-in-a-church-trophy-hunt-would-do-well-to-read-the-green-bible/>>, access: 10 June 2024.

cultural activity in which wildlife is hunted using a rifle, bow or similar weapon for the use of a variety of meat (game meat) products such as biltong, dried sausages and salami, as a performance of belonging in post-apartheid South Africa, argues that the Afrikaner men he encountered during his field work did not hunt simply to kill, or for meat. Rather, they hunted to acquire meat through embodied practice that enfolded within itself a sense of masculinity deriving from a mythic past, and that was a central part of a reciprocal relationship they had with the hunted animal and the land it occupied.²⁸⁰ Bakkes captures this mythical past when he decries the modern hunting industry as one that replaced the old-fashioned Boer who took up his Mauser and walked off into the bushveld to shoot a kudu for winter meat. Here, hunting is associated with a performative Afrikaner masculinity. There is close interrelation between the predominant Western conception of manhood and that of racial (and species) domination in which, in canonical Western myths and fables, “the white hero . . . achieves his manhood . . . by winning victory over the ‘dark beast’ or over the barbarian beasts of other in some sense ‘darker’ races”.²⁸¹ This conception of manhood can be gleaned from the idea of a frontier masculinity. This point is reinforced by Bakkes who writes, *to most of us as young boys, hunting served as a rite of passage to manhood.*²⁸² As Arseneault puts it,

The vanquishing of the bestial other is also identification with it, in that the white masculinity in question requires quelling the life of the other to emerge. In such cases, the animal whose bestialization is produced by the “man” in turn produces the grounds on which the man stakes his masculinity.²⁸³

The subjugation of the animal therefore bolsters masculinity in this regard. The consumption of meat thus symbolizes the subjugation of the animal which is embedded in the ontology of heroic masculinity. There has been a lot of research on the perceived lack of masculinity in male vegans and vegetarians. For men, in particular, there is often a visceral attachment to slaughter-derived meat.²⁸⁴ Manhood is theorized to be a precarious state, whereby men need to earn and demonstrate their status as a legitimate man through publicly verifiable actions;

²⁸⁰ A. Goodrich, *Biltong Hunting as a Performance of Belonging in Post-Apartheid South Africa*, p.136.

²⁸¹ J. Arseneault, ‘Brute Violence and Vulnerable Animality: A Reading of Postcoloniality, Animals, and Masculinity in Damon Galgut’s the Beautiful Screaming of Pigs’, *Postcolonial Text* 7(4),2012, pp. 1-23

²⁸² C, Bakkes. 2022. <https://www.dailymaverick.co.za/opinionista/2022-09-05-those-who-kill-animals-in-a-church-trophy-hunt-would-do-well-to-read-the-green-bible/>, access: 10 June 2024.

²⁸³ J. Arseneault, 'Brute Violence and Vulnerable Animality: A Reading of Postcoloniality, Animals, and Masculinity in Damon Galgut’s the Beautiful Screaming of Pigs', *Postcolonial Text*, 2012, p. 6.

²⁸⁴ D. Marinova *et al.*, <https://theconversation.com/meat-and-masculinity-why-some-men-just-cant-stomach-plant-based-food-174785>, access: 10 September 2023.

maximizing meat consumption may enable men to perform masculine gender roles recurrently and solidify their manhood.²⁸⁵

It is not surprising that men who do not eat meat are more likely to experience social disapproval. Social disapproval exists because people see vegetarian men as less conforming to traditional gender roles, perceiving them as less masculine and more feminine than they perceive meat-eating men to be. In a survey of men who eat meat, participants condemned men who eschew meat, describing vegetarian men as ‘lacking testosterone and braveness’ and as a huge disappointment for the rest of the real ‘masculine men’ even so far as saying that vegetarian men should be prosecuted for their unmanly behaviours.²⁸⁶ Eating meat is the ultimate expression of masculinity delineating power over animals. The refusal to eat meat symbolises a rejection of masculinity, creating the idea of male vegetarians as less masculine.

Writing in the *Volksblad* van der Heever and Jones consider changing entrenched notions of masculinity within the Afrikaner community.²⁸⁷ The article argues for a need to redefine masculinity in contemporary South African society, moving away from traditional patriarchal notions of masculinity, suggesting more inclusive and healthier forms of masculinity that should be promoted. The contents of the article are thus important in understanding the gendered implications of the article title ‘Braai, Beer, and Bliksem’. The article makes no mention of the braai, thus its presence in the title suggests that the braai is being grouped with traditionally masculine activities the authors view to be part of the traditional and patriarchal masculinity which needs to be redefined. The use of the words in the title illustrates gendered discourse centred around stereotypical notions of male behaviour, particularly within social or recreational settings. The title also represents traditional expectations of masculinity, where activities like braaing and drinking alcohol are often perceived as male-dominated domains, while the mention of brawling (bliksem) implies aggression or conflict, further reinforcing stereotypes of male behaviour associated with toughness or bravado.

Throughout history, certain ideals of masculinity have been celebrated, associated with national or cultural figures such as athletes and political leaders, while others have been marginalized, excluded, or even criminalized. The authors of this article argue against the valorisation of

²⁸⁵ D.L. Rosenfeld, ‘Masculinity and Men’s Resistance to Meat Reduction’, *Psychology of Human-Animal Intergroup Relations* 2, 2023, p. 3.

²⁸⁶ D. Bogueva *et al.*, ‘Who Needs to Solve the Vegetarian Men Dilemma?’, *Journal of Human Behaviour in the Social Environment* 30(1), 2020, pp. 36-39.

²⁸⁷ J. van den Heever & C. Jones, ‘Braai, Bier en Bliksem’, *Volksblad*. 2017, pp. 1-3

Afrikaner masculinity embodied in braai, beer and bliksem. The authors call for a re-examination of Afrikaner masculinity. Through this van den Heerver and Jones illustrate the non-static nature of masculinity. Scholars have argued against a static, timeless conception of masculinity, emphasizing its fluidity, and reshaping through various social processes.²⁸⁸ Nonetheless, in certain societies, specific forms of masculinity become dominant, endorsing patriarchal hierarchies, and reinforcing social inequalities. Arguing for a re-examination of this specific kind of Afrikaner masculinity points to a changing understanding of what has been a dominant Afrikaner masculinity. This is especially crucial given the history of the publication. The *Volksblad* is the oldest daily Afrikaans-language newspaper in South Africa, more importantly the *Volksblad* was a nationalist newspaper closely aligned to the apartheid government, which was involved in the crafting of a nationalistic, hegemonic Afrikaner masculinity.²⁸⁹ This also signals a potential change in the gendering of the braai.

Despite this example of a call for reconfiguring South African, and in particular Afrikaner, masculinity, the dominant discourse remains firmly rooted in conceptions of hegemonic masculinity linked to physicality, sport, and meat consumption. An episode of the *Boks Office*, a weekly rugby show, streamed on RugbyPass TV and YouTube illuminates this very successfully. In an episode aired on the 24th of September 2024, the conversation between Schalk Burger, Jean De Villiers and Hanyani ‘Shimmi’ Shimange naturally turns to the braai, with the host, Shimange opening the show by wishing the viewers a happy Heritage Day.²⁹⁰ The conversation that follows is of importance,

Shimange: Firstly, boys, happy Heritage Day (0:51).

De Villiers & Burger: Thanks, Shimmi (0:54).

Burger: Baie dankie! (0:55).

Shimange: And it’s Heritage Day, not National Braai Day (0:55).

Shimange: (0:59) Well, it’s Heritage Day, but we’re just South Africans, we love to braai.

²⁸⁸ J. Green, ‘Part of the Package: Ideas of Masculinity among Male-Identified Transpeople’. *Men and Masculinities* 7(3), 2005, pp. 291-299 & S. Bredenkamp ‘Gesturing Toward a Definition: Passing Thoughts on Lack and the Phallus’, *Left History* 11(2), 2006, pp. 47-74.

A. Buschmeyer & A.D. Lengersdorf, ‘The Differentiation of Masculinity as a Challenge for the Concept of Hegemonic Masculinity’, *NORMA* 11(3), 2016, pp. 190–207.

²⁸⁹ J.A. Stemmet & L. Barnard, ‘See No Evil, Hear No Evil, Speak and Publish No Evil: The Relationship Between PW Botha and the Pro-Establishment Afrikaans Press during the 1980s’, *Historia* 49(1), 2004, pp.154-166 & T. Sonnekus, ‘Africa is Not for Sissies: The Race for Dominance Between White Masculinities in South Africa’.

²⁹⁰ RugbyPass, 2024. <<https://youtu.be/BZIGHz28Ikc?feature=shared>>, access: 21 November 2024.

De Villiers: Yes! (1:02). Braai is part of our heritage (1:03)

Burger: It's going to turn into a braai day for me, for sure. (1:05)

Shimange: Yeah, it turns into a braai day (1:07)

Burger: I'm going to braai for five hours (1:10)

.....

Shimange: Okay, guys (4:28), What are the red flags for braai? (4:29) (4:30) If you go to a braai, what are the red flags? (4:33)

De Villiers: Don't take over someone's braai (4:37)

Shimange: Don't let anyone... (4:40)

De Villiers: It's like driving (4:41) We don't want any backseat drivers (4:41)

Burger: My biggest culture shock was when I had to braai vegan patties and vegan wors (4:44)

Shimange: "Laughs," at your own braai stand? (4:50)

Burger: We went away for a weekend, and I actually tasted one of these plant-based sausages (4:51). And then I just handed the braai over to whoever brought the vegan patties and wors (4:58). And I braaied my own and bailed out (5:02). Yeah, it wasn't quite part of my genre (5:04). It was out of my league. (5:08).

Shimange's reaction to Burger's confession illustrates the centrality of meat to the braai especially when the thought of a non-meat (a vegan alternative in this instance) braai is met with amusement and derision. Moreover, Burger's own reaction of slight disdain for the plant-based patties and wors reaffirms the masculinity of meat consumption particularly around his remarks of the vegan options not being a part of his 'genre' and being 'out of his league.' Burger not only dismisses the vegan options, but he also repudiates them physically by removing himself from the braai and handing over the braai to the owner of the vegan options. Burger's refusal to handle the vegan options could have been an attempt at neutralising the symbolic diminishment of his masculinity not only through the lack of real meat but also through the potential diminishment of masculine competence which involves mastery over braaing meat. Masculinity of the braai is further emphasised by De Villiers comments around control of the braai and reflects broader gendered hierarchies and notions of masculine authority and dominance when it comes to braai. That these comments are made on a rugby show where the sport of rugby is celebrated as a bastion of traditional masculinity, and where machismo is lauded, reveals the performative masculinity at play with regard to the discussion on vegan

options, where veganism is incongruent with the rugged ‘real man’ persona celebrated in rugby culture.²⁹¹

The repudiation of the vegan or vegetarian options to meat however is in contradistinction to what, at first glance, appears to be an alternative discourse that incorporates non-meat alternatives into the braai, championed by none other than Jan Braai. As the champion of renaming Heritage Day as Braai Day, Jan Braai is arguably one of the most visible and iconic braaimasters. His publication of *Jan Braai: The Vegetarian Option* in 2019 seemingly opens up the braai discourse, that has meat, as a central element, to non-meat options. The marketing blurb on his official website braai.com contends that,

If you’re looking for a meat-free Monday option, have to cater for your son’s new vegetarian girlfriend or the grandchildren, or have even decided to take the vegetarian plunge yourself, there’s no reason to neglect your braai – Jan has you covered.²⁹²

There are several points worth discussing here. First, the reference to the son’s ‘new vegetarian girlfriend’ and ‘grandchildren’ shows a similar disdain to the exchange discussed earlier on the *Boks Office* show. It is not the son but his girlfriend who may be vegetarian. Likewise, it is the children rather than adults who may prefer vegetarian options. This relegates vegetarian braai options to the realm of women and children rather than adult men. Male concession to vegetarian options is framed as either an option to have one meatless day, or a risky venture indicated by the use of the word plunge. Thus, on the face of it, *Jan Braai: The Vegetarian Option* does not in any substantial manner challenge the men-meat-braai nexus but reinforces it in a much more insidious manner. Furthermore, while superficially this may appear to indicate changing discourses, a closer analysis reveals the contrary.

Conclusion

Food has the potential to carry within it all manner of complex symbols that can give insight into the values and beliefs of any particular society. Food has been understood as having gendered dimensions, with the consumption of meat closely linked to masculinity. This chapter has argued that two crucial elements of the braai, the outdoors and meat consumption, are

²⁹¹ K.B. Muir & T. Seitz, ‘Machismo, Misogyny, and Homophobia in a Male Athletic Subculture: A Participant-Observation Study of Deviant Rituals in Collegiate Rugby’, *Deviant Behavior* 25(4), 2004, pp.303-327 & B. Clargo, & M. Skey, ‘Forgive Me for Saying, but Rugby is Not a Game for Women’: An Exploration of Contemporary Attitudes Towards Women’s Rugby Union’. *European Journal for Sport and Society* 21(4), 2024, pp.1-15 & S. Timeo & C. Suitner, ‘Eating Meat Makes You Sexy: Conformity to Dietary Gender Norms and Attractiveness’, *Psychology of Men and Masculinity* 19(3), 2018, pp. 418-429.

²⁹²Jan Braai, 2024. <<https://braai.com/books>>, access: 5 July 2024.

entangled with historical conceptions, discourses, and symbols of masculinity. The outdoors as a place is symbolically, historically, and culturally linked to masculinity through narratives that promote the masculine hero, celebrating an idealized version of masculinity and cultural rituals that see the outdoors as a site for the process of masculinization. Becoming a man in the outdoors is perhaps best illustrated through the Xhosa initiation ceremony, as well as in leisure practices such as hunting and camping. Historically, in the South African context, and globally, hunting was an important means of providing for the family. The histories of frontier and settler societies such as South Africa in particular, are frequently narrativized as ‘man’s’ conquest of nature, including wildlife which was an important source of food. As discussed in Chapter Two, the expansion and encroachment of the early Afrikaners, most notably in the Great Trek, and survival on trek in the pursuit of frontier expansion depended on being able to hunt animals for food, which was cooked on open fires or coals.

The outdoors thus become a site for the production and reinforcement masculinity through the braaing. The braai as an extraordinary family meal is separated from the more ordinary and mundane family meal which is cooked in the kitchen and is the responsibility of women. Men engage with cooking as leisure and are thus, more likely to cook meals that represent leisure such as the braai. The cooking of the braai outdoors is important as it acts as a barrier against the crossing of traditional gender roles with regard to food preparation, as men who cross the boundary into women’s work are seen as lesser. Meat, a foundational element of the braai adds to the braai’s embodiment of masculinity as a result of the symbolic power of meat consumption in men, where eating meat symbolizes male strength and virility. The braai therefore both embodies masculinity and is a site for the performance of masculinity.

Chapter Four: Playing with fire: Sport, Leisure, and the Masculinisation of the Braai from 1970-2024

As a culinary and social practice, the braai extends far beyond food preparation, embodying notions of identity and community. These notions of community and identity have given the braai its status as a symbol of heritage post-apartheid where it has been used in the effort to build a common heritage and national identity in South Africa. This sense of community finds expression in leisure, and more importantly so when leisure is frequently an organised group spectatorship of sporting events, to the accompaniment of a braai. Sport similarly is embroiled in the construction of social, cultural, and national identities with its pervasive and political role in forging and reinforcing ideas of community and national pride. Leisure, sport, and the braai are linked to the expression of masculinity with the braai's embodied masculinity having been established in chapter three. Sport, in particular rugby, football and cricket, which draw big audiences, have at different times represented different kinds of masculinity within South Africa. This masculinity, both with regard to the braai and sport is reinforced through textual and visual representations in the media. This chapter traces the gendering of the braai through an analysis of textual and visual discourses focusing on leisure, and leisure as organized sport spectatorship that shape or reinforce the gendering of the braai.

Sport is socio-cultural phenomenon deeply intertwined with the social and cultural fabric of communities and societies at large. Sport is considered a social product and among its many functions are providing a common cultural currency between peoples, and a mechanism for the affirmations of identity and difference.²⁹³ In this regard citing Durkheim, Ingram, and MacDonald, argue that sport is representational with organised competitive sport argued to act as representations of collectives.²⁹⁴ They argue that sports teams and athletes which encompass sport foster a sense of belonging thus defining as community due to the way that they signify “we-ness”.²⁹⁵ This is due to the way that sport and athletes work as symbols through which people can understand themselves as part of a group. This means that when people identify with an athlete or a sports team, they form a community with other who have the same identification with an athlete or a sports team. The way in which sports fans invest emotionally

²⁹³ G. Jarvie, *et al.*, *Sport, Culture and Society: an Introduction*. p.1

²⁹⁴ A.G. Ingraham & M.G. McDonald, ‘Sport and Community/Communitas’, in R.C. Wilcox *et al* (ed.). *The Making and Meanings of Urban Sports Cultures*, p.17.

²⁹⁵ Ibid.

in a team or athlete gives them a personal stake in the athlete or team.²⁹⁶ This then becomes a part of their self-identity demonstrated by sayings such “I am a fan of this...” “our team” and “I want to be like...” Sport then becomes a source of social solidarity, cohesion, and unity through shared identification within sport. This identification is shaped by what Ingram and McDonald call sport-media complex.²⁹⁷ The proliferation of sport through media allows for the formation of virtual symbolic communities making it possible for people of different geographic locations to identify with some teams and athletes but also shapes how fans or sports and athletes interact from a distance. Representational sport communities are not without complexities however, while these sports communities may form cross-class alliances united in their support of a team or athlete, how they organise, celebrate, and understand that support is varied. This variation is influenced by “biography, social differentiation, and stratification.”²⁹⁸ Embedded within the concept of community are ideas of inclusivity and exclusivity. Ingram and MacDonal argue that the idea of community provides both belonging and exclusion.²⁹⁹ Historically, sport has been used to exclude certain groups. This is particularly relevant in South Africa where sport was used to not only exclude but to construct identities.³⁰⁰ Jarvie citing Naught, argues that sport in the apartheid era 1948 until 1992 meant that only white South Africans could represent South Africa in international sports.³⁰¹ In addition, he highlights the role rugby played in galvanising and symbolising a white identity in apartheid South Africa. Similarly, feminist scholarship has noted the masculinised representation of sport arguing that sport often perpetuates patriarchal norms, with Whannel arguing that sport is most gender-specific of all cultural forms.³⁰² In this regard sport can provide the “technical means for creating political identities and these are thereby reflected or embedded within national cultural identities”.³⁰³ In this setting the sport-media complex wherein sport is mediated through the media, plays an important role in perpetuating encoded ideologies in sport. The consumption of mediated sport by representational sport communities, requires locating and placing a community in its broader social and cultural context whilst also using their

²⁹⁶ A.G. Ingraham & M.G. McDonald, ‘Sport and Community/Communitas’, in R.C. Wilcox *et al* (ed.). *The Making and Meanings of Urban Sports Cultures*, p.17.

²⁹⁷ Ibid.

²⁹⁸ Ibid

²⁹⁹ Ibid.

³⁰⁰ G. Jarvie, *et al.*, *Sport, Culture and Society: an Introduction*. p.284

³⁰¹ Ibid.

³⁰² G. Ingraham & M.G. McDonald, ‘Sport and Community/Communitas’, in R.C. Wilcox *et al* (ed.). *The Making and Meanings of Urban Sports Cultures*, p.22. & G. Whannel, ‘Sport and Popular Culture: The Triumph of Process over Product’, *Innovation in Social Sciences Research*, 6(3), 1993, p. 343.

³⁰³ G. Jarvie, *et al.*, *Sport, Culture and Society: an Introduction*. p.285.

identification with sport teams and athletes to capture their attention. This results in a loop of communication between the media, representational sport communities and between members of these communities. It is within this loop that advertising makes its appearance. Sports universality, given through its status as social phenomenon allows social groups, nations, and societies to communicate with each other. This ability to communicate is used by advertisers to promote and sell a range of products within the realm of sports and leisure related media. This has significant implications on discourses on sport within society.

The connection between leisure activities and gender roles is also a significant area of inquiry in cultural studies. Among leisure activities the braai stands out as a significant site where gender dynamics are performed and perpetuated. Combining this with leisure, and especially sports spectatorship, whether live at stadia or at home on television, the gendering happens at two distinct levels. While sports spectators are not a monolithic group and while many women are socialised into watching sporting events, the predominant spectators remain men. Some women may also participate in spectatorship due to the social niceties of being amiable and being ‘good sports’.³⁰⁴ A more recent study by Farrel, Fink and Fields argues that while women’s participation in sporting events may have increased, this does not necessarily translate into increased spectatorship by women, even of women’s events.³⁰⁵ The study found that women are socialised into sports – as participants and spectators – by men and as such women as athletes and spectators are bound by an ‘encircling male influence’.³⁰⁶ This forms part of what has been identified as the ‘gender regime of sports’ which entrenches male hegemony on and off the sporting field.³⁰⁷

Analysing both advertising and newspaper articles this chapter aims to uncover how gender roles are reinforced through the association between the braai, sport, and leisure to masculinity. Through a critical discourse analysis of advertising within *Scope* magazine and various South African newspapers this chapter looks at how linguistic and visual representations of sport and leisure contribute to a gendering of leisure, sport spectatorship and the braai. It examines the language used in advertising, the visual aesthetics of braai themed media content, and the narratives that emerge from these representations. By doing so, the chapter sheds light on the

³⁰⁴ W. Gantz & L. A. Wenner, ‘Fanship and the Television Sports Viewing Experience’, *Sociology of Sport Journal*, 12(1) 1995, pp.56-74.

³⁰⁵ A. Farrel, J. S. Fink & S. Fields, ‘Women’s Sport Spectatorship: An Exploration of Men’s Influence’, *Journal of Sport Management*, 25 (3), 2011, pp.190-201.

³⁰⁶ *Ibid*, p.193.

³⁰⁷ *Ibid*, p.191.

complex ways in which media contribute to the social construction of gender, and how these constructions influence and are influenced by cultural practices and societal expectations.

Combining leisure, sport, and the braai in marketing specific and frequently unrelated (to the braai) products has been hugely popular. Given this, advertising is a critical element in the construction of public discourses around the gendering of the braai, particularly in relation to sport. As a pervasive culture industry reliant on media imagery, advertising plays an integrative role in cultural practices, functioning as a sphere of ideology and therefore providing a powerful framework for analysing the links between particular social problems and inequities and the discourses that represent, reproduce, and resist them.³⁰⁸

Images are not just simple representations or copies of what can be seen, rather they are symbolic artefacts, with deeper meaning and significance attached.³⁰⁹ Arguing for images to be seen as a form of visual rhetoric, which Scott understands as the framing of messages to interested parties through the use of cultural knowledge.

Rhetoric is an interpretive theory that frames a message as an interested party's attempt to influence an audience. The sender's intention is understood to be manifest in the argument, the evidence, the order of argumentation, and the style of delivery.... The sender, therefore, crafts the message in anticipation of the audience's probable response, using shared knowledge of various vocabularies and conventions, as well as common experiences. Receivers of the message use this same body of cultural knowledge to read the message, infer the sender's intention, evaluate the argument, and formulate a response. Cultural knowledge thus provides the basis for normative interaction and persuasion.³¹⁰

Images, therefore, act as indeterminate semiotic resources that become meaningful according to the cultural lens used by the viewer. Culture thus has a significant impact on advertising by bringing the product and a representation of the culturally constituted world together in an advertisement.³¹¹ Advertisements therefore present as sites to uncover culturally constituted meanings projected back to society.

³⁰⁸ S.J. Jackson *et al.*, 'Introduction: The Contemporary Landscape of Sport Advertising', in S.J. Jackson & D.L. Andrews, (ed.), *Sport, Culture and Advertising Identities, Commodities and the Politics of Representation*, p.7.

³⁰⁹ L.M. Scott, 'Images in advertising: The Need for a Theory of Visual Rhetoric', *Journal of Consumer Research* 21(2), 1994, p. 252

³¹⁰ *Ibid*, pp.252-253

³¹¹ S. Bulmer & M. Buchanan-Oliver, 'Visual Rhetoric and Global Advertising Imagery', *Journal of Marketing Communications* 12(1), 2006, p. 52.

Men at the grill, women at the table, gendered braai discourse in sport and leisure advertising, 1970-1987



Figure 10: Shellgas advert (Scope, 1970:67)

The Shellgas advert published in 1970 in Figure 10 is unique in its representation of the braai in that it deviates from the observed trend of the previous chapter, and what will be observed in this chapter, of a masculinised braai with specific reference to its representation. The advert presents all the elements of the braai, with outdoor leisure being both visually and textually emphasised, encapsulated in the tagline “*Fun. Anywhere. With Shellgas.*” The text furthermore claims “*It doesn’t matter where you go. Outdoor living is more fun with Shellgas.*” This is emphasised by references to all Shellgas uses outdoors, including the braai, with the line, “*Brightens the braaivleis,*” alluding to lighting the braai fire. This along with the imagery of the woman outdoors in a rugged landscape ties Shellgas to a sense of adventure which reinforces leisure as an activity that goes beyond the constraints of urban or domestic life.

Other elements of the braai present are of course, fire and meat. The deviation in representation showing a woman braaiing can at first glance be thought as empowering and therefore consonant with wider social changes heralded by the Second Wave feminism of the 1960s. The consequences this movement were widespread in time, space and contexts and advertising in

the 1970s began to reflect some of the wider changes in society.³¹² The woman is the singular focus of the advert providing a visual discourse of empowerment, independence and freedom, especially in the context of the conceptualisation of the outdoors as masculine, going against the still dominant stereotypical representation of women during this period in advertising.³¹³ This stereotypical representation primarily portrayed women decoratively, as can be seen in other analysis in the chapter, with the UN reporting that women were portrayed in only two key roles in advertising, as beautiful but passive glamour girls and as housewives, caring for home and children.³¹⁴

However, a singular reading of seeming women's empowerment in the advert is simplistic, especially given the publication in which the advert appeared. The pages of *Scope*, as a soft porn magazine, were adorned with scantily clad women, as evident in this advert. Here, the woman's beauty and sex appeal are deployed in service of marketing a particular product; the woman is thus objectified in service of sales of gas appliances. The braai remains the domain of men, as men are the intended audience for this advert and the product it sells. The woman functions merely to attract the man's gaze from whence his possible interest in the product itself.

To understand the visual and textual use of the braai as a device through which to communicate to the intended audience (men) a symbolic masculinity, it is important to analyse the way in which Shield marketed its anti-perspirant for men, as evident in the advert below. In the process it constructs a particular kind of masculinity that is inextricably tied to the braai.

³¹² L. Ciochetto 'Images of Women in Advertising Both Consumer and Object of Consumption', *Media Asia* 35(4), 2008, pp. 243

³¹³ Ibid.

³¹⁴ Ibid.



Figure 11: Shield advert, *Scope*, 1973, p. 53.

Published in 1973, Figure 11 shows a man braaing while in apparent distress, rubbing his eyes, presumably from the smoke. The tagline ‘You don’t have to be a sportsman to sweat’ suggests an equivalency between braaing and participating in sports. It implies that both braaing and sports are arduous and challenging enough for a man to break out in a sweat, thus needing the men’s deodorant being advertised. Shield is made for sportsmen, who are idealised for their strength, capability, and endurance, linked to a peak masculinity. Shield continues this idealisation through the headline by placing sportsmen at the top of a masculine hierarchy. The advert thus, powerfully bridges sport and the act of braaing for leisure. While braaing is not explicitly athletic, using the headline, Shield elevates the braai and men who braai, giving it and men the same symbolic status as sport, and thus the same masculinity embedded in sport. In this way, the braai is not just gendered, but masculinised as the domain of rugged, athletic men. This rugged, athletic masculinity is further emphasized in the text accompanying the visual image.

You’ve invited your latest flame and some friends around for a braai. The sun is beating down. The fire is heating up. And you’re making enough smoke to start another Apache War. It’s a good thing you’re wearing Shield Anti-perspirant. Because while you’re fighting the fire, Shield is fighting away under your arms. By now you must be thinking that Shield is rather something special. Correct. It doesn’t sting you. It dries on contact (no stickiness). It won’t stain your shirt, and its perfume is as masculine as you can get. More important, Shield has the power

to handle the worst perspiration problems. It's made for sportsmen. But it's amazing how many non-sportsmen use it.³¹⁵

The first three sentences conjure up images of outdoor ruggedness which is the natural setting for displaying and enacting masculinity. The fire imagery contained in words like flame, heat and the relentless sun entrenches ideas of men conquering both natural elements (sun and heat) and also women, with the girlfriend being referred to as the latest flame. The masculinising of the braai is further emphasised through the evocation of war and fighting but lest men become diminished by the idea of perfume, the advert emphasises that it is 'as masculine as you can get.' This advert very explicitly masculinises the braai, through both text and visual, as being no less physically demanding than war and fighting elemental fire as well as the relentless heat of the sun. Given the physical demands required to braai, it calls for a very specific kind of masculinity that is rugged, hardy and athletic.

This advert was also published in *Scope*, a soft-porn magazine in the style of the American *Playboy* described by Froneman, as a lightning rod in highly charged white culture for its struggle against apartheid censorship.³¹⁶ The advert is an illustration of how language is used for social action especially when discourse constitutes society and culture, and when identities are constructed within, not outside, discourse.³¹⁷ Discourse therefore plays a crucial role in both reflecting and shaping societal and cultural norms. This has significant implications when discourse articulated through the medium of magazines and advertising have been shown to be sites for the social construction of gender.³¹⁸

Language thus reflects and reproduces pre-existing social variables such as class, race, sex, age etc, shaping and creating social relationships.³¹⁹ Language shapes and is shaped simultaneously by societal and cultural structures. In addition, given that advertising is located in the pivotal position between production and consumption, its role as representation is important, because it is one of the key processes in the circuit of culture that connects meaning and language to

³¹⁵ Shield. 1973. You don't have to be a Sportsman to sweat. [Advert]. *Scope*. 12 January 1973, p.53.

³¹⁶ J. Froneman, 'The rise and demise of *Scope* magazine: A media historical perspective', *Ecquid: Novi African Journalism Studies*, 32(1), 2011, pp. 49-65.

³¹⁷ S.J. Jackson *et al.*, 'Introduction: The Contemporary Landscape of Sport Advertising', in S.J. Jackson & D.L. Andrews, (ed.), *Sport, Culture and Advertising Identities, Commodities and the Politics of Representation*, p.7.

³¹⁸ A. Stibbe, 'Health and the Social Construction of Masculinity in Men's Health Magazine', *Men and Masculinities*, 7(1), 2004, pp. 31-51. & N. Govender *et al.*, 'Magazines' Representation of Women and its Influence on Identity Construction: A South African Perspective', *Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences* 5(20), 2014, pp. 2278-2283.

³¹⁹ Ibid

culture, thereby constituting socially constructed identities in specific contexts.³²⁰ Shield uses sport within a South African cultural context to sell its anti-perspirant products and in doing so transmits both a visual and textual gendered discourse.

Shield's play here becomes more obvious when looking at the embodiment of hegemonic masculinity in sport. With regard to sport, Connell argues the constitutions of masculinity through bodily performance means that gender is vulnerable when the performance cannot be sustained, for instance as a result of physical disability.³²¹ Thus Shield, with this advert is using the braai to bolster the masculinity of non-sportsmen. The conceptual linking of braaiing to sports is reinforced by recreating the intense physicality of sporting matches, especially those that recall gladiatorial contact sports, through an exaggerated description of the braai environment, "*The fire is heating up. And you're making enough smoke to start another Apache War. It's a good thing you're wearing Shield Anti-perspirant*". In the masculine hierarchy presented by the Shield advert, participation in domestic masculinity, the braai, does not diminish masculinity, rather it elevates it as the braai is positioned as another arena through which masculinity can be demonstrated with the aid of Shield anti-perspirant.

Another discursive element of this advert is what men's magazine's researchers in the United Kingdom have termed 'laddism.' Laddism is a model of masculinity that emerged in the 1990s in men's magazines in the United Kingdom. Laddism is characterized by an emphasis on youthfulness, hedonistic consumption, bachelorhood, the objectification of women, and sexual conquest.³²² Laddism is a model of consumerist masculinity that also indulges in stereotypically masculine interests, such as sports and cars.³²³ South African men's magazines have also been characterised in similar terms, having been found to provide a normative rhetoric often focusing on sex, money and sport.³²⁴ While laddism is a more contemporary concept established in the 1990s, it can be seen throughout the discourse of the advert. The use of the word 'flame' to describe a woman is steeped in ideologies that view women as property but more importantly reflects the cultural, social and gender dynamics of the period. The use of flame to address or describe a woman establishes and frames the woman primarily as an

³²⁰ S.J. Jackson *et al.*, 'Introduction: The Contemporary Landscape of Sport Advertising', in S.J. Jackson & D.L. Andrews, (ed.), *Sport, Culture and Advertising Identities, Commodities and the Politics of Representation*, p.7.

³²¹ R. W. Connell, *Masculinities*, p.54.

³²² R. Ricciardelli *et al.*, 'Investigating Hegemonic Masculinity: Portrayals of Masculinity in Men's Lifestyle Magazines', *Sex Roles*, 63(1), 2010, pp. 64-78.

³²³ *Ibid*

³²⁴ N. Sanger, "There's got to be a man in there': reading intersections between gender, race and sexuality in South African magazines', *African Identities* 6(3), 2010, pp.275-291.

object of sexual desire or romantic attraction. Like a moth to a flame, the woman's identity is reduced to her ability to captivate and entice men. Furthermore, with the dangerous and unpredictable nature of fire, its use to describe a woman potentially evokes long-held stereotypes of women being emotionally and romantically unstable, following the theme, like the smoke and fire of the braai the woman is to be managed or controlled by the braai master.

Fleeting and transient, the use of flame suggests that this woman is a temporary part of the man's life, she is simply a flame, not even a girlfriend, never mind a wife. Flames eventually die out. Framing women as flames makes them less substantial (girlfriends and wives have relative longevity compared to flames) and thus transient. The woman's role in the advertisement is passive she has been invited to the braai by the man who is the active subject in the ad. Her role is tied to her relationship to the male host in the ad. Male ownership is also implied through the words "*your latest flame*" emphasising how women are the possessions of men whose value lie in their ability to fulfil a man's sexual or romantic desires. This exemplifies one of the oldest masculine tropes within male narratives of romantic and or sexual pursuits, that of women being transient, fleeting, and replaceable, playing on the model of laddism, an aspect of which is sexual conquest, laddism itself is described as a model of masculinity within hegemonic masculinity.³²⁵ Accompanying the textual discourse of this ad is a visual discourse that works to entrench the masculinity of the braai with a man as a main subject of the ad. This choice of representation is meant to emphasise the centrality of men in the braai event. The inclusion of the braai in the 1973 Shield advert is a part of the masculinised thematic landscape of sport in Shield's print advertising during the late seventies and early eighties. Discourse carries the history and lifestyle of people, intertwining language and society. This is due in part to the way discourse, which is ultimately a form of communication has developed socially to make and circulate a coherent set of meanings sometimes referring to socially shared habits of thought, perception and behaviour reflected in numerous texts belonging to different genres.³²⁶ The Shield 1973 advert, thus constructs a masculinised braai but also reflects socially shared patterns of thinking which masculinise the braai.

³²⁵ R. Ricciardelli *et al.*, 'Investigating Hegemonic Masculinity: Portrayals of Masculinity in Men's Lifestyle Magazines', *Sex Roles*, 63(1), 2010, pp. 64-78.

³²⁶ R. Hassen, 'Discourse as Medium of Knowledge: Transmission of Knowledge by Transmission of Discourse People Live', *Journal of Education and Practice* 6(31), 2015, pp.119-128.

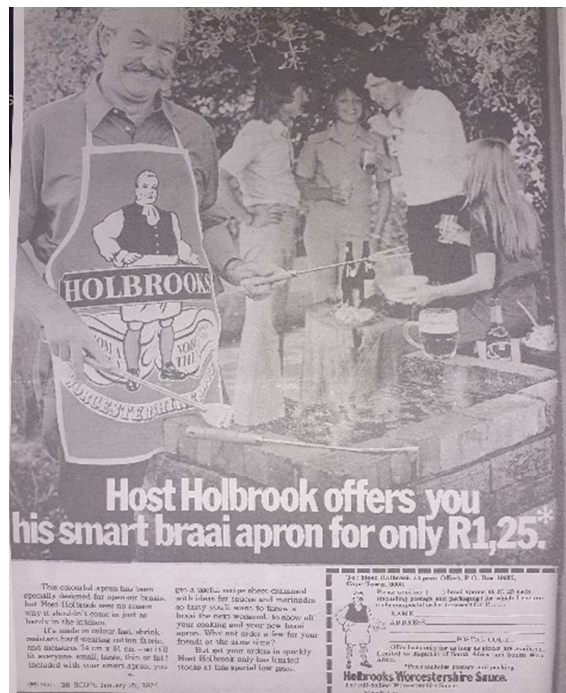


Figure 12: Holbrooks advert, *Scope*, 1974, p.36.

In a stereotypical representation of the braai, a Holbrook's advert, Figure 12 above, from January 1974, reinforces visual discourses that symbolically place the braai in the realm of masculine leisure, containing the following text,

This colourful apron has especially been designed for open-air braais, but Host Holbrooke sees no reason why it shouldn't come in just as handy in the kitchen. It's made in colour-fast shrink-resistant and hard-wearing cotton fabric, and measures 74cm x 61cm – so it'll fit everyone small, large, thin, or fat! Included with your smart apron, you get a useful recipe sheet crammed with ideas for sauces and marinades so tasty you'll want to throw a braai next weekend, to show off your new braai apron. Why not order a few for your friends at the same time? But get your orders quickly – Host Holbrook only has limited stocks at this special low price.

Holding a skewer in one hand and braai tongs in another, the man stands over a built-in braai, with big cuts of red meat on the grill. Holbrook's sauce stands prominently on the side of the built-in braai, with a table containing a salad bowl to the right and a glass mug of beer on the right side of the built-in braai. The advert captures the social atmosphere of a braai with the addition four individuals in the background.

Representation occurs and can be seen in spoken, written, and visual texts in the form of discursal 'traces'.³²⁷ Discursal traces suggest the often-subtle way that language and images represent and disseminate ideas and ideologies.³²⁸ There are no overt gendering discourses within the text of this advert. Its visuals, however, perpetuate the trend seen in the previous chapter, with the stereotypical masculine representation of the braai. These ideas and ideologies are not always overt but can be implied in the connotations of words phrases and the visual elements used in the representation. For example, the use of the words freedom fighter and terrorist to describe Nelson Mandela during apartheid revealed not the only attitude and beliefs of a speaker or writer but also implied the ideology that the speaker or writer subscribed to. The use of these words by a writer or speaker is a choice of how the writer or speaker wants to represent Nelson Mandela. This is because language itself is a representational system consisting of signs and symbols that not only give literal meaning but also convey broader concepts and feelings.³²⁹

Language as a system of representation is therefore not neutral but is shaped by cultural, social, and historical contexts. Stuart Hall shows how representations of the black experience in American mainstream cinema echoed the prevailing thoughts and beliefs of American society. In the 1930s black actors were used to represent faithful servants (echoing slavery), and in the 1940s sang in black musicals.³³⁰ It was not until the 1950s that mainstream films dealt with race itself and cast accordingly. Therefore, representation can also be based on stereotypes. The implication here is that while this advert may not have overtly gendered discursal traits, the representation of the braai in this advertisement is shaped by the cultural, social, and historical context of 1974 and the prevailing stereotypes of this period. If advertisements that combine text and imagery can be considered as discursal then this advertisement masculinises the braai. One way in which this is achieved is through the masculinisation of the long-domesticated apron. Holbrook has taken the apron out of its domestic environment and made it an essential component of the braai. Moreover, the language used makes the braai apron an important accoutrement of the braai and its versatility can be transferred into the domestic sphere of the kitchen.

³²⁷ B. McComiskey, 'Visual Rhetoric and the New Public Discourse', *JAC*, 24(1), 2004, pp.187-206.

³²⁸ Y. Yang, 'Ideology in Critical Discourse Study: A Review of Literature', *Journal of the University of Ruhuna* 11(2), 2023, pp.53-63.

³²⁹ E.L. Gans, *The Origin of Language: A Formal Theory of Representation*, p.2.

³³⁰ E. Guerrero, *Framing Blackness: The African American Image in Film*, p.20-68.



Figure 13: Alcan Foil advert, *Scope*, 1974

In a continuation of masculinised visual discourse on the braai, an Alcan Foil, advert, Figure 13, published in 1974, provides gendered visual and textual discourse on the braai. Two men feature prominently in the ad, while two women, who can be assumed to be the wives of both men sit demurely in the background of what appears to be a community park, focused on boy child who can be seen far back on the left of the image. The women are dressed very modestly with their legs crossed in stereotypically feminine way, sitting near a table containing refreshments. The two men appear sociable, holding large glass mugs of beer, with the man on the right of the image in control of the braai evidenced by the braai tongs in his hand. Overall, the imagery of the advert represents a stereotypical braai social gathering.

The visual discourse of the advert reinforces not only traditional gender roles but also the idea of masculinised outdoor cooking. While the men are braaiing sociably the women are likewise sociably engaged with the playing children in their eyesight. This tethers women to familial responsibilities even within leisure spaces. The gendered division of labour is only upended with regard to the braai as an extraordinary cooking event while conforming in the main to stereotypically gendered roles. This division can also be seen through the clear depiction of the men while the images of the women in the background lack focus, almost as if they are fading into irrelevancy. This fits into the dominant depictions of women in advertising wherein they were depicted decoratively or portrayed in roles that emphasised their domestic duties,

including motherhood.³³¹ That the women’s images lack focus and look faded work to sharpen the gendered nature of the braai, placing women at the periphery.

With the understanding that visual elements are capable of containing discourse thus, revealing the underlying ideologies, beliefs, and ideas contained with an image, the gendered nature of this advert is revealed. The visual discourse of this advert thus replicates the prevailing sites of masculinity and femininity during a braai. Men are represented and therefore seen to be central to the cooking practice of the braai and its attendant social elements. The text, although seemingly innocuous, when combined with the imagery further entrenches the gendered nature of the braai. The visual discourse of the advert establishes the target audience, with the text reinforcing a discourse of masculine competence and performance, with the line “*Your family will be surprised at what a daringly good chef you’ve become.*” This culinary space, outdoor cooking, thus becomes a site for the performance of masculinity. Cooking in the masculinised space of the outdoors also becomes an avenue for adventure and experimentation in the line “*With Alcan, you can afford to give vent to your more adventurous ideas. Experiment. Try new dishes...and new ways of braaing*”, with use of “daringly” further entrenching this ideal. In this regard Alcan Foil is positioned as tool through which men can maximise their masculinity through the braai. The advert postulates that to perform masculinity adequately the meat needs to be cooked to perfection. Alcan therefore enhances men’s expertise and braai skills which elevates their masculinity.

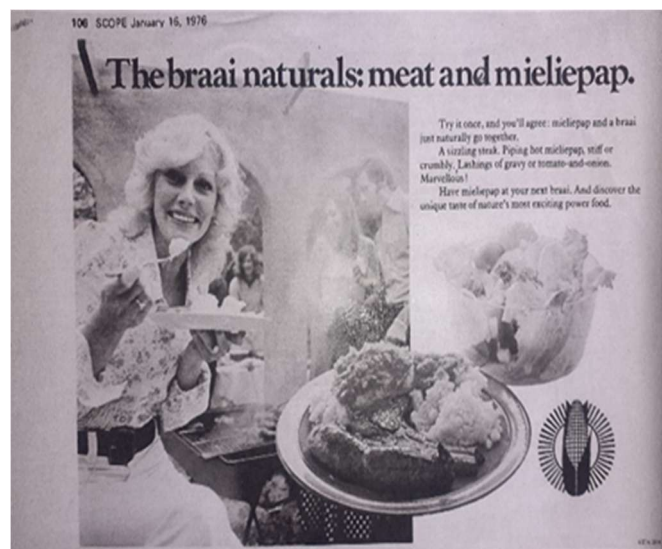


Figure 14: Mielie pap advert, *Scope*, 1976, p. 106

³³¹ L. Ciochetto ‘Images of Women in Advertising Both Consumer and Object of Consumption’, *Media Asia* 35(4), 2008, pp. 241-249.

In contrast to Figure 13, the Mielie Pap advert of Figure 14 published in 1976, positions a woman as the central figure. Despite the centrality of the woman in the foreground, the advert still offers a masculinised braai. The background image is of a man braai with a woman standing next to him. The centrality of the woman holding a plate of mielie pap conforms to the braai as masculine precisely because the pap is a side-dish, a preserve of women, and not the main feature of a braai, the meat on coals. This remains the domain of men.



Figure 15: Cadac advert, *Scope*, 1976, p. 27

Textually, Figure 15, a 1976 Cadac ad, is rich in gendered discourse. With the tagline “*Make it your local steakhouse*”, and the headline “*These days the Watsons still manage to eat out twice a week.*” The accompanying text illuminates the gender dynamics at play.

Figure 15, from 1976, unlike the previous advert, presents more gendered discourse within the text and imagery. Three gendered discourses can be picked up from the text, namely, around traditional gender roles, financial responsibility, and ownership and control. The advertisement begins with, “*These days the Watson’s still manage to eat out twice a week.*” This immediately signals that the image accompanying the text is that of a family, the Watson family. The text is also written in the style of an interview. The central figure in the text is

David Watson, who is positioned as a traditional masculine figure, and the head of the Watson family. David's responses in the written text portray him as the decision maker and the problem solver in his family, echoing elements of hegemonic masculinity in the description of his resourcefulness, encapsulated in this passage of text, "*Dave, you're a resourceful man, surely you can be a do-it-yourself steakhouse owner*".

In addition, David also asserts his privilege when it comes to braaing as shown in the line, "*Everybody wants to do the braaing. But I insist on my privilege. After all, it was my idea!*" Having already articulated the cultural and social context within which the braai takes place, David's assertion of his privilege reinforces the association between masculinity and the braai. David's assertion also reveals the ownership and control over his family, but in the particular context of a family braai, furthering this association between the braai and masculinity. This is done through a sense of authority and control conveyed in the text. Mention of finances when it comes to eating out and the unilateral decision taken by David to save money in this regard portray him in the traditional role of financial provider and the decision maker in the family context.³³² The text is solely centered around David, his opinions, and his beliefs and reveals him to be an authoritative figure who dictates what happens within his family. With no other opinions from any other family members including his wife, an adult who should be considered his equal in the family context, the focus on David's perspective when it comes to the braai suggests an emphasis and foregrounding of David's experiences, providing him an importance which makes him an authority on the subject of braaing.

The central figure in this advert is the teenage son, who stands over the gas braai, watched indulgently by his father. The teenager is joined by his two sisters, David who is sitting at a table on the right and David's wife who is captured mid stride, from the direction of the kitchen which can be seen in the background, evidenced by the plates in her hands. In contrast to the text, David is not in charge of the braai, his teenage son is. This is significant considering that this representation reinforces the masculinised nature of the braai. The skill of braaing is not given at birth it must be learned; the choice to represent David's teenage son in control of the braai feeds into notions of masculine socialisation especially given that David implies that

³³² A.T.M.C.D. Silva *et al.*, 'Paternity: Social Responsibility of Man's Role as Provider', *Revista de saúde pública* 43(1), 2009, pp.85-90 & L.H. Koenig-Visagie, & J Van Eeden, 'Gendered Representations of Fatherhood in Contemporary South African Church Imagery from Three Afrikaans Corporate Churches', *Verbum et Ecclesia*, 34(1), 2013, pp.1-12.

everyone wants to braai in the text. The teenage son is being inducted into the masculine mastery of cooking meat over coals or fire.

In selling products advertisers must attach the product with lifestyles and ideals that consumers can identify with. This is significant in understanding the choice to have David's teenage son braai, given the implications of diminished masculinity when braaing with gas. David's son, not yet a man, both biologically and in a socio-cultural sense, potentially provides a buffer against audience (mainly men) perceptions which would view this as potentially emasculating. In selling the product the text also seeks to assuage notions of emasculation by making clear that Cadac offers a range of braais, including wood and charcoal-fired braais seen in the lines, *"I went down to my Cadac dealer and had a look at his range of Cadac braais. "He keeps big ones, small ones, braais that use wood or charcoal, and those that need no more than a match."*

Schmid argues that the analysis of images has to look at their position in a certain discourse constellation, their function for that discourse and their relationship to other pictures.³³³ The source above and below, which represent the braai through the use of gas, sit in a constellation of discourse that masculinises the braai. The sources also offer a discourse that sees the use of fire as an essential element of the braai which maximises its masculinity. The use of gas, therefore, diminishes one's masculinity. In this regard, depictions of teenage boys or women in control of the gas braais signals the way brands and advertisers managed the potential cultural misunderstanding, which sees fire as essential to the masculinity of the braai, by fronting women in gas braai adverts and in the case of Figure 14 a teenager, not yet considered a man. This provides for a safe arena for the advertising of gas braai's where masculinity cannot be diminished.

Published in 1977 Figure 16 for Cadac gas bears further corroboration of a more 'feminised' gas braai through a variety of mechanisms. First, women and children, in number and positioning, dominate the image with only two men immediately visible. The low-key positioning of the men, one on his haunches before a gas braai and the other sitting in a chair, suggest a subservience that is seemingly at variance with the masculinised space of the outdoors. One can argue, however, that this variance is consonant with the nature of the event

³³³ A. Schmid, 'Bridging the Gap: Image, Discourse, and Beyond—Towards a Critical Theory of Visual Representation', *Qualitative Sociology Review* 8(2), 2012, pp.76-89.

depicted, a family camp and picnic which would call for a more toned-down masculinity than if it was a group of men only. And despite the woman in the foreground looming over the gas



Figure 16: Cadac, advert, *Scope*, 1977, p. 20

braai, it is the man whose hand is hovering over the braai, putting him firmly at the helm. Despite the presence of women and children, the dominance of the men is enhanced because of their muted roles. What is also striking about this advert is the presence of the ox-wagon cart in the image. This once again links the braai to the Afrikaner nationalist drive of the 1930s as discussed in chapter two. That the advert was released after the politically precarious year of the 1976 Soweto uprising which saw students stand up against the apartheid regime's imposition of Afrikaans as a language of instruction is significant and can be read as an attempt to bolster the morale of white South Africans in the face of increasing anti-apartheid resistance. By including imagery of the ox-wagon the advert bolsters and reinforces Afrikaner identity against the perceived threat or attack on Afrikanerdom.

A series of Blitz Firelighters, adverts, Figures 17-20, from 1979 to 1984 illustrate the pervasive masculinisation of the braai. In a period spanning five years, the adverts all provide a visual discourse that genders the braai in different ways. As observed before, Figure 17 plays on notions of gendered cooking and consumption through a depiction of, presumably a couple. As usual the man is the central figure, holding a glass mug of beer in one hand and braai tongs in another, flipping boerewors, which features prominently. The woman stands behind and is

captured slicing some type of vegetable in preparation for a side dish or salad considering the bowl of lettuce and onions on the table. This imagery fits into ideas of gendered meat consumption, as discussed in Chapter three with the juxtaposition between meat and salad highlighting ideas around meat as masculine and salad as a more feminized food. This is emphasised by how the positions of meat and salad in the advert are mirrored by the position of the man and the woman.

This visual discourse is similarly replicated in Figure 18. The advert depicts three individuals, one man standing in the foreground of the picture looking directly at the camera and holding up a Blitz Firelighter cube. In the background is a man and a woman. The man has braai tongs in one of his hands and a glass of beer in the other hand looking at the braai in front of him. The woman has one of her hands on the man's shoulder and is looking at the braai as well. The level of familiarity in the scene depicted suggests that the man and the woman are a couple. Barring some exceptions, the larger trend has been that women in these advertisements are



Figure 18: Blitz advert, *Scope*, 1979, p. 92



Figure 17: Blitz advert, *Scope*, 1981, p. 154

superfluous and function merely as decorative props. There is thus a continued objectification of women as either irrelevant to, or secondary in relation to the men who dominate and claim the braai as a masculine domain.



Figure 20: Blitz advert, *Scope*, 1982, p. 162



Figure 19: Blitz advert, *Scope*, 1984, p. 109

Figure 19 contains images from the televised Blitzbraai contest, with the headline “*The Day Smokey discovered Blitzvinnig's burning secret.*” The advert provides images of the two contestants mentioned in above. The image on the right is meant to depict Blitzvinnig Le Grange, looking amused with a glass of beer in his one hand braai tongs in another standing over a braai, wearing a Blitz firefighters apron. The image appears to be a candid shot of Blitzvinnig, who is positioned in a way that seems as if he is looking at Smokey Robinson depicted in the second image on the right. Smokey Robinson appears to be struggling as the text says, with his braai fire. Robinson is hunched over his braai, blowing at the fire, looking flushed and overwhelmed. This stands in stark contrast to the image of competence that Blitzvinnig portrays. In fact, the positioning of the two images suggest that Blitzvinnig’s amusement is directed at Robinson’s failure to get a fire started and sustaining it for long enough to cook the meat. The framing of this advert suggests that Blitz is the way for the audience to prevent this humiliation for themselves with “the burning secret” of Blitz. One can argue that two different masculinities are depicted here, both tied to either success or failure in getting the braai fire started and sustaining it for long enough to cook the meat. The advert suggests that successful men deploy the various tools at their disposal to attain success, while Smokey Robinson is represented as the man who is not clever enough to use the requisite resources to attain success.

Figure 20 contains a simple image of a smiling man holding up boerewors sausage, hunched over a braai with various cuts of meat on a grill. Above the image is the headline “*When I braai,*

I'm so fussy my wife wants to send me back to the bushveld.” The accompanying text, below, is rich in gendered discourses that affirms the masculinisation of the braai in several ways.

I always say a great braai begins with the little things. Chops from ou Jaap's place in the Karoo. My Ouma's special wors recipe. Sosaties made with Calitzdorp apricots and green sticks I cut myself at the river. And a marinade that's been in our family since the Trek. But you know, it all begins with the fire. It must burn just so. or you don't get the real taste out of your meat. So, I always bring a bakkie load of dried mielies back from the farm. And I mix that with some very old acacia wood for a nice slow heat. And now I light up with new Blitz Natural braailighters. They get the flame going quickly. They burn to nothing. And they let me enjoy the taste of the food I know. It's a really good idea, this new Blitz. Even my wife can't tell I'm using it. And she still thinks I'm fussing from the start.

The headline positions the braai as an activity that requires perfection hence, the husband fussing over the braai. Discursively, the outdoors feature heavily in this advert, with references to the Karoo and Calitzdorp, also located in the Klein Karoo, all evoking images of rugged landscapes. The husband situates himself in this rugged landscape by saying that he cuts green sosaties sticks himself at “the river”, playing on notions of masculine heroism, reinforced by reference to the Trek. Visagie argues that the Great Trek, which played an important part in Afrikaner identity, is bound up in notions of a heroic conquest of new frontiers.³³⁴ This heroism, employed in constructing nationalism was typically fulfilled by men.³³⁵ This is significant considering the social and cultural emergence of the braai, which was fueled by the cultural zeitgeist of the 1930s and saw the construction of nationalist symbols, including the braai. The braai begins transcending its Afrikaner nationalist symbolism by the 1940s and encompasses a broader white South African as argued in chapter two. That the iconography of the Trek is used in this advert, potentially reveals that a cultural understanding of the braai as Afrikaner heritage remained as late as the 1980s.

Furthermore, the deployment of heroism in nationalism has significant implications in that, the fiction of the nation state is sustained, in part, by the fiction of hyper-masculinity, a mythological condition that almost inevitably results in the political and cultural marginalisation of woman as political category according to Whitehead.³³⁶ The advert therefore employs nationalistic tropes already established to marginalise women. Marginalisation of women is prevalent in the discourse of the advert, both visually textually, with the final line of

³³⁴L. Koenig-Visagie, ‘Active, Adventurous and Heroic: Visual Constructions of Masculinity in the Afrikaans Church’, *Gender Questions* 10(1), 2022, pp.1-34.

³³⁵ Ibid

³³⁶ S. Whitehead. *Men and Masculinities: Key Themes and New Directions*, p.122.

the text “*Even my wife can't tell I'm using it. And she still thinks I'm fussing from the start.*” This implies female ignorance on the braai, representing wives and women more broadly as having no knowledge or expertise on the braai, thus, the wife is impatient, mistaking the husband’s meticulousness as fussiness. This places women outside the braai ritual, which can only be understood, experienced and undertaken by men.

The Blitz firelighters adverts frame the braai as a masculine activity. This is done through a visual discourse that plays on notions of gendered labour as seen in Figure 17, the decorative portrayal of women as exemplified by Figures 17 and 18, and the complete visual exclusion of women in Figures 19 and 20. In addition, discursively the adverts, position the braai as an activity that requires masculine competence and skill, an activity women are incapable of understanding. While there may be contending masculinities on display in these adverts, particularly Figures 19 and 20, these do not interrogate the masculinisation of the braai.



Figure 21: Vista Garden Homes advert, *Scope*, 1987, p. 85

Depicting white suburban life, Figure 21, an advert for Garden Vista Homes, portrays a family in their back garden with a built-in braai. The mother appears to be arranging the table decked with bread, refreshments, and salad dishes. The young daughter is captured mid-stride, carrying plates from the direction of the kitchen door. The young son is sitting relaxed on a bench with a drink in his hand. The mother, daughter and son are all looking at the father, almost in fascination while he stands over the built-in braai that has meat on the grill, with a glass of beer

held close to his mouth. The advert very clearly assigns specific gender roles to each family member and through this transmits traditional notions of masculinity and femininity.

The braai and the father are not only the focus of the advert but are also the focus of the rest of the family, making the father the central and dominant figure not only in the braai activity but in the fictionalised home. This projects the home as a masculinised space particularly, the outdoor space where the braai is depicted. Given this imagery the tagline, “Yes, you can afford a Vista home” is addressed to men, suggesting that home ownership is a symbol of masculine success, especially homes with built in braai’s wherein men can engage in the kind of leisure depicted. While the rest of the family are all passive observers of the father braaiing, there is a gendered nature to this passivity. Both mother and daughter while, passive observers of the braai are active in roles informed by domestic labor, reinforcing traditional notions of gender. The mother is shown setting the table, already populated with bread, salad, and refreshments that she likely prepared, positioning her in a traditional role that emphasises caretaking. The daughter, shown carrying plates is being apprenticed, and thus socialised into her future role as domestic caretaker especially considering that the son is depicted as having no duties and simply watching the father braai. His passivity while watching his father might suggest that the boy is being socialised into his own future role, learning from the father how to braai. Reinforcing traditional gender norms, the visual narrative of the advert presents a stereotypical nuclear family where men and women fulfil distinct roles, The braai is framed as distinctly masculine, and this is emphasised by the roles the children play in the advert.

Still Smoking, the gendered braai in the news, 1996-2024

News, and newspaper coverage has long been understood as the recording of hard truths and unbiased facts. However, Fowler argues that the content of newspapers is not about fact of the world but in a very general sense about ideas.³³⁷ Journalists, therefore, play a critical role in transmitting these ideas to the public. Richardson argues that the role of the journalist is to enable citizens to understand their lives and their position(s) in the world. In recent decades there has been a softening and tabloidisation of journalism away from its common understanding and tradition of providing hard news, to a more consumer-driven format which has blurred the boundaries between information and entertainment. This has resulted in the

³³⁷ R. Fowler, *Language in the News: Discourse and Ideology in the Press*, p. 1.

establishment of what is called lifestyle journalism or popular journalism, distinguished from traditional journalism by the added dimensions of review, advice, and consumerism, focused on audiences as consumers, providing them with factual information and advice, often in entertaining ways, about goods and services they can use in their daily lives.³³⁸ The rest of the articles under analysis in this chapter fall under this categorization providing significant insights as the critical function of lifestyle journalism refers to providing judgements of taste.³³⁹ Within these judgements of taste lie values, beliefs and ideas that help create and signify identity within the realm of consumption and everyday life.³⁴⁰

Writing in the *Sunday Times* Lannice Snyman in her column Food and Drink refers to the braai in an article *Coalside follies or culinary bravery*, which illustrates these strategies employed by opinion writers:

Have you ever seen the look on a man's face when the fish his friend has been braaiing sticks to the grid? It's one of pure joy. Especially when the braaier's wife, bustling about bringing more brandy and cokes and splashing bottled mayonnaise onto the coleslaw, has told him (a million times and loudly) that he hasn't oiled the grid enough. And when the perpetrator of this insult to braaidom, by now sweating on the top line, finally gets the battered object unstuck and onto a platter, you just know this is a moment in which the buddy system and the marriage will be tested to the limit. It could be one of life's turning points which could ruin the most enduring relationship unsullied even by something as awesome as adultery.... If, however, the offending object is dried out, it takes the skill of a Nobel Peace Prize laureate to salvage the remnants of a ruined reputation. And we're not talking seriously dried out here, just a tidge of succulence short of award-winning fish-flesh condition. This is not the time to ask your man why his friend Stoffel's fish never looks like this and tastes much better. And certainly not the moment to mention how much the thing cost. Nor would it be pertinent for Stoffel to offer a couple of braai tips. For the disgraced host, impotence is preferable to the misery of wrecking a fish braai. Change the topic instantly to something even more fraught with tension like boerewors.³⁴¹

Snyman's article humorously reflects on a time when cooking was primarily about enjoyment rather than competition. It emphasizes how the advent of cooking competitions has shifted the focus from the pleasure of cooking and eating to a more competitive and scrutinised atmosphere surrounding South African traditions such as the braai, boerewors making, and potjiekos. The rhetorical question at the beginning of the article establishes a rapport between the author and the reader, assuming a shared experience among the readerships. It assumes the universality of the described experience, further illustrated by Snyman's commentary. This

³³⁸ F. Hanusch, 'Broadening the focus: The case for lifestyle journalism as field of scholarly inquiry', *Journalism Practice*, 6(1), 2012, pp. 2-11.

³³⁹E. Fürsich, 'Lifestyle Journalism AS Popular Journalism: Strategies for evaluating its public role', *Journalism Practice* 6(1), 2012, pp.12-25.

³⁴⁰ F. Hanusch, 'Journalistic Roles and Everyday Life: An empirical account of lifestyle journalists' professional views', *Journalism Studies*, 20(2), 2019, pp.193-211.

³⁴¹ L. Snyman, 'Coalside follies or culinary bravery', *The Sunday Times*, 1994, p.6. (Date and Month?)

shows the significance men place on the braai, where mishaps are seen as potentially so disastrous to a man's ego that impotence is preferred over the prospect of ruining braaied fish in this instance. Snyman's introduction primarily focuses on how men suffer from heightened scrutiny and pressure when braaing during social gatherings. By emphasising only, the pressure men face during braaing, Snyman portrays men as the central actors in these situations, framing heightened scrutiny as solely their burden. Moreover, portraying the husband as primarily responsible for braaing aligns with gendered perceptions of outdoor cooking, associating such activities with notions of masculinity.

The rhetorical question at the beginning of the article creates a rapport between the author and the reader, assuming a homogeneity in the readership as it assumes the universality of the experience described at the beginning of the text. Therefore, the question in addition to Snyman's commentary illustrate the significance placed on the braai by men where mishaps are so disastrous. Additionally, any critique from the braaier's wife for the ruined fish is described as testing the limits of the couple's marriage. What can be determined from this is that the wife's critique is unwelcome especially since the wife's earlier input (*"Especially when the braaier's wife...has told him (a million times and loudly) that he hasn't oiled the grid enough"*) had been ignored. The husband's disregard for his wife's repeated warnings about not oiling the grid enough illustrates a gender dynamic where there is an assumed competence placed on men when it comes to braaing. In addition, the dismissal of the wife's expertise and knowledge in this regard suggests that when it comes to braaing women's knowledge and expertise is deemed inconsequential.

Ultimately the text underscores a sense that braaing successfully is so intrinsically a part of male socialization that it creates a pressured environment where failure causes severe embarrassment. Preferring impotence, a disability thought to be highly emasculating, to a ruined braai suggests that the braai is an arena for performative masculinity.³⁴² The implication here is that failure to braai in a socially accepted way strips a man of that intangible quality of maleness, illustrating, how braaing is wrapped up in feelings of masculine pride and competitiveness. The wife is placed in a supportive role to her husband preparing salads and bringing drinks for imagined guests. Overall, the discourses present in this text underscore the social importance of braaing successfully for men. When it comes to braaing there are

³⁴²S.I. Khan *et al.*, 'Phallus, Performance and Power: Crisis of Masculinity', *Sexual and Relationship Therapy* 23(1), 2008, pp.37-49.

performance expectations for men that do not seem to be present in this text for women thus excluding women from the braai experience. Understanding that language is a tool for social action and interaction, thus making it a window into the practices, beliefs, and norms of a society, allows for the understanding that the braai in South African society, according to this text is mainly a masculine pursuit.

Glenda Nevill, providing an example of lifestyle journalism in a lifestyle feature titled 'Day at the races is a high-octane rush' describes the scene observed at a motor racing event. Like most lifestyle journalism Nevill's article is casually written with a humorous tone, mixing commentary imbued with cultural observations and anecdotal reporting on relatable personal experiences. Among her cultural observations is the masculinised nature of motor sport and the braai, describing her experience attending a motor sport event below,

The first thing that assailed my senses was the smell; the air was almost liquid with methanol. Mixed in with this were great braai smells. In true South African tradition, hundreds of portable braais were being worked loudly by men with beer bellies. Clustered around the men were entire families lounging on deck chairs, suntanning on towels, and eating themselves silly.... Thousands of tousle-haired boys, showing off on daddy's bike or car, littered the joint. The dads were looking butch - either braaiing or preparing to get their weekend kicks out on the track. Tight-lipped moms with chameleon eyes were everywhere, dragging kids from under wheels or lugging babies to the loo. They didn't look like they were having fun, and I sympathized waiting for your loved one to wipe out can't be a laugh a minute.³⁴³

The overall text of Nevill's article conveys her unexpected enjoyment at attending a motor racing event, despite her initial reservations. Nevill's reservations were influenced by what she believed were the roles of women at motor racing events and her failure to live up to her perception of these women's roles, "*From what I've gathered while watching Formula One on TV, women who do are generally - gorgeous, look better in faded denim shorts than they do fully dressed, and wouldn't be seen dead without an all-over tan.*" Nevill's beliefs are based on the representation of women at these events which has resulted in her categorization of women who attend motor racing events in stereotypical terms. Nevill's understanding of motor racing and the role of women within it, does not happen in a vacuum. As Braun and Wilkinson have shown, representational practices whether linguistic or visual feed into broader symbolic and material contexts.³⁴⁴ Representations are thus embedded in systems of meaning whether cultural, social, ideological, along with historical frameworks that give significance to

³⁴³ G. Nevill, 'Day at the races is high-octane rush,' *Sunday Times*, 1996, p. 123.

³⁴⁴ V. Braun & S. Wilkinson, 'Socio-cultural representations of the vagina', *Journal of Reproductive and Infant Psychology* 19(1), 2001, pp.17-32.

representations be they words or images. This means in all likelihood that Nevill is not alone in her perceptions of motor racing which include perceptions on men who attend this event as well, with Nevill writing, “*It could have been a day at the dam. My preconceptions were ruined. Where were the hot babes and the muscle-bound hunks? Most of the flesh on display here was suffering from post-winter flab syndrome.*”³⁴⁵ This context is important; Nevill’s role as a lifestyle journalist is that of a ‘cultural intermediary’, mediating between the elite and mass culture by negotiating the establishment of status positions.³⁴⁶ Lifestyle journalists play an active role in promoting consumption through attaching products and services, particular meanings and lifestyles with which consumers can identify.³⁴⁷ As a cultural intermediary Nevill’s unexpected enjoyment of the event is meant to challenge the potentially widespread stereotypical understandings of motor racing for both men and women in an effort to ‘sell’ motor racing to the public. However, in doing so she reinforces other stereotypes specifically related to the braai in her effort to challenge stereotypical notions of motor racing by attaching it to shared patterns of thinking, with which the audience of her article can identify. Understanding discourse as a way of representing aspects of the world, the processes, relations, and structures of the material world, the mental world of thoughts, feelings, beliefs, and so forth, and the social world, provides a way of understanding how Nevill’s representation of the braai both affirms already held patterns of thinking about the braai whilst also constructing a social and cultural understanding of the braai.

The phrase “*South African tradition*” reveals an understanding of the braai as part of South African culture and heritage, suggesting a much earlier consolidation of the conceptualisation of the braai as heritage. Nevill however, masculinises this heritage by framing it as tradition engaged with by men, “*with beer bellies.*” In addition, Nevill’s description of the gendered division of labour on display (men braaing, families watching, women parenting) resembles the gendered nature of leisure cooking, where men cook on ‘special occasions’, like at a motor racing event, holiday, birthday party etc., in masculinised environments, the outdoors, pre and post sport events, and where they cook in masculinised ways, grilling, barbecuing, braaing which typically involves meat consumption. Nevill’s portrayal of men at the event confers on the men both physical dominance (butch, beer bellies) and symbolic dominance through their

³⁴⁵ G. Nevill, ‘Day at the races is high-octane rush,’ *Sunday Times*, 1996, p. 123.

³⁴⁶ E. Fürsich, ‘Lifestyle Journalism AS Popular Journalism: Strategies for evaluating its public role’, *Journalism Practice* 6(1), 2012, pp.12-25.

³⁴⁷ Ibid

control of the main social activity outside of the main event. This is in contrast to the passive way Nevill depicts women, including the way women are shown to be tethered to familial responsibilities even in recreational settings reflecting broader cultural expectations of women as nurturers and caregivers.³⁴⁸ Playing on stereotypes Nevill's textual representation of men braaing as 'butch' provides them a hyper-masculinity particularly in light of her emasculating descriptions of their physical appearance. The word butch carries significant gendered connotations. The word is believed to have been an early abbreviation of the word butcher, used in 1920's America as slang for 'tough kid'.³⁴⁹ Associating the act of butchery with toughness once again highlights the historical and cultural link between meat and masculinity with meat in many societies and cultures having long been associated with strength, vitality, and male dominance both in terms of control over nature (slaughtering animals) and consumption (protein as a source of energy and virility). This link as discussed in chapter three is part of the elements which provide an embodied masculinity to the braai as a ritual. The use of the word butch therefore conjures and taps into an old historical, cultural imagery harkening back to a primitive era, ascribing the braaing dads a kind of primal masculinity.

The sporting backdrop of Nevill's article reinforces the masculinised discourse present in her feature. The 'tight-lipped' mothers referred to in the piece evokes imagery of resigned women whose presence at this event is obligatory reinforced by Nevill's observations, "*They didn't look like they were having fun, and I sympathized waiting for your loved one to wipe out can't be a laugh a minute.*" The focus on women's emotions perpetuates stereotypes related to women's role as caregivers with this role outweighing their enjoyment of this leisurely event. Their lack of enjoyment is also blamed on their fear for the safety of their loved ones, who can be assumed to be primarily men as the Nevill makes no effort to describe men's emotional responses to risk involved with this kind of sport. This absence suggests that the women's fear is a natural response reinforcing cultural narratives of women in sports spaces which see their participation as defined through their relationships to men.³⁵⁰ Men are thus portrayed as engaging in the risk and danger of motor sport, while women's roles at these events centre around risk management, managing the fallout of participation in the sport. Nevill's choice in highlighting how young boys were 'showing off' on their dads' bikes further entrench gendered

³⁴⁸ T. Revenson, *et al.*, 'Gender and Caregiving: The Costs of Caregiving for Women', in T Revenson *et al.* (ed.), *Caregiving in the Illness Context*, p. 55.

³⁴⁹ K. Manders, 'The Renegades', *The New York Times*, 2020, <<https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/04/13/t-magazine/butch-stud-lesbian.html>> access: 20 July 2024.

³⁵⁰ S. Marks, 'Cinderella at the (foot) ball: Wives and girlfriends in Australian rules football', *Continuum* 33(4), 2019, pp. 435-445.

understandings of not just motor sport, but sport in general. Young girls are completely absent from the feature, constructing a narrative that perpetuates feminised ideas on girls and women's interests. That young boys are portrayed as emulating their fathers suggests that men are apprenticed or socialised into masculinity through performance.

Lifestyle journalism places greater emphasis on identity and self-expression and is thus defined through the coverage of express values and practices that help create a specific identity within the realm of consumption and everyday life. As cultural intermediary's lifestyle journalists cannot enforce desires or purchases, rather they create the conditions for consumers to identify their tastes.³⁵¹ In selling motor racing to the public Nevill uses the braai to give motor racing normalcy, ("*South African tradition*", "*It could have been a day at the dam*",) in a way that can be socially and culturally understood. Her transformation of the exciting and 'high-octane' environment of motor racing into an everyday, somewhat domestic environment using the braai provides for a social and cultural understanding of the braai's significance in South Africa and through her use of language and representation the gendering of the braai in the societal context of her feature in the *Sunday Times*. Consequently, the text imbues braaing with a masculine essence, illustrating how the media plays a powerful role in shaping cultural norms and values in a society.³⁵²

The following articles are reviews of a play by Paul Slabolepszy, a play on South African obsessions, where sport features heavily and where the braai does too. The reviews are examples of both lifestyle journalism, as well as the social role theatre plays in society. This allows for both a discursal analysis of the review and an analysis of the theatrical discourse of the play. Published in in the *Sunday Times* the review of the play reveals Slabolepszy's linking of South African obsessions, the braai and cricket to a masculine identity,

James Borthwick delights as the sharp-witted Corky Labuschagne in, yet another apt and humorous Paul Slabolepszy play on South African obsessions. Sitting on his Parow patio, Labuschagne takes us through the South African landscape via his pithy thoughts on anything from the making of the perfect braai to the cunning neighbor masquerading as a pool installation expert, to his days as a hopeless young batsman in the godforsaken far north. In this fine production, Slabolepszy takes his cue from cricket and the obsession the sport inspires in the

³⁵¹ L Vodanovic, *Lifestyle journalism: social media, consumption and experience*, p.3.

³⁵² C. Happer & G Philo, 'The Role of the Media in the Construction of Public Belief and Social Change', *Journal of social and political psychology* 1(1), 2013, pp.321-336. & A Rahima, et al 'The Role of Mass Media in Shaping People's Cultural Identity', *International Journal of Progressive Sciences and Technologies* 35(2), 2002, pp. 559-565.

likes of Labuschagne, a South African male who takes his cricket the way he likes his braai: perfect.³⁵³

South African men have an international reputation for being sports mad; the review reinforces this reputation presenting cricket as masculine arena tied to a South African identity.³⁵⁴ Embedded with Victorian values, cricket expressed codes that were expected to govern all masculine behaviour, for example sportsmanship, a sense of fair play, thorough control over the expression of strong sentiment by players on the field, subordination of personal sentiments and interests to those of the group and unquestioned loyalty to the team. These values were understood to be quintessentially masculine.³⁵⁵ Cricket has therefore, long been tied to a masculine identity, linked to colonial efforts to civilise colonised subjects through the “manly game”.³⁵⁶ Cricket can then be seen as a site for masculine performance and a source for masculine status.³⁵⁷ In South Africa, cricket as sport, played a part in the consolidation of a white masculinity with Morrell writing,

The apartheid state has long been recognised for its persecution of Africans, but its impact on gender relations (and specifically on men in South Africa) is less well recognised. Militarisation and national conscription brought a growing intolerance of difference and with the elevation of rugby and cricket into national sports and marks of patriotism, a national white masculinity was created.³⁵⁸

This has significant implications for the reading of the discourse of the text. Discourse is a key site for the construction of meaning, resulting in the development of specific socio-cultural representations in this case, of cricket. With the use of discourse analysis, cricket can therefore be assumed to symbolise and represent a white masculine identity given that socio-cultural representations and practices develop and change, across time and context.³⁵⁹ The review frames both the braai and cricket as facets of a South African male identity and culture and in

³⁵³ J. Dlamini, *et al.*, ‘Skit on cricket scores a six’ *The Sunday Times*, 1996, p.54.

³⁵⁴ R. Morrell, ‘Masculinity in South African History: Towards a Gendered Approach to the Past’, *South African Historical Journal*, 37(1), 1997, pp.167-177.

³⁵⁵ A. Appadurai, ‘Playing with Modernity: The Decolonisation of Indian Cricket’, in C.A. Breckenridge (eds), *Consuming Modernity: Public Culture in a South Asian world*, p.25.

³⁵⁶ T. Walle, ‘A Passion for Cricket: Masculinity, ethnicity and diasporic spaces in Oslo’ PhD Thesis, University of Oslo. P.155.

³⁵⁷ Ibid

³⁵⁸ R. Morrell, ‘Masculinity in South African history: Towards a Gendered Approach to the Past’, *South African Historical Journal*, 37(1), 1997, pp.167-177.

³⁵⁹ V. Braun & S. Wilkinson, ‘Socio-cultural representations of the vagina’, *Journal of Reproductive and Infant Psychology* 19(1), 2001, pp.17-32.

particular that of a white South African identity and culture given the historical context of the review.

A second review of the same play encapsulates how the use of language can construct meaning and transmit discourses that inform societal understanding.

Paul Slabolepszy's latest sports fever, "Ticket to Fine Leg," arrives just as South Africans are being subjected to SABC commentary from noon till night on Hansie and the boys. The play is a one-hander starring James Borthwick as Corky Labuschagne, the cricket fan who is full of reminiscences and disappointed when the match in Sri Lanka is cancelled because of bad weather. Bored, he resorts to indulging his other passion - braaiing. Slabolepszy explores the culture of the braai and the exclusion of women from the male cooking adventure. Women in the audience will gain an insight into why men want to spend their entire Saturday afternoons in front of their television screens. The play has some catchy one-liners and should not be missed by the manne.³⁶⁰

Subtly more critical, the second review acknowledges the gendered aspects of the play and the gendered nature of both the braai and sport by revealing how the play critiques these aspects. While critical, the review positions women as outsiders to this "male cooking adventure" and in addition, reinforces stereotypes around female interest in sport, "*Women in the audience will gain an insight into why men want to spend their entire Saturday afternoons in front of their television screens.*" This framing suggests that the South African 'obsessions' of braaiing and spending hours watching cricket are inherently masculine traits, which women lack an understanding of, creating a mysticism around these masculine activities which perpetuate these activities as distinct and separate from women's activities and experiences. This choice of language reinforces the exclusion of women from the cultural and sporting spaces of the braai and cricket as the writer of the review accepts and normalises their exclusion despite an acknowledgement of the gendered nature of the spaces. As reviews, these texts form a part of lifestyle journalism. As cultural intermediaries these journalists play a significant role in the dissemination of cultural ideals and values by creating the space and conditions for consumption. In this regard, the reviews, particularly the first one, tie the braai and cricket to a quintessential South African identity, emphasising the status of the braai and cricket in South Africa and their centrality to understanding South African society however, through a male lens.

³⁶⁰ N. Omarjee, 'A Question of braai the beloved country', *The Sunday Times*, 1997, p.8.

The masculinity of the braai and cricket is reinforced by the second review's encouragement that the play should not be missed by the "manne," which has both gendered and racial undertones. Both reviews entrench traditional understandings of gender around the braai and sport despite the subtle acknowledgement of gender in the second review. The normalisation of gender roles is congruent with lifestyle journalism which tends to reproduce and reflect cultural ideas through its effort to create conditions of consumption by aligning products, goods, services with cultural meaning and lifestyles with which audiences can identify. Therefore, by appealing to culturally familiar meanings, perceptions, ideas, these reviews are meant to draw audiences who identify with experiences captured in the play. In this regard the reviews replicate and perpetuate both gendered and potentially racial understandings of the braai.

According to Morrell, sport is pre-eminently an arena of display, where masculinity is performed publicly, where its physicality is the object of attention, where mastery is the source of admiration, competitive sport in the media has become a major purveyor of images of masculinity.³⁶¹ It is this mastery and its admiration which provides the context for South African men's reputation for being sports mad. However, in stark contrast to previous discourses on sport, David Bullard laments men's emotional investment in sport, identifying the braai as one of the spaces where this investment is shared and discussed.

Another week and it will all be over, thank heavens. Those of us who have pretended for the past few weeks to be interested in rugby will feel a huge weight lifted from our shoulders. Is there anything more boring than standing around a braai fire listening to men analysing the national team in minute and tedious detail, particularly when you don't even know who they're talking about?³⁶²

Bullard does not share this investment and thinks of sports discussions around the braai fire as particularly tiresome and 'boring.' This sentiment may be widely held among many men but the dominance of sports fandom, which informs the kind of braai Bullard is describing, is so pervasive as public discourse that men who do not fit the mould pretend to fit in. Providing a more nuanced view of masculinity by questioning and critiquing the societal expectations for men to be interested in sport, Bullard's article suggests a societal, cultural masculinisation of sport and the pressure for men to perform these societal and cultural expectations. From an

³⁶¹ R. Morrell, 'Masculinity in South African History: Towards a Gendered Approach to the Past', *South African Historical Journal*, 37(1), 1997, pp.167-177.

³⁶² D. Bullard, 'Putting the Boot in', *The Sunday Times*, 1999, p.164.

insider's perspective Bullard critiques the norms and practices of the male dominated space of the braai, while simultaneously also reinforcing the masculinity of the braai in this line, “*Is there anything more boring than standing around a braai fire listening to men analysing the national team*”, by indicating the exclusive participation of men in this ritual. Bullard's use of language not only masculinises the braai but also suggests, despite his critique, that the braai amplifies male dominated activities such as discussions on sport. Unlike most lifestyle journalism Bullard's reflections challenge cultural understandings of sport as a masculine domain. This potentially reflects minor shift in social attitudes. The potential transformative nature of this discourse is dulled however, by the emphasis of the braai as masculine space which reflects and reinforces cultural tropes.

A *Sunday Times* article by Andrew Donaldson titled, ‘It's bullets, not braais, which the get the brothers fired up’ looks at how gun culture in South Africa reaffirms white cultural heritage, even more so than the braai according to the title. In the introductory paragraph, Donaldson articulates what appears to be popular sentiment amongst white men in the aftermath of apartheid:

These are difficult times for white men in Africa. Directionless and marginalized in an uncaring world where humourless feminists and social workers now rule the roost, where actions aimed at redressing historical imbalances and the imminent paving of the way for the previously disadvantaged to help themselves to one's pile frankly terrify, where does one turn to? Why not try the nearest outdoors exhibition and tinker among the camping equipment and marvel at a jet ski or two? This, at least, seemed a harmless enough way of reaffirming my white worth amid the comfortable, familiar objects of my cultural heritage. Or so I thought as I made my way to last weekend's Africa's Big Shot Show at Kyalami, north of Johannesburg.³⁶³

Language use in Donaldson's article describes white men as feeling directionless and marginalized in a changing societal landscape. According to Donaldson, this sentiment arises from perceived shifts in power dynamics specifically in race and gender dynamics, and the rise of movements advocating for social justice and equality, such as feminism and initiatives aimed at redressing historical imbalances in post-1994 South Africa. Additionally, the passage implies resistance among some white men towards actions aimed at addressing historical injustices and promoting opportunities for previously disadvantaged groups. The mention of actions “aimed at redressing historical imbalances” suggests a reluctance or fear towards efforts to promote equity and inclusivity. Moreover, Donaldson implies that white men are seeking solace in their cultural identity and affirmation of their identity by engaging in familiar

³⁶³ A. Donaldson, ‘It's bullets not braai's the get the brothers fire up’, *The Sunday Times*, 1998, p.22.

activities associated with their cultural heritage, such as attending an outdoor exhibition or a gun show. This retreat to familiar spaces and activities reflects a desire to reaffirm one's sense of worth and belonging in the face of perceived challenges or threatening changes in South African society. The perception that black people are waiting to 'help themselves to one's pile [of money]' entrenches a racist trope of 'thieving black people' posing a danger to white wealth, comfort, and existence. The retreat to nostalgia linked to familiar cultural past times is a retreat away from the 'danger' posed by black people. In this instance, guns and hunting are not just culturally familiar but also a potential form of protection against the 'Swart Gevaar' or black peril. The Swart Gevaar was a term used during apartheid to refer to the perceived security threat the majority black population posed to the racial purity of white people and to the entrenched power of Afrikanerdom.³⁶⁴ One of the central elements of the Swart Gevaar was an irrational fear of communists and black violence, elements which feature strongly in Donaldson's article.³⁶⁵ Donaldson's article articulates a perspective on the experiences and concerns of white men in contemporary South Africa, focusing on themes of perceived marginalization, a threatened existence, resistance to change, and seeking affirmation of identity within familiar cultural contexts.

The title of the article, 'Its bullets, not braais, which get the brothers fired up' reveals both a gendered and racial discourse, in which the understanding of the braai is linked to white masculinity as well as a part of white cultural heritage. Donaldson writes this article both as an observer of white male sentiment on societal changes post-1994 as well as a participant in the search for activities that affirm his white cultural heritage. Therefore, brothers in the title of the article refers to his fellow white men in search of familiar cultural contexts. The braai is identified in the title as being a part of the familiar cultural context of white men and explicitly linked to specific forms of leisure that are deemed part of white South African culture. The implication in the title is that the braai ignites far less passion in white men than bullets, implying that the braai is subordinate to owning a gun which is symbolic here of both protection and hunting as a leisure activity. The text thus reinforces the gendered stereotype of the braai as well as the representation of the braai as an idiom for white leisure, in particular white male leisure.

³⁶⁴Y. Davidson. 2017. The doctrine of Swart Gevaar to the doctrine of common purpose: a constitutional and principled challenge to participation in a crime. (Thesis). University of Cape Town.

³⁶⁵ E. Kunene, 2016. < <https://www.dailymaverick.co.za/opinionista/2016-02-25-swart-gevaar-redux-the-anatomy-of-fear-and-violence/>> access: 10 February 2024.

Furthermore, gun ownership and use (whether against animals in hunting or black people in warding off criminal theft of white piles of money) entrenches the idea of the man as protector of family – and fortune. In the South African context, and in particular Afrikaner nationalist framing, the family is the volk or nation. Thus, protection of the family is implicitly also protection of the volk. The political transition of 1994 created a sense of precariousness within the white population which fuelled a gun ownership, and a gun culture based on perceived threats.³⁶⁶ Donaldson, does not challenge this discourse rather he reinforces it. In this reinforcement he casts the braai as one of the symbols of white masculine identity.

Simon Mathebula writing in the *Sunday Times* on food trends beginning in the 20th century, casting his eye back into the past, writes this about informal eating and the braai in the 1960s,

Informal dining experiences, particularly braais (barbecues), became increasingly popular, with South African men claiming it as their territory, akin to the American barbecue culture of the 50s. The love of meat ensured the success of the emerging concept of steakhouses.³⁶⁷

The article suggests a gendered connection between outdoor cooking and social gatherings around the braai. A comparison is made between how South African men have claimed the braai as their territory, with the way American men claimed the barbecue in the 1950s. The barbecue is notoriously linked with an expression of masculinity in an American cultural context.³⁶⁸ The use of the word claimed suggests that the braai belongs to South African men, implying that men are the primary participants in the action of braaing, thereby excluding women as primary participants. This reinforces traditional gender roles associated with the braai as a culinary practice as well as the social aspect of the braai. Consumption of meat is once again linked to masculinity when the success of steakhouses is associated with men's love of meat.³⁶⁹ This again perpetuates the stereotype of meat-centric meals as being one of the central aspects of masculine dining. This is further evidenced by the fact that more beef is eaten on Father's Day than on any other single day.³⁷⁰ Thirty-six million kilograms of beef is served to men on Father's Day in 24 hours. *FHM*, a men's magazine, argues that this is because

³⁶⁶ M. Keegan, 2005. *The Proliferation of Firearms in South Africa, 1994–2004: Gun-free South Africa (GFSA)* Oxfam Canada, p.29-31

³⁶⁷ S. Mathebula, 'The Burger is king', *The Sunday Times Millennium Souvenir*, January 2, 2000, p. 44.

³⁶⁸ J. Leer, 'The Gendering of Tradition, Innovation and Space in the Netflix Series *Chef's Table: BBQ* (2020)', *Anthropology of Food* 16(1), 2022, pp. 1-17.

³⁶⁹ H. Rothgerber, 'Real men don't eat (vegetable) quiche: Masculinity and the justification of meat consumption' *Psychology of Men & Masculinity* 14(4), 2013, pp.1-13.

³⁷⁰ For Him Magazine, 2021, p. 86.

Father's Day is the only day where the man of the house is likely to get what he wants on the menu.³⁷¹ This emphasis on men's involvement in meat consumption and cooking methods like braaing marginalizes women's participation in the braai, aligning with the established exclusion of women as primary participants of the braai.

A news feature titled 'The Gran Tour' in the *Sunday Times* focuses on two women who started up a safari tour business for older people. The following is an introduction to the text,

Being chased by elephants in the Kruger National Park is an unlikely pastime for two middle-aged women. But granny Marie McCrae and her partner, Carol Thornton, do this for a living. The two women – both divorced and in their 50s – run a company that takes older people on tours of Southern Africa's game reserves. The directors of Bush cat Safaris do it all for themselves, from making braai fires to digging their 4x4s out of the mud. "We may do all these things but we're still vain," joked Thornton. "People either think that we're brave or mad."³⁷²

Marie McCrae and Carol Thornton's ventures into the wilderness of the Kruger National Park stand as an exception to the traditional association of the outdoors with masculinity. These two middle-aged women, both in their 50s and divorced, manage Bush Cat Safaris, and guide older adults through Southern Africa's game reserves, challenging the stereotypical norms that often frame the outdoors as a predominantly male domain. Traditionally, roles such as safari guides, outdoor adventurers, and survivalists are portrayed as male-dominated; however, McCrae and Thornton confidently step into these roles, demonstrating that age and gender do not define one's ability to engage in such activities. The physical demands of setting up braai fires, navigating and rescuing 4x4 vehicles from the mud, and handling the unpredictable elements of the wild are tasks often attributed to men. Braaing appears to be another one of these exceptions.

Chapter three explains how masculinity is performed through the braai, but by performing this practice of braaing these women further challenge traditional stereotypes around braaing. By mastering the braai and other outdoor related tasks, McCrae, and Thornton show that women are equally capable of handling the rigors of outdoor life. Running a company that provides safari tours positions these women as leaders and entrepreneurs in an industry where leadership roles are frequently held by men, challenging the notion that leadership in adventurous and

³⁷¹ For Him Magazine, 2021, p. 86.

³⁷² N. Padayachee, 'The Gran Tour', *The Sunday Times* 2002, p.10.

physically demanding industries is a male prerogative. Thornton's comment that people think they are either "brave or mad" reflects societal surprise and admiration for women who step outside traditional gender roles, highlighting how unusual it is for women, particularly older women, to be seen in such adventurous and rugged settings. The discussion of their experiences with male rangers, whom they describe as "terribly chauvinist," further underscores the male-dominated nature of the wildlife business. Despite this, McCrae and Thornton's tours include feminine touches such as valuing birds and insects as much as the Big Five and McCrae's skill in making soufflés, suggesting traditional gender roles associated with nurturing and domesticity. Nevertheless, their success and visibility challenge the stereotypes that outdoor and adventurous activities are primarily associated with men. By actively engaging in and thriving within a traditionally male-dominated space, McCrae and Thornton challenge cultural narratives that often relegate women to more domestic or less physically demanding roles, broadening the understanding and acceptance of women's capabilities in all spheres of life.

Sean O'Toole writing in the *Sunday Times* asks the architect Gareth Walker what the ultimate South African design icon is. Gareth Walker's response is contained in the following text,

"Easy!" replies Garth Walker in answer to my question. "It has to be the reversible braai grill." "As all men know, trying to wrestle 17 feet of slippery boerewors into an endless circle on an open braai grill is nearly impossible." Not that Walker, a Durban-based graphic designer and the only South African to be nominated to the prestigious Alliance Graphique Internationale, is being flip. In fact, he's being totally serious. Asked to describe his quintessential South African design icon, Walker is adamant that it's the reversible braai grill.³⁷³

Walker's response to O'Toole's question masculinizes the braai. Highlighting only the struggles of men when handling boerewors on an open grill, Walker excludes women from struggles related to braaing; this is punctuated by the phrase "all men know." This reinforces a discursive understanding of the braai as a male-dominated activity in the mind of the reader. This assertion of masculinity implies that knowledge of the difficulty of handling boerewors is common and well-known among men lending the braai a mysticism that women are unable to fathom. The tone of Walker's response also implies a shared understanding of the experience of the braai amongst men. Walker's choice of the reversible grill an accessory designed to make braaing works much easier as the ultimate design choice is itself gendered. Emphasizing the functionality and practicality of the reversible grill aligns with perceived masculine design

³⁷³ S. O'Toole, 'Work with me', *The Sunday Times, Lifestyle*, 2005, p.12.

choices.³⁷⁴ Altogether Walker's response to O'Toole's question reflects a stereotypical association between men and braaing.

Chantel East in her column 'The Accidental Tourist' is invited to a Japanese barbecue. In the following text, East compares a Japanese barbecue to a South African braai,

*It was just like a South African braai. The women were quietly chatting while the men were drinking beer, laughing loudly, and grilling the meat. It was more of a stir-fry than a braai.*³⁷⁵

East writes that the Japanese barbecue is "just like a South African braai." The basis of her comparison illustrates the same gendered separation of men and women around the braai event. Quietly chatting women are juxtaposed with men boisterously drinking beer, laughing, and braaing meat. The description of this scene illustrates separate social spheres for men and women during a braai. This further implies a clear division of labour during the braai, with men actively engaged in braaing and in lively social interaction around the coals or gas, while women remain in the background, participating in quieter conversations. This perpetuates stereotypes regarding men's dominance in outdoor cooking and social gatherings. Additionally, the comparison made to a traditional South African braai suggests that the absence of active female participation is the norm during a braai.

In a Father's Day article titled, "*A dad is king of the castle, Bob the Builder and braai master all rolled into one,*" Devi Govender looks at a few traits that Indian fathers seem to have in common. The title of the article itself contains many gendered discourses. "Dad" is traditionally associated with masculinity, reinforcing the gendered stereotype of fathers as providers and authority figures within the family structure. The reference to "Bob the Builder" evokes a stereotype of men as skilled workers or fixers, aligning with traditional gender roles where men are expected to be handy and capable in construction or DIY tasks.³⁷⁶ The mention of being a "braai master" highlights the association between men and outdoor cooking, and braaing activities. The title of the article portrays a stereotypical image of fathers as strong, capable,

³⁷⁴ E.K. Kelan, 'TOOLS AND TOYS: Communicating gendered positions towards technology', *Information, Community and Society* 10(3), 2007, pp.358-383 & I.A. Aaltojärvi, "That Mystic Device Only Women Can Use"-Ascribing Gender to Domestic Technologies', *International Journal of Gender, Science and Technology* 4(2), 2012, pp.208-230.

³⁷⁵ C. East, 'Another blooming braai', *The Sunday Times*, 2005, p.3.

³⁷⁶ R. Moisio, *et al.*, 'Productive Consumption in the Class-Mediated Construction of Domestic Masculinity: Do-it-yourself (DIY) Home Improvement in Men's Identity Work', *Journal of Consumer Research*, 40(2), 2013, pp.298-316.

and skilled in manual tasks, aligning with traditional gender roles and expectations. The article continues with Govender finding one trait that Indian fathers seem to share,

Indian fathers are braai masters, or so they insist. But here's how it works. When the Indian father has decided that he's going to make a braai, everything involved must be carried out to him – braai stand, firelighters, marinated meat, seasonings, tongs, everything. And Indian fathers have a penchant for putting anything from snoek and crab to soya burger patties on the braai. But when the braai is over and has been a self-proclaimed success, the Indian father will take himself indoors, leaving the rest of the family to clean up the mess. So happy Father's Day next Sunday. We love you - frosty face and all.³⁷⁷

Govender mocks the notion of Indian fathers as skilled braai masters. Govender, humorously portrays Indian fathers as demanding everything necessary for a braai be brought to them, including the braai stand, firelighters, marinated meat, seasonings, and tongs. Despite grilling a diverse range of items, from snoek and crab to soya burger patties, the father takes no part in the preparation or subsequent cleanup, delegating these tasks to the rest of the family. This humorous portrayal undermines the father's self-proclaimed mastery, revealing a disconnect between perception and reality. The playful tone and stereotypical portrayal serve to critique and challenge traditional gender roles within Indian familial contexts. The absence of red meat in Govender's humorous portrayal is culture-specific; Govender is in all likelihood describing a Hindu family braai where meat would not be consumed for religious reasons. This exception does not challenge the meat-men nexus in any significant manner.

Hilary Biller writes on the Boerewors championships at Sun City. The competition involved contestants making their boerewors and then braaing it for the judges. Biller writes,

Traditionally the preserve of the male, this year's competition had three female finalists: Frances Pelser, a homemaker from Kroonstad; Annetjie Fourie, a butcher from Brits; and Elizabeth Lesley, a semi-retired butcher from Kuruman in the Northern Cape. Lesley was a finalist in 2007 and 2008.³⁷⁸

Phrasing a competition which involves making boerewors from scratch and braaing the boerewors as traditionally the preserve of men genders both working with meat and braaing as masculine. This, along with mentioning three female finalists in the competition who were challenging the traditional landscape of the competition further illustrates how male-dominated both boerewors making and braaing are in South Africa. However, the article also challenges the notion of braai and meat being masculine, illustrating that despite the cultural and social

³⁷⁷ D. Govender, 'A dad is king of the castle, Bob the Builder and braai master all rolled into one', *The Sunday Times*, 2007, p.7.

³⁷⁸ H. Biller, 'Boerewors gets a grilling', *The Sunday Times*, 2009, p.15.

perception of the braai being masculine there are instances such as this that break this stereotype.

A column titled 'Jacket Notes' by Greg Latter explains his reasoning for writing the book *Angolsh: Scenes from an Army Camp*. Writing the following, Latter makes mention of the braai,

There's a bar I frequent in Onrusrivier that is patronized mainly by white men over 50, which means a lot were subject to military conscription back in apartheid SA, and after a few beers tongues invariably loosen as foggy minds drift nostalgically back to the border and the bush war. It would seem almost every one of those barflies was in the very thick of it, engaged in heavy combat with the enemy where their lives were always at risk, and they survived only by their own incredible bravery and maybe the odd stroke of good luck: "We moered the hell out of those Swapo and Cubans. I must tell you about this one encounter we had..." Oh Lord, spare me. Enough of the war stories. Most of them are utter bullshit. It doesn't matter what story you have, the other oke will try to better it with more blood and guts. Trust me. Sure, some of them come from a place of truth, but after all these years of listening to okes at the bar and around the braai I can now smell a bush war liar a mile away, and that's one of the reasons I sat down to write *Angolsh*- to try to tell a non-gung-ho account of some time I spent in Angola back in early 1976.³⁷⁹

The bar in Onrusrivier is described as a predominantly masculine space, frequented mainly by white men over 50, suggesting a setting where traditional masculinity prevails. The mention of military conscription during apartheid South Africa further solidifies this perception, linking the bar environment to experiences of military service that shaped traditional notions of masculinity. Scholarship in South Africa has already identified the SANDF pre-1994 as a highly masculinized organization where recruits were enrolled into a militarized white masculinity.³⁸⁰ Within this context, Notes describes how patrons often reminisce about their military experiences, particularly during the apartheid-era border conflict, creating a sense of masculine bonding centered around tales of bravery and survival. Notes's mention of the braai in this article contributes to the broader narrative established in the article on masculine spaces and activities. The braai in this regard can be seen to be a space where men share their military experiences. Reference to the braai amid the sharing of military experiences and storytelling among bar patrons underscores its role as a setting for masculine bonding and camaraderie. It becomes a space where men gather to share stories, assert their masculinity, and reinforce social hierarchies through tales of their experiences, including those tied to military service. In this way, the braai serves as a backdrop for reinforcing traditional masculine identities. The

³⁷⁹ G. Latter, 'Jacket Notes', *The Sunday Times, Lifestyle*, 2019, p. 41.

³⁸⁰ R. Janak, *et al.*, 'Becoming manly': white South African defence force veterans negotiating masculinity', *NORMA* 19(3), 2024, pp. 116–136.

braai is thus seen as an appropriate space for reaffirming and reinforcing masculinity thus rendering the braai in the discourses in this text as masculine.

Overtime sport has created and perpetuated gendered, and particularly in South Africa, racial identities. Rugby is among one of the most salient examples of this in South Africa. The following article featuring Jan Braai (Braai entrepreneur, and promotor of Braai Day) and the Springboks appearing both in the *Beeld* and *Volksblad* newspapers is analysed with this historical context in mind.

Karoo lamb chops, spices, and good company are the secret to a great barbecue. At least that's what some of the Springbok rugby players believe, as they closed off Heritage Day, also known as National Braai Day, on Monday at the Nelson Mandela Bay Stadium in Port Elizabeth with a meat barbecue.... Jan Braai, the barbecue mastermind behind Braai Day, cooked up some lamb chops and boerewors over the coals for the Springboks on Monday evening in the shadow of the stadium. "If you wonder if the coals are hot enough, then they are cold, you must make sure your coals are hot enough," Jan Braai reveals one of his secrets. Scrum-half Faf de Klerk agreed, saying the secret to a good barbecue is a very hot fire. "Especially if you want to barbecue nice thick steaks, which I like. A nice hot fire and good spices," says Faf. For loosehead prop Steven Kitshoff, the secret is again good company and enough beer while braaiing the "Karoo lamb chops" over the coals. Hooker Malcolm Marx agrees and says good beer is the secret to a good barbecue, and his favorite is also lamb chops.³⁸¹

The discourse of this text illustrates the intersection of sport, masculinity, national pride, and heritage. The article written in 2018 describes how the Springboks celebrated Heritage Day ahead of a match with Australia at Nelson Mandela Bay Stadium. The celebration appears to have been hosted by Jan Braai wherein he braais for the team. Jan Braai has, beginning in the early 2000s promoted and advocated for the braai as heritage and in doing so has subsequently become a "braai entrepreneur" producing a whole range of braai related products. Engaging in rainbowism, he has somewhat successfully framed the braai as a unifying culinary and cultural practice encompassing a collective heritage within South Africa. However, a look at his book *Jan Braai: The South African Barbecue Book* reveals gendered discourses that contrast these views. The book appears to be nothing more than an ordinary cookbook, with hundreds of different recipes along with helpful tips and tricks. However, before the final acknowledgements of the book are two pages titled, "What is a Man Oven?", referred to in some of the recipes, and "Final thoughts". What is a Man-Oven provides an example of how

³⁸¹ C.L. Dorfling, 'Jan Braai vir Bokke waar stryde voorle', *Beeld*, 2018, p.14 & C.L. Dorfling, 'Bokke en Jan Braai gooi 'n tjoppie op die kole', *Volksblad*, 2018, p.3.

outdoor cooking, particularly with fire are aspects of the braai that embody masculinity Jan Braai defines the man-oven as,

Man-Oven is my collective term for those outdoor cooking devices that are powered by charcoal or briquette fires, where you mostly cook with indirect heat, and where the food is usually baked with the lid closed. You typically use a Man-Oven to braai larger cuts of meat. Some Man-Ovens are powered by gas but if you want to read more about them you will have to buy a different book. The best-known Man-Ovens in South Africa are the kettle braai-type made by brands like Weber, Cadac and Bushbaby.³⁸²

With this definition, the man-oven assigns outdoor cooking especially that of meat, as an inherently masculine activity. These man-ovens are thus symbolic of masculinity. This symbolism is not only embroiled in the masculinised space of the outdoor and the cooking of meat but also the fuel used, charcoal and briquettes which are closer to wood than gas. Scannell not only dismisses gas powered man-ovens in his definition by not addressing them at all, but he also writes the following in one of the opening pages of his books titled *Braai Rules*, “*Gas is Afrikaans for a guest at your braai, not something you braai with.*” In South Africa the use of gas seems to diminish the masculinity of the braai. One of the hosts of *The Good the Bad and Rugby Australia*, a rugby podcast, had to contend with South African fans of the show abusing him in his comments for using a gas barbecue in a picture he posted on Instagram, with South Africans urging him to learn how to “braai”. This is revealed when the host promotes a brand of pre-cooked burger patties on the show, with both hosts which include Justin Marshall a former All Black rugby player, talking about characteristics of the patties.³⁸³ The main host then adds that they’re “*juicy, they’re really juicy*”. John Smit former Springbok Rugby captain and a guest on the show cheekily responds to this with “*on wood obviously not on gas*”, adding that gas “*is cheating, its cheating*”. Smit then proceeded to explain the ‘technical’ reasons for why gas is not appropriate for braaing. That the use of gas is considered cheating illustrates the performative nature of the braai. To exhibit true masculinity men must braai using fire showing mastery and control. Throughout the text Scannell (Jan Braai’s real name) emphasizes the cooking of large cuts of meat in these man-ovens once again, reinforcing the association of meat to masculinity. The final phrase of Scannell’s final thoughts page reveal that his book is addressed to men,

³⁸² J. Scannell, *Jan Braai: The South African Barbecue Book*, p.197.

³⁸³ The Good, The Bad and the Rugby, Australia, 2024. < <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rKkhMyoK1ys> > access: 26 November 2024.

Hunting and fishing may not be the measure of a man anymore, but you do need to be able to make the perfect braai, without fuss or fanfare. It's just one of those things that separates the men from the boys.³⁸⁴

Scannell's phrasing here ties perfecting the braai to a masculine rite of passage, real men therefore, must braai. This is emphasised by Scannell's policing of gender encompassed in the phrase "*It's just one of those things that separates the men from the boys.*". Failure at mastering the skill of braaing then undermines one's masculine status and undoubtedly leads to pressure to perform this masculine ideal. Furthermore, braaing is framed as skill that defines masculinity excluding women from a ritual that according to Scannell denotes national pride and heritage. While acknowledging a shift away from old symbols of masculinity, hunting and fishing, Scannell uses the braai as a replacement for these old symbols. However, that both the old symbols and the new symbol of masculinity are linked to historical and cultural narratives that position and frame men as providers particularly with regard to the provision food, shows a maintenance of traditional notions of masculinity attached to new symbols.

During apartheid rugby became a means of exclusivity through which white males set themselves apart from women and the majority black population.³⁸⁵ Therefore historically the Springboks symbolised a white masculine identity. The article highlights Siya Kolisi as the captain of the Springboks, the first black captain of the Springboks symbolising a change in the racial exclusivity of rugby in South Africa post democracy but no change in the rugby's masculinised conceptualisation.

In an episode of *Cooking with Somizi*, Kolisi, then a guest on Mhlongo's show, in a discussion of gender-based violence made the comment that rugby players in South Africa are seen as the most masculine men and that necessitated that he speak up against gender-based violence.³⁸⁶ This is the backdrop of Scannell's braai for the springboks. The discourse of this text focuses on braai and rugby activities which have been historically and culturally, as shown in this chapter associating with masculinity. *The Volksblad* frames the braai as Scannell's celebration of the Springboks which coincidentally happens on Heritage Day/Braai Day. The Springboks are therefore celebrated through a masculinised ritual. This portrayal of the celebration excludes women, there is no mention of the female Springboks and their braaing techniques in the article,

³⁸⁴ J. Scannell, *Jan Braai: The South African Barbecue Book*, p.198.

³⁸⁵ J Nauright & T.J.L. Chandler, *Making Men: Rugby and Masculine Identity*, p.9.

³⁸⁶ *Cooking with Somizi*, episode 6.

while the article goes to great lengths to get the male springboks views and opinions on the braai.

The Springboks are more than a symbol of masculinity, but also a symbol of national pride, with the media actively promoting a nostalgic identity through the viewing of past rugby glories as central to the national experience.³⁸⁷ This is amplified by the article's inclusion of Heritage Day in its reporting of this event, tenuously connecting the masculinised Springboks, symbols of national pride to national heritage. That this article is an example of popular journalism i.e. lifestyle journalism, has significant implications for the values perpetuated by the discourse in this text. The prominence of Scannell, illustrated by his name featuring in the title of both articles, provides a lens through which to analyse how lifestyle journalism fuels consumption and the related implications of the commercialisation of the braai as heritage. The article shows the way that Heritage Day has been eclipsed by National Braai Day which has reframed what is meant to be an inclusive day focusing on broader historical and cultural reflections into one that emphasises consumption, leisure and importantly masculinity. This is evident through the gendered marketing, discourse, and representation of the braai in this chapter, positioning men as the ultimate authorities in national rituals like the braai.

Conclusion

Language is not just a collection of words and rules but is a dynamic medium of interaction. This means that studying discourses in images, texts, cultural productions, and conversations reveals how language functions in social practice. This makes language a tool for social action and interaction, making it a window into the practices, beliefs, and norms of a society. Analysing discourse, therefore, becomes an analysis of what people do with language in their everyday lives. Analysis of discourse, whether textual or visual in this chapter has revealed how advertising from the 1970s onwards has used the braai as a symbol of masculinity. The ability to use the braai as a symbol of masculinity results from advertising's use of social and cultural understanding within specific contexts to sell products. This means that within a South African cultural context the braai embodied masculinity allowing for its symbolic use by companies like Shield, Cadac and other companies selling a variety of braai-related products, from sauces to aprons.

³⁸⁷ J Nauright & T.J.L. Chandler, *Making Men: Rugby and Masculine Identity*, p.9.

Like advertising, lifestyle journalism needs to create conditions wherein consumption can occur. These conditions attach products, goods, and services with particular meanings with which consumers can identify. The examples of lifestyle journalism in this chapter have masculinised the braai. This masculinisation would not be coherent without entrenched similar patterns of thinking within South African society. The masculinisation of the braai happens in the backdrop of sport which works to amplify masculinised discourse of the braai resultant from sport's own historical and cultural framings of sport as masculine. This has served to perpetuate and entrench a masculinised understanding of the braai.

What has also become apparent through the engagement with a multiplicity of sources is that attempts to unsettle, critique, and interrogate the pervasive dominance of the masculinised braai-leisure-sport nexus remain few and far between, hardly making a dent or even shifting discourses in minor ways. Despite the prominence of women in some of the adverts discussed in this chapter, this prominence continues to frame women as mere sojourners to the braai experience at best, at worst, irrelevant and invisible. The sources examined in this chapter, from the 1970s to the 2000s show remarkably little change in the braai discourse, minor and subtle variation notwithstanding. This underscores just how deeply entrenched the braai is in various configurations of masculinity.

Chapter Five: Brewing Identity: The Braai, Alcohol and Heritage from 1976-2021

Heritage, as an expression of cultural identity, is often conveyed through traditional practices and rituals that hold significant meaning within a community. In South Africa, the braai has come to represent a collective, shared heritage in a post-apartheid drive to create a shared national identity, with braai as heritage discourse becoming more entrenched within public discourse and the public sphere. However, having established the braai as ontologically masculine, the representation of heritage and by association, a national identity, through braaiing is thus complex and is influenced by social, and gender dynamics. This chapter traces the ways in which the braai continues to be gendered even when framed as collective heritage and central to a national identity. In this regard the chapter focuses on the implications of the gendering of the braai in heritage and national identity building. The chapter argues that as the braai has become the preeminent domain of South African men, this masculinisation extends to the masculinisation of both heritage and national belonging.

The braai as heritage, has in the last two decades increasingly become a part of public discourse within South Africa, culminating in the official national holiday, Braai Day.³⁸⁸ The notion of Braai Day was introduced by Jan Scannell, more popularly known as Jan Braai, in 2005 after a media campaign to rebrand Heritage Day.³⁸⁹ With some financial backing from Michiel Le Roux, a South African billionaire, to the amount of R1.5 million National Braai Day was launched. In its first two years it does not appear that Braai Day gained much traction amongst the public with a very low public profile. This all changed when Archbishop Desmond Tutu was announced as the official spokesperson and patron for the holiday in 2007, thereby elevating its status and place in the public consciousness.³⁹⁰ Having coined the term rainbow nation, a concept which encapsulates ideals of reconciliation and unity in diversity, Tutu's promotion of Braai Day fit with the apparent ideals of the Braai Day initiative. The Braai Day initiative encouraged and continues to encourage South Africans to unite around fires every 24th of September, with the braai standing as a testament to South Africa's collective identity and strength as a nation.³⁹¹ Interviewed in 2008 at the launch of the Braai4Heritage, Scannell

³⁸⁸J. Sihlangu, 'How Heritage Day Became Known as National Braai Day', *The South African*, 2019, <<https://www.thesouthafrican.com/lifestyle/south-africa-heritage-day-known-as-national-braai-day/>>. access: 25 [Add date here?](#)

³⁸⁹ Ibid. & T. Radebe 2013, 'Braai Day Is a Mockery of My Culture', *News24*, 2013 <<https://www.news24.com/News24/braai-day-is-a-mockery-of-my-culture-20180719>>. access: 30 November 2024.

³⁹⁰ N. Xulu, 'Women Get up Stand up', *The Times*, September 29, 2008, p21.

³⁹¹ J. Scannell, 2024, <<https://braai.com/#>>. access: 24 September 2024

argued that celebrating heritage was important in the preservation of national identity, further stating, “This is why it is important to celebrate our common national heritage through truly South African features. And what is more South African than shisanyama.”³⁹² Here, Scannell very opportunisticly, conflates the braai with the shisanyama. Though both the braai and the shisanyama share the method of cooking meat over coals, the cultural and social characteristics are vastly dissimilar as has been argued previously. By conflating the two, Scannell seeks to ride the rainbow nation wave.

Following Tutu’s patronage of the holiday, Braai Day found mainstream acceptance, especially with the endorsement of the National Heritage Council in 2008.³⁹³ With greater public buy-in Braai Day started gaining momentum in the early 2010s due in part to Scannell’s continued activism. The Braai4Heritage campaign, launched as a compromise with the National Heritage Council since the council had dismissed the idea of the holiday in 2007, became an avenue through which Scannell could channel his activism on the holiday.³⁹⁴ In 2011 kykNET, an Afrikaans channel on Dstv launched *Jan vir Erfenis*. The show, which in English translates to Jan for Heritage, is described as an entertaining travel show that blends the art of braai with South African humor, delicious food, and a celebration of heritage and is currently in its 14th season.³⁹⁵ In the same year Scannell brought together various South African artists, including hip hop artist HHP, The Soweto Gospel Choir and Die Heuwels Fantasties to produce a National Braai Day anthem, promoting the braai as national heritage. The song, posted on the Braai Day YouTube channel, has elements of the popular 1974 Chevrolet ad, *Braaivleis, Rugby, Sunny Skies and Chevrolet...* The lyrics of the song refer to South Africa’s sunny weather, in verse 1, “*The spring has arrived in Southern Africa. Not a cloud in the sky* and verse 2, “*We stand united at the bonfire, we raise our glasses to the clear, blue sky*”. Visually, the song refers to rugby, with the opening scene showing Jan braai jogging out the entrance at Ellis Park, wearing the Springbok kit with a ball in one hand and a tray of boerwors and tongs in the other. In this way the 1995 Rugby World Cup is evoked and immersed in the braai as heritage

³⁹² Staff Reporter, ‘Tutu: One Nation, One braai’, *Mail & Guardian*, 2008. < <https://mg.co.za/article/2008-09-02-tutu-one-nation-braai/>>. access: 18 October 2024.

³⁹³ M. Stopforth, ‘Braaing Is Also Our Heritage’, *Citizen*, September 28, 2007, p.13., R. de Kock, ‘For Many Heritages Day is About Braaing with Family’, *EP Herald*, September 24, 2008, p.3. & C. Naidoo, ‘How Wors Shows Us Who We Are’, *Weekend Post*, September 26, 2009, p.6.

J. Sihlangu, ‘How Heritage Day Became Known as National Braai Day’, 2019, <<https://www.thesouthafrican.com/lifestyle/south-africa-heritage-day-known-as-national-braai-day/>> access: 5 May 2023.

³⁹⁴ Staff Reporter, ‘Tutu: One nation, One Braai’, *Mail & Guardian*, 2008 < <https://mg.co.za/article/2008-09-02-tutu-one-nation-braai/>> access: 20 September 2024.

³⁹⁵ J. Scannell, 2024, < <https://braai.com/#>>. access: 24 September 2024.

discourse, especially with scenes showing Scannell braaing at the spot where Joel Stransky kicked the winning drop goal for South Africa at the World Cup. The video continues its references to rugby with scenes showing the game being played and scenes capturing Blue Bulls fans and players as well as Sharks fans outside their respective stadiums; no references to other sports are made in the video.

While Scannell's braai television show was not the first of its kind, (Kom Ons Braai en Toks and Tjops being two others) Scannell's linking of the braai to heritage found resonance and saw the establishment of other braai and heritage themed entertainment television. The Ultimate Braai Master, dubbed South Africa's favourite cooking show and the toughest outdoor cooking competition, aired in 2012 a year after Scannell's Jan vir Erfenis premiered on television.³⁹⁶ The show combines the great outdoors and the braai, with the format of traditional cooking competition shows like that of Master Chef. Interestingly, the show, taking its cue from Scannell, positions the braai as heritage in the opening scene of the very first episode,

South Africa is home to some of the most beautiful and primal landscapes in the world. From vast semi-deserts and their water-wise inhabitants to rich coastlines full of nature's bounty. From majestic mountains riddled with cliffs and ravines to conservation areas that preserve and protect the big five for future generations. It's a place that for thousands and thousands of years has cradled some of the planet's richest biodiversity, and where people from all works of life and different cultures have united to form the rainbow nation. And there is one thing we all love to do, to gather around an open fire in a space that breaks down the barriers and walls between us and connects us to each other, we love to braai. And over the years I have put South Africans through their paces around my fire in a game that celebrates who we are through food kissed by flames...³⁹⁷

Show host, Bonello's monologue fits into 'Rainbowism discourse' identified by Rassool which is characterized by the message of how diverse South Africans have managed to unite and form the rainbow nation.³⁹⁸ Shows like these led to the further mainstreaming of braai as heritage discourse and helped spawn an industry of "braai entrepreneurs" like Scannell, who has also marketed a range of products including 7 braai sauces and 3 braai salts, 8 cookbooks, a boerewors range and in a partnership with Woolworths, producing a "premium range" of Jan Braai equipment.³⁹⁹ Corporate South Africa has backed the braai as heritage with Braai Day becoming "an unexpected and unmitigated cash cow for SAs biggest retailers".⁴⁰⁰ Roper argues

³⁹⁶ IMDb, 2024, <https://m.imdb.com/title/tt27752399/episodes/?ref=tt_ep_epl> access: 25 November 2024 & Media Update, 2013, <<https://www.mediaupdate.co.za/media/54149/cooked-in-africa-films-brokers-international-broadcasting-deal-for-first-season-of-ultimate-braai-master>> access: 25 November 2024.

³⁹⁷ Bonello, 2021, <<https://www.netflix.com/watch/81477084?trackId=255824129>> access: 31 December 2023.

³⁹⁸ Rassool, C, 'The Rise of Heritage and The Reconstitution of History in South Africa', *Kronos: Journal of Cape History* 26(1), 2000, p.1.

³⁹⁹ J. Scannell, 2024, <<https://braai.com/#>>, access: 24 September 2024.

⁴⁰⁰ C. Roper, 'Identity Crisis', *Financial Mail*, September 29, 2002, p. 42.

that this has ultimately commercialized Heritage Day which now sits alongside Valentine's Day, Easter and Christmas as highlights of the retail calendar.⁴⁰¹ Furthermore, while retailers benefit the most out of increased meat sales on the 24th of September, Braai Day, becomes an avenue for many retailers to kick-off their outdoor-living and entertainment merchandising, and promotional programmes" for summer.⁴⁰² In this regard the public space granted to the braai as heritage discourse has given way to commercial interests. This among, other concerns have led some to question the validity of the braai as heritage.

Among concerns of the commercialisation of Heritage Day, are fears that the installation of Braai Day in the national consciousness was conceived to shift focus away from Heritage Day, wherein reflections of the past create discomfort for some considering the complexity of South Africa's past.⁴⁰³ Fred Khumalo in the *Sunday Times* found Braai Day to be a usurpation of Heritage Day writing,

These said holidays were created to recognise the cultural diversity of this country and the historically significant milestones on its journey to defining itself as a nation of human beings who respect each other – or are trying very hard to work at it. These holidays were not created in a vacuum. They were carefully considered to create a space in which each culture can learn to respect other cultures. They were created to pay tribute to those who have contributed one way or another, to the birth of this nation, in its various incarnations throughout history.⁴⁰⁴

Khumalo is not alone in his assessment of Braai Day as an attempt at erasing the hard-won recognition of different South African cultures, especially against the backdrop of colonialism and apartheid. In *Grocott's Mail*, Zimkitha Linyana argues that the braai does not need a day of celebration, arguing that for centuries much of South Africa's cultural diversity and heritage didn't feature in the mainstream celebrations and commemorations of the country's wealth of heritage; she therefore finds the possible erasure of Heritage Day by Braai Day egregious.⁴⁰⁵ Linyana continues by saying that every kind of heritage and everybody's heritage matters and should be embraced, and if your heritage is rooted in braais, that's great, but it's still Heritage Day and not Braai Day.⁴⁰⁶ Linyana goes further by addressing the already mainstream nature of the braai, which for her means the braai does not have to be protected by a yearly celebration. Braais happen everywhere and on any day of the year. They have never been prejudiced by

⁴⁰¹ Ibid.

⁴⁰² Ibid.

⁴⁰³ B. Ndenze, 'Era of Poets Needed – Rasool', *Cape Times*, September 25, 2007, p.6.

⁴⁰⁴ Khumalo, 'Grill the Chops who Thought of Braai Day', *Sunday Times*, 2007 p.23.

⁴⁰⁵ Z. Linyana. 2022, <<https://grocotts.ru.ac.za/2022/09/24/um-no-its-not-braai-day-its-heritage-day/>>. access: 17 April 2023.

⁴⁰⁶ Z. Linyana. 2022, <<https://grocotts.ru.ac.za/2022/09/24/um-no-its-not-braai-day-its-heritage-day/>>. access: 17 April 2023.

mainstream culture or contested in parliament. In contrast, the acknowledgment and celebration of the diverse cultures and heritages of all South Africans are relatively new.”⁴⁰⁷ For Linyana the braai should only be celebrated under the banner of Heritage Day for those whose heritage lies with the braai. However, calling it or making it just ‘braai day’ trivializes Heritage Day and blurs its significance.⁴⁰⁸

For some critics, Braai Day is the natural conclusion of a country without a shared nationhood. Heritage helps bind a nation together, referring to a group of people who share a common history, culture, language, or national heritage as well as a common religion or set of ideals. This sharing of common characteristics cements a psychological bond between geographically dispersed and disparate individuals in a nation. South Africa does not fit into the traditional characterisation of the nation.⁴⁰⁹ It is thus, clear that the prevailing rainbowism discourse of immediate post-apartheid South Africa, characterized by constitutionalism, was the first and best attempt of liberation struggle stalwarts to forge a new nation with reconciled differences by providing a common narrative of the past and presenting a vision for a united future.⁴¹⁰ However, it is still difficult to speak of common nationhood in South Africa today. Runji argues that the various and contending nationalisms of Afrikaners, British and revolutionary Africans that vied for primacy in South Africa’s 300-year colonial history continue to wage a vigorous battle even in a democratic SA.⁴¹¹ This has led to a fractured sense of nationhood typified by the apparent need by some to change Heritage Day into Braai Day which, however well-intentioned its proponents may be, aid, for some, in the erasure of Heritage Day. For Runji it is not surprising that Heritage Day, a day so important in the quest for a cohesive society according to Runji, has been appropriated by corporate SA and dubbed National Braai Day.⁴¹² Runji argues that this appropriation of Heritage Day is not only a commercial gimmick but

⁴⁰⁷Z. Linyana. 2022, <<https://grocotts.ru.ac.za/2022/09/24/um-no-its-not-braai-day-its-heritage-day/>>. Access: 17 April 2023.

⁴⁰⁸Z. Linyana. 2022, <<https://grocotts.ru.ac.za/2022/09/24/um-no-its-not-braai-day-its-heritage-day/>>. access: 17 April 2023.

⁴⁰⁹C. Gnecco, ‘Heritage in Multicultural times,’ in E Waterton & S. Watson (ed.), *The Palgrave Handbook of Contemporary Research*, p. 278.

⁴¹⁰N. Runji. 2018, <<https://www.sowetanlive.co.za/opinion/columnists/2018-09-20-heritage-day-wont-stick-until-we-recognise-unity-in-our-diversity/>> access: 17 April 2023.

⁴¹¹N. Runji. 2018, <<https://www.sowetanlive.co.za/opinion/columnists/2018-09-20-heritage-day-wont-stick-until-we-recognise-unity-in-our-diversity/>> access: 17 April 2023.

⁴¹²N. Runji. 2018, <<https://www.sowetanlive.co.za/opinion/columnists/2018-09-20-heritage-day-wont-stick-until-we-recognise-unity-in-our-diversity/>>. access: 17 April 2023.

signifies the failure of South Africa’s political leaders to grapple with the difficult questions of constructing a common nationhood for a new South Africa.⁴¹³



Figure 22: South African Government, ‘Heritage Day’ 2021, <https://www.gov.za/HeritageDay2021#:~:text=Heritage%20Day%20on%2024%20September,cultural%20wealth%20of%20our%20nation>

The tension between Braai Day and Heritage Day can be seen in the promotional images of both holidays. Figure 22 comes from an article on the South African Government Website. The image was posted in the run-up to Heritage Day 2021 to promote the theme of Heritage Day that year which was “Celebrating South Africa's Intangible Cultural Heritage”.⁴¹⁴ The image is filled with typical Heritage Day iconography, South Africans in their specific cultural traditional dress, a still image of South Africans in the middle of a traditional dance, with the addition of an image of traditional beer and graphics which fit traditional African iconography, an African woman with an afro wearing colourful clothing and beating a drum as well as a graphic of Charlotte Maxeke to commemorate the year of Charlotte Maxeke. The image also includes the coat of arms of the South African government and the national development plan logo which includes a small South African flag. The article posted along with the image gives insight into what the SA government believes is the purpose of Heritage Day:

Heritage Day on 24 September recognizes and celebrates the cultural wealth of our nation. South Africans celebrate the day by remembering the cultural heritage of the many cultures that make up the population of South Africa.⁴¹⁵

⁴¹³ N. Runji. 2018, < <https://www.sowetanlive.co.za/opinion/columnists/2018-09-20-heritage-day-wont-stick-until-we-recognise-unity-in-our-diversity/>> access: 17 April 2023.

⁴¹⁴ South African Government, 2021, < <https://www.gov.za/HeritageDay2021>> access: 5 May 2023.

⁴¹⁵ Republic of South Africa. 2023. < <https://www.gov.za/HeritageDay2021>> access: 19 April 2023.

The article continues by addressing the theme of that year, that living heritage is the foundation of all communities and an essential source of identity and continuity. Aspects of living heritage include cultural tradition, oral history, performance, ritual, popular memory, skills and techniques, indigenous knowledge system, and the holistic approach to nature, society, and social relationships. In South Africa the term “intangible cultural heritage” is used interchangeably with the term “living heritage”. Living heritage plays an important role in promoting cultural diversity, social cohesion, reconciliation, peace, and economic development. In every community, there are living human treasures who possess a high degree of knowledge, skills, and history pertaining to different aspects of diverse living heritage. It is therefore important for South Africans to reclaim, restore and preserve these various aspects of living heritage to accelerate the use of living heritage to address challenges communities are facing today.⁴¹⁶



Figure 23: ‘Braai Day’ Rooderpoort Record. 2020.
<https://roodepoortrecord.co.za/braai-day/>

The second image above is taken from the *Roodepoort Record* in an article celebrating National Braai Day 2020. This image displays typical Braai Day iconography with a standalone image of a braai and a large South African flag. The article begins with a description of South African braai culture,

South Africans love public holidays; we celebrate our Constitution, landmarks in our political history, and even a few cultural pastimes like National Braai Day ... yes, we take a whole day off work to celebrate our braai culture. (Technically it’s Heritage Day, but that’s close enough.) A braai is always a good idea in South Africa, no matter the weather, day of the week, or time of the day. To braai is not the question as the answer is almost always yes. The questions are what will be thrown on the grill, what beverages will be consumed, and what snacks will be served for the occasion.” The article goes further to claim, the common heritage of the braai,

⁴¹⁶ Republic of South Africa. 2023. < <https://www.gov.za/HeritageDay2021>> access: 19 April 2023.

“Across race, language, region, and religion, we all share one common heritage. It is called many things: ChisaNyama, Braai, and Ukosa, to name just a few. Although the ingredients may differ, the one thing that never changes is that when we have something to celebrate, we light fires and prepare great feasts. We encourage all South Africans to unite around fires, share our heritage and wave our flag on 24 September every year.⁴¹⁷”

The excerpt above as well as the images, illustrate South Africa’s lack of a unified conceptualisation of a national heritage and the political, cultural, and social vacuum left by this. More concerning however, that despite discourse positioning the braai as a unifying South African practice across, race, class and gender, the way in which the braai is constructed through discourse is heavily gendered. Thus, while the braai may have achieved a modicum of success in shedding its roots in the Afrikaner past, it has not done so with regard to its masculine associations.

Heritage on fire: gendered braai discourse within heritage, 2002-2016

From a critical discourse analysis point of view South African newspapers have constructed the braai primarily as masculine activity. An advertisement for the Rugga Show on SABC 2 links rugby, braai, pap, and marogo with South African heritage in the following text of the advert,

The Heritage of South Africa – Rugby proudly back home. Rugby, braai, ipapa, and marog – true symbols of South African life can now be shared with SABC2. Catch the Bankfin Currie Cup, “The Rugga Show” and even more on SABC2 and SABC radio. Brought to you by SABC Sport.⁴¹⁸

Accompanying the advert is an image featuring two men and a woman standing around a braai. One of the men is holding braai tongs and is standing directly over the braai. Both men are holding cans of beer while the woman stands with her hands interlocked over her chest. The men in the image are looking at each other while having a conversation and the woman seems to be standing quietly looking at the men interact. The image fits into the already established representation of the braai in public discourse in chapter four. In this text braai as heritage can be seen in the discussion of it having a significant cultural value in South Africa.

David Bullard’s writing on the evolution of the ‘braaivleis man’ plays out the scenario a visitor to South Africa might encounter when invited to the braai, writing that,

⁴¹⁷ Roodepoort Record. 2020, < <https://roodepoortrecord.co.za/braai-day/>> access: 18 April 2023.

⁴¹⁸ SABC2, ‘The Heritage of South Africa – Rugby brought back home’, *Sunday Times*, 2002, p. 19. (Day and Month?)

A first-time visitor to South Africa will almost certainly be subjected to the ritualistic cremation of dead animals fondly known as the “braaivleis.” Not to be confused with the Aussie “Barbie” or the more British or American Bar-B-Q, the braaivleis is a uniquely South African phenomenon. Although men and women arrive together, they traditionally separate into two groups at a braai. The men make the fire and cook the meat while the women traditionally ferry the beers to the men, arrange the salads, and look after the children. In the 20th century, it’s the closest a man can get to his “hunter-gatherer” Neanderthal roots.⁴¹⁹

Gender identity is socially constructed and the text above illustrates this social construction of gender in public discourse. Additionally, describing the braai as an imagined return to a man’s hunter-gatherer, Neanderthal roots reveals why outdoor cooking resonates so much with men.⁴²⁰ This nostalgia for a hunter-gatherer lifestyle is related to an era where masculinity is perceived amongst some men to have been at its purest form.⁴²¹ The braai is thus linked to traits such as strength, skill, and outdoor competence which were required of men in the prehistoric era. The act of braaing, therefore, symbolizes the masculine trait of outdoor competence in men. Overall, the text presents braaing as a culturally significant event in South Africa characterized by traditional gendered roles and dynamics, where men assume a ‘prehistoric masculinity,’ cooking meat on the braai while women support and assist in domestic tasks, thus gendering the braai as masculine.

Discourse is ideological work, and this text shows how language is used to perpetuate and maintain ideologies through the construction of the braai as masculine.⁴²² The text both reaffirms the social reality of the braai as masculine and constructs, through language, a gendered braai. Language is used to portray the braai as a distinctly South African phenomenon. Within this phenomenon, language use reflects and perpetuates a gendered braai through the description of different roles. In addition, mentioning the idea of the braai as a way for men to connect with their “hunter-gatherer” Neanderthal roots perpetuates an idea of innate masculinity linked to primitive instincts reinforcing patriarchal ideologies that prioritise male dominance and control. The braai is again, seen as an arena for performative masculinity, where male dominance and control are perpetuated in public discourse around the braai. Discourse analysis, and it’s understanding that language and communication are not just about the fact that people communicate is important, but which people are communicating, exactly how they

⁴¹⁹ D. Bullard, ‘The Evolution of the Braaivleis Man’, *Sunday Times*, 1998, p. 24.

⁴²⁰ L.M. Bye, ‘Masculinity and rurality at play in stories about hunting’, *Norwegian Journal of Geography* 57(3), 2003, pp.145-153. & M. Gurven & K Hill, ‘Why do men hunt? A reevaluation of “man the hunter” and the sexual division of labor’, *Current Anthropology* 50(1), 2009, pp.51-74.

⁴²¹ Ibid.

⁴²² T.A. Van Dijk, ‘Discourse and ideology’, *Discourse studies: A multidisciplinary introduction* 2(1), 2011, pp.379-407.

do this, and to what effect is equally important.⁴²³ This text is written from a male perspective and thus privileges a masculinised understanding of the braai, communicated in the *Sunday Times* which at the time had a fairly large readership. The masculinisation of the braai is thus disseminated through the public sphere and public discourse.

An article on Heritage Day titled *Braai's Sizzle as the Nation Celebrates its Heritage* in the *Star* newspaper gives an account of Heritage Day celebrations around the country. A scene at Florida Lake and Gillooly's Farm where some celebrated Heritage Day portrays traditional gender roles where fathers are said to be making fires while mothers are said to be worried about making salads and minding children,

Whether it was to celebrate their heritage or to braai boerewors, South Africans went outdoors to enjoy a hot day under a beautiful blue sky. With offices closed yesterday for Heritage Day, and fires sizzling for National Braai Day, this was a Monday no one complained about. A visit to Florida Lake and Gillooly's Farm found fathers making fires, mothers worrying about salads, and children running around. "Of course, we had to come out to have our braai. It is a true South African tradition, and we could not miss out," said Norman Morris at Florida Lake on the West Rand. "There is nothing better than this." Esirom Maponya said braaing had become a traditional way of eating, not restricted to Afrikaners. Maponya's 10-year-old son Banele voted braaied meat "the best". Marek Pilch, another braai enthusiast, added: "What's better than relaxing over the" fire with a beer watching sport? It cuts across all cultures and traditions.⁴²⁴

The scene described reflects an established trend in this chapter of men/fathers taking charge of the braai fires and mothers preparing side dishes, perpetuating a gendered division of labour when it comes to braaing. The article expresses the views of only men on braaing and Heritage Day. This explicit exclusion of women's opinions on braai and heritage despite their presence at Florida Lake and Gillooly's Farm indicates an assumption amongst the interviewers that women's voices in this regard are not valuable or needed. Even the voices of ten-year old boys are more relevant than women's voices as boys are being apprenticed into masculinity at events such as these. The absence of any direct quotes or mentions of women participating in the braai activities or expressing their opinions about the tradition of braaing on Heritage Day suggests a marginalization of women in both the public representation of the braai and the voices of women when it comes to discussions about the braai as cultural heritage.

⁴²³ T.A. Van Dijk, 'Discourse and ideology', *Discourse studies: A multidisciplinary introduction* 2(1), 2011, pp.379-407.

⁴²⁴A Cox, A. Eliseev. 'Braai's Sizzle as the Nation Celebrates its Heritage', *The Star*, 2007, p. 3.

Paddi Clay's arguing for deeper introspection of the concept of braai as heritage in the *Herald* reveals gendered discourse within her argument,

My gender, however, did pose some problems on National Braai Day. I've been socialized into salad making, and as my spouse was away braaiing goat in southern Sudan, I had no one to light my domestic fire. I settled instead for a "feminine," and much less convivial, meal of salad and quiche and inhalation of the braai smoke spiralling up from my suburb.⁴²⁵

Explicitly highlighting gender at the beginning of this text, Clay introduces gender as relevant in the subsequent discussion on the braai. Reinforcing the stereotypically gendered division of labour related to braaiing, Clay describes herself as being socialized into salad making when braais are taking place. Having centred gender in the discussion, Clay's socialization into salad-making is extended to all women. The gendered division of labour is made more explicit when Clay's lack of a braai celebration on Heritage Day is placed on her traveling spouse who incidentally happens to be braaiing goat in Southern Sudan. Clay therefore has no one to "light her domestic fire as she puts it." The braais' gendered division of labour in Clay's social reality is replicated in adverts analyzed in chapter 4. Clay then contrasts her Heritage Day meal with the traditional and masculine braai, defining her salad and quiche as feminine. The relationship between meat and masculinity discussed in Chapter 3 is seen in operation in Clay's definition of her meal containing no meat, as feminine. Clay thus categorizes her meal choice and lack of braai as being influenced by gender,

In 2011 the *Sunday Times* asked five famous South Africans about their plans for Heritage Day. What three of the celebrities had to say is relevant to the study. At the time a CNN correspondent had the following to say,

On Heritage Day, my husband will be overseas, so my son and I will have to find a family that will adopt us for the day. My husband is a braai master. He is a perfectionist by nature so there are no half measures. So, every time we have a braai he is in charge. He makes the best potato salad I have ever tasted, with a touch of mustard. He has even experimented with jam, and it is delish. He also makes a wicked couscous salad. There are a few excellent butcheries near our home, so a typical braai for us will have wors, maybe lamb chops and chicken kebabs. We very rarely have steak. My favourite shisa nyama is Joe's Butchery on 11th Avenue in Alexandra Township. Besides work, I very rarely had a reason to go to Alexandra until I was introduced to the best shisa nyama in the country. The meat is fresh, and the pap (hugely important) is cooked just right. Heritage Day is a time for us to remember that we are South African first before we are black, white, Christian, Muslim, Rhema, or ZCC. It reminds us of our shared love for braaiing.⁴²⁶

⁴²⁵ P. Clay, 'How Can We Celebrate a Culture of Violence', *EP Herald*, 2007, p.4.

⁴²⁶ S. de Groot, 'Braai Freedom', *Sunday Times*, 2011, p. 11.

In this text we see a contradiction to the salad making as women's work trope. Unlike the established stereotype within this and the previous excerpts, men are solely responsible for braaing the meat. Here, Mabuse's husband takes on the preparation of side dishes as well, making the best potato salad, experimenting with mustard and jam, and also prepares a couscous salad. This perfectionist approach to braaing, including the careful preparation of dishes and willingness to innovate, shows a dedication to cooking that goes beyond the traditional masculine role of braaing, demonstrating that men can also excel in areas typically associated with women's cooking. His involvement beyond braaing meat challenges the conventional gender roles and spaces assigning side dish preparation to women in the kitchen within the home and men to braaing outdoors. In addition, the seriousness with which Mabuse's husband takes the braai contradicts the understanding of male outdoor cooking as leisure. However, while Mabuse's husband's engagement with the braai challenges the gendered norms of the braai event, he is still portrayed as having mastered the practice of braaing to such an extent that Mabuse and her son will have to find another family to "adopt" them for Heritage Day so they can enjoy a braai because her husband is travelling. This implies that Mabuse is incapable of braaing for her son for Heritage Day. Mabuse's acknowledgement of her husband's expertise and her expression of appreciation for his braaing abilities makes him the focus of the braai within their household. This fits into both visual and discursive representation patterns established in the previous chapter and in the beginning of this chapter. Furthermore, Mabuse's response to the question reveals elements of rainbowism which are embedded in braai as heritage discourse suggesting the significance of the braai in unifying diverse South Africans.

Jeff Moloi, sports editor at Khaya FM, said the following when asked about his Heritage Day plans,

On Heritage Day, I'll be at home. I'm off for the first time in years. A braai should have beef and boerie with pap and salads. I always save a medium rare piece for myself, though not a lot of people think it's healthy. It's the only time I get to eat red meat; I'm more of a chicken sort of fellow. I've always enjoyed being around the braai stand. These days I try and convince my 14-year-old son and 18-year-old nephew to come and join me and learn the skill as well. My favourite shisa nyama is my brother Thabo's place and my friend Mlu's house. But if I go out for that real experience of being with people, I always end up at Tin Ties in the Naturena/Meredale area. It reminds me of home in Mthatha, Eastern Cape. The idea of Braai Day on Heritage Day has had a lot of opposition, but I think themes like these are practical ways of bringing South Africans closer together, with much more potential to unite us than speeches

and rallies. Just as long as the younger generations are informed, over the fires, why it's important to burn some meat on September 24.⁴²⁷

Moloi places himself at the centre of the braai, speaking authoritatively on aspects thereof. These include enjoying red meat, possessing braaing skills, and passing on this knowledge to younger male family members such as his son and nephew. By specifying his enjoyment of being around the braai stand and inviting the younger male members of his family to join him, the text highlights the braai area as a male-dominated space. Moloi mentions actively trying to convince his 14-year-old son and 18-year-old nephew to join him at the braai stand and learn the skill, portraying braaiing as a tradition passed down from one generation of men to the next. While this act of mentorship and passing down braai skills isn't inherently gendered, the focus on teaching braai skills to younger males reflects a gender preference for transfer of skills, reinforcing the idea that braaiing is a masculine activity, serving as a bonding experience where men connect and share a cultural practice. The suggested apprenticeship of Moloi's son and nephew resembles aspects of the Xhosa male initiation process, wherein young initiates are apprenticed into manhood by male elders in their community. This in conjunction with the notion that younger generations should be informed "over the fires" about the importance of burning meat on Heritage Day, which perpetuates the continuity of this masculine tradition, suggesting that it is a vital part of their cultural heritage to take on this role and continue the practice. Moreover, Moloi makes clear that the significance of the braai lies in its potential ability to unite South Africans, fostering a shared cultural identity and forging a new heritage focused on the braai.

SAfm news presenter and regional marketing manager at BancABC, Karabo Malatsi, shared her plans for Heritage Day,

On Heritage Day, I'll be at home with my sister and our friends. She's the socialite and organiser extraordinaire. She sends the invitations, tells everyone what to bring (and wear), and gets the family involved. A typical braai for me involves plenty of cheese and wine... other snacks are welcome, too, but cheese and wine are just about as traditional as our famous South African braais. As always, the women are busy prepping in the kitchen (salads, chakalaka, and so on). We give men the opportunity to feel important by letting them handle the boerewors, steak, ribs, chicken, and fire (that's multitasking for them). My favourite shisa nyama is Panyanza in Rockville, Soweto. The ambiance is truly authentic. I love the music, adore the people, and enjoy catching up with old friends around the corner. Heritage Day honestly is about celebrating everything unique about being South African and our heritage as a whole. I wish my family, friends, and all South Africans a truly real experience this Heritage Day.⁴²⁸

⁴²⁷ S. de Groot, 'Braai Freedom', *Sunday Times*, 2011, p. 11.

⁴²⁸ Ibid.

Malatsi mocks traditional gender roles highlighting the evolution over time of several elements within this context. Malatsi first differentiates between specific roles for men and women during a braai, reinforcing traditional gender expectations. Women are seen as primarily responsible for food preparation in the kitchen while men are outside braaing. Malatsi then mocks this division of labour, especially the stereotypical expectation that women should be involved in cooking and preparation, while men are given more visible and seemingly important tasks like grilling the meat and managing the fire. The mocking tone is evident in the phrase, “*We give men the opportunity to feel important by letting them handle the boerewors, steak, ribs, chicken, and fire.*”, showing an awareness of these traditional roles whilst also simultaneously, poking fun at them, indicating a recognition of how these roles have evolved over time.

The use of “letting” suggests that men are only given these tasks to make them feel significant, downplaying the actual importance of the work and mocking the notion that grilling is a more prestigious activity. Additionally, the term “multitasking for them” humorously implies that men are seen as less capable of handling multiple tasks compared to women, who are implied to be the true multitaskers in the kitchen. Highlighting the exaggerated nature of these roles, suggests that modern society, or at least Malatsi, views them as outdated and somewhat ridiculous. This disrupts the traditional view of the braai as sociologically important in the construction of dominant masculinities. Finally, the concluding remarks about Heritage Day emphasize inclusivity and the celebration of the diversity of South African culture.

Susan Cilliers in the *Saterdag Beeld* describes the scene at a giraffe braai in the Northwest,

Ten men around the spit; 80 marinades and 12 tons of wood. That’s what it takes to barbecue a giraffe, says Neil Oosthuizen, organizer of Coligny in North West’s first giraffe braai yet. Today’s event is for the benefit of Coligny Helping Hand, which assists the poor with school fees, food, clothing, and even university fees. The 700 kg giraffe will need to rotate for about 20 hours on the spit at the Coligny High School sports field before it is cooked. About 1000 guests will be able to enjoy this exotic game meat.⁴²⁹

This text contains no explicit gendered discourse. However, the article is accompanied by a photograph of the event which may highlight some gendered discourses in the text. The image features a very large device where the giraffe carcass has been hoisted over hot coals. Around this device are several men dressed in camouflage with a man taking pictures of the braai

⁴²⁹ S. Cilliers, ‘Hy is Sappig Soos Skaap’. *Beeld*, 2016, p.2

carcass. The description in the “ten men around the spit” implies a male-dominated environment. This in conjunction with the photograph of the event suggests a masculinised environment around this giraffe braai. The masculinisation and thus the gendering of the braai is further implied by the use of exotic game meat such as the giraffe which would require brute strength to hoist onto the spit braai.

Alcohol, heritage, and the braai, 1976-2022

Among the most prominent examples of gendered discourses related to the braai is the way in which the alcohol industry has tied the braai to national identity and heritage while masculinising the braai in the process. While the most salient examples of this are introduced post-apartheid, the tying of the braai to innate South Africanness through alcohol begins much earlier. One of the reasons why the tension between the Heritage Day and Braai Day exists is because historically, the braai has a particular cultural construction. In 1974 Chevrolet released a radio jingle which called to a South African identity as seen in chapter two. Two years after the first airing of the Chevrolet advert on South Africa radio, and with the introduction of television in South Africa, Lion Lager too up the refrain of braaivleis, rugby, sunny skies that Chevrolet introduced its own advert. Screenshots from the advert can be seen in Figure 24, the advert is set against the backdrop of a rocky beach.



Figure 24: Lion Lager, ‘Down a Lion...feel satisfied’ 1976.
<https://purl.dlib.indiana.edu/iudl/media/811k521f9p>

Two men emerge from a small cabin-like house holding glasses in their hands. The camera pans out and two more men are seen fishing on the rocky edges of the beach. The landscape features heavily in the advert, with prominent images of the ocean and sun. The scene changes to show the men gathering around a fire, glass mugs are placed on the large beach rocks along with six cans of Lion Lager. The beers are opened and poured into the glass mugs. At this point, the narration starts, “*The good things of life, the great braai, the juicy steaks and a good beer for a good thirst*”.⁴³⁰ Along with the narration are images of meat on a grill and the men drinking beer. A song then starts to play in the background “*Icy cold rich and gold down a Lion feel satisfied.*” The advert closes with an image of Lion Lager amongst a tray containing braaied meat, a potatoe and a lettuce in the background. Here, the sunny, warm climate and the beach as signifiers of the outdoors is prominently displayed. It is represented as the natural setting for a man who enjoys the good things in life, including a great braai and a good beer.

Figures 25 to 28 below are all Lion Lager adverts, which was a premium brand in the South African Breweries stable. Mager argues that South African Breweries (SAB), which monopolised the South African liquor market, had had a main strategic policy in the 1970s, which was providing the possibility for brand personalities. This strategic policy identified three areas the SAB should focus on when promoting its brands. Firstly, talk about the beer itself. Secondly, portray sociability as the prime reason for drinking and thirdly focus strongly on men’s sporting activity.⁴³¹ In this regard heritage, masculinity and nationalism would become common markers of many of SAB’s brand identities.⁴³² These along with earlier maxim of ‘respectability, brand heritage and perceptions would constitute the blueprint for beer advertising for three decades.’⁴³³

Aspects of these strategic focuses are apparent in Figures 25 to 28 which were published in *Scope* magazine between 1977 and 1979. Prominent, in the initial television and these print adverts, are the two themes of outdoor leisure and masculine sociability. The adverts are set in rugged landscapes with both the television ad and Figure 27 featuring the activity of fishing,

⁴³⁰ Lion Lager, (1976) “Down a Lion...feel satisfied”, [Advertisement] Indiana University. <<https://purl.dlib.indiana.edu/iudl/media/811k521f9p>> access: 30 November 2024.

⁴³¹ A. Mager, “One Beer, One Goal, One Nation, One Soul’: South African Breweries, Heritage, Masculinity, and Nationalism 1960–1999’, *Past & Present*, 188(1), 2005, pp.163-194.

⁴³² Ibid.

⁴³³ Ibid.

already established to be a masculine past time.⁴³⁴ Alcohol is the lubricant of masculine sociability.⁴³⁵



Figure 26: Lion Lager advert, *Scope*, 1977, p. 7

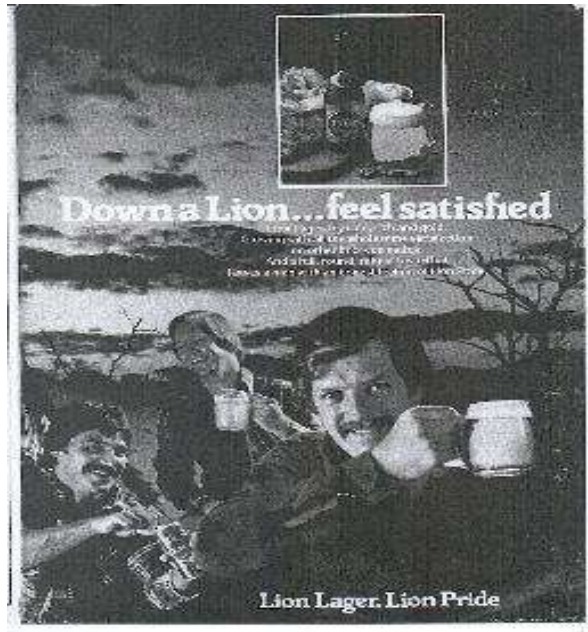


Figure 25: Lion Lager advert, *Scope*, 1979, p. 7

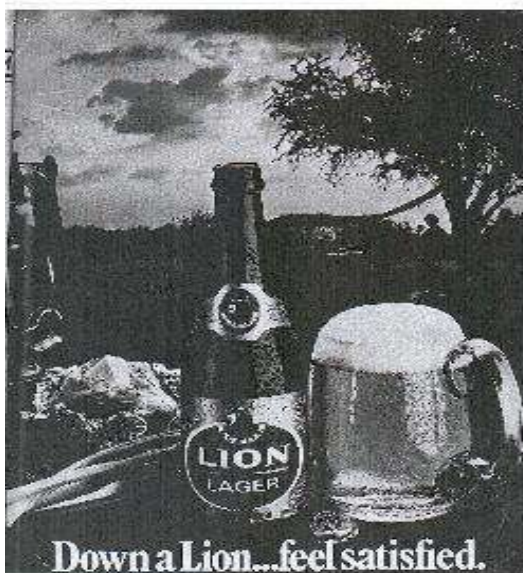


Figure 28: Lion Lager advert, *Scope*, 1978, p. 79

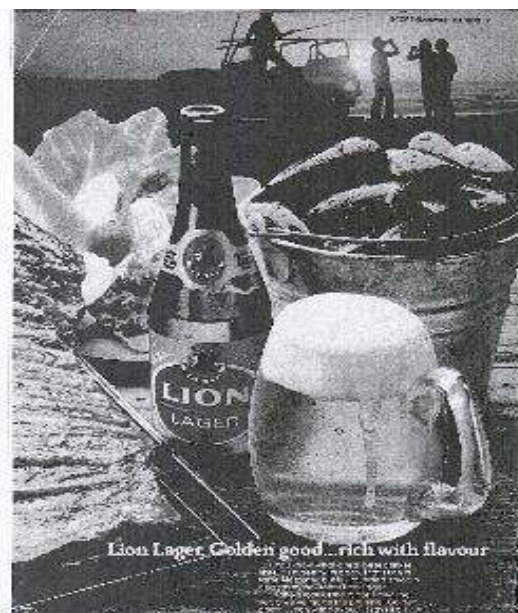


Figure 27: Lion Lager advert, *Scope*, 1979, p. 7

⁴³⁴ T.J Adkins, *Fishing for Masculinity: Recreational Fishermen's Performances of Gender*, MA Thesis & N.G. Power, 'The "Modern Fisherman": Masculinity in Crisis or Resilient Masculinity?', *Resources for Feminist Research*, 32(3-4), 2007, pp.208-209.

⁴³⁵ A. Mager, 'One Beer, One Goal, One Nation, One Soul': South African Breweries, Heritage, Masculinity, and Nationalism 1960-1999', *Past & Present* 188(1), 2005, pp.163-194.

Anne Mager looks at how South African Breweries which, became the producers of 90% of all bottled beer in South Africa during the 1970s and 1980s, became intertwined with cultures of masculine beer drinking and sociability.⁴³⁶ Mager argues that by ensuring that beer became the most popular alcoholic beverage in the country and by repeatedly affirming masculinist beer-drinking culture, SAB became a powerful agent in shaping social values. SAB promoted bottled beer as the lubricant of masculine sociability and deep play and built these values into brand personalities in beer.⁴³⁷ Lion Lager was the most popular beer brand in South Africa in the 1970s and 1980s and was one of the main promoters of a masculinised drinking culture through its adoption of masculinised symbols of the outdoors, sport and braai.⁴³⁸ The promotion of Lion Lager as masculinised drink is not a coincidence. In 1990, Peter Savoy, then South African Breweries Beer Division marketing director gave an interview on why women are never shown in their adverts, saying the following,

We aren't trying to discourage women from enjoying a beer, but there are too many taboos about women drinking in public. In some communities' men only drink when the women are away. We find that women respond well to the ads anyway, Once, or twice brewers around the world have tried to launch a beer aimed specifically at the female market. The last time was Swan Gold in Australia: the campaign bombed.⁴³⁹

This shows that the masculinised visual discourse can only be understood through cultural cues as has been theorised.⁴⁴⁰ The visual discourse is reinforced by the textual discourse of some of the ads and the tagline line of Lion Lager, “*Down a Lion... Feel Satisfied.*” Figure 27 contains the following text,

Lion Lager. Icy cold, rich, and gold. Glowing with all the wholesome satisfaction no other beer can match and a full round, robust taste that leaves a man with an honest feeling of pride.⁴⁴¹

The claim in the final line of the text invokes that drinking Lion Lager not only quenches thirst but also boost a man's self-worth and confidence, Lion Lager is thus an aspirational drink for men. Lions, used metaphorically in the advert are symbolic of power as kings of the jungle. In this regard the act of hunting a lion implied by “down a lion” provide a sense of achievement

⁴³⁶ A. Mager, ‘One Beer, One Goal, One Nation, One Soul’: South African Breweries, Heritage, Masculinity, and Nationalism 1960–1999’, *Past & Present* 188(1), 2005, pp.163-194.

⁴³⁷ Ibid.

⁴³⁸ B. Humberstone, ‘The ‘outdoor industry’ as social and educational phenomena: Gender and outdoor adventure/education’, *Journal of Adventure Education & Outdoor Learning* 1(1), 2002, pp.21-35 & M. Messner ‘Reflections on Communication and Sport: On Men and Masculinities’, *Communication & Sport*, 1(1-2), pp.113-124.

⁴³⁹ Anon, ‘The only game in town’, *Financial Mail*, 1990, pg. 79.

⁴⁴⁰ U. Schröder, ‘The interplay of verbal, vocal, and visual cues in the co-construction of the experience of alterity in exchange students’ talk’, *Journal of Pragmatics* 81(1), 2015, pp.21-35.

⁴⁴¹ Lion Lager (1979, Jan). *Down a Lion...feel satisfied*, [Advert] Scope, 1979, p.7.

and success encapsulated in “feel satisfied.” Invoking hunting ties, the advert to traditional notions and ideals of masculinity which see hunting as the ultimate expression of masculinity.⁴⁴² This in discourse, against the backdrop of the outdoors all serves to reinforce traditional notions of masculinity.

Beginning in the 1990s South African Breweries began changing its marketing strategy. This strategy involved diversifying its advertising through multiculturalism, coinciding with the legislative fall of apartheid. This strategy was attacked by some as portraying an artificial setting.⁴⁴³ Castle Lager, another SAB product, had already begun mixing races in its advertising in the 1980s. By the late 1990s Lion Lager would start to lose its primacy in the beer market, with Castle becoming the flagship product for SAB.⁴⁴⁴ One of the reasons for its fall in sales was the image associated with the beer, an image crafted through its advertising linked to sport. Lion Lager was the official sponsor of the Springboks from 1992 until 1996.

However, its association with rugby can be seen as early as the 1980s through its 1985 advert featuring South African-born Italian rugby union prop Tito Lupini. The advert is set during and after a rugby game. The ad focuses on Lupini throughout the game, showing him scoring a try to the jubilation of his teammates and the fans attending the game. The scene then changes showing Lupini and his teammates celebrating after the game while drinking cans of Lion Lager, with braai meat being served at the celebration.⁴⁴⁵ This becomes a recurring theme in SAB’s advertising post-apartheid, linking alcohol, sport, and beer. Lion Lager’s fall in sales is linked to its “white rugger bugger image.”⁴⁴⁶ This association was why it was pulled from sponsoring the Springboks to counter the negative public image. This change could not stop the fall of Lion Lager which completely stopped production in 2003.

Gill Moodie writing in the *Business Times*, says the following on the Lion Lager’s cessation of production,

Once marketed as accompaniment to braai, sunny skies, and Chevrolet with the tag “Down a Lion. Feel satisfied” Lion played on masculinity and achievement. It was the national rugby sponsor on the 1990s and also tried to target the Black market...Lion lost out and became views as old fashioned.⁴⁴⁷

⁴⁴² ⁴⁴² L.M. Bye, ‘Masculinity and rurality at play in stories about hunting’, *Norwegian Journal of Geography* 57(3), 2003, pp.145-153.

⁴⁴³ Anon, ‘The only game in town’, *Financial Mail*, 1990, pg. 79.

⁴⁴⁴ D. Robertson, ‘Castle under siege from black label’, *Business Times*, 2003, p.3.

⁴⁴⁵ Castle Lager, 1985, <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tavwNOaWSCw>> access: 8 November 2024.

⁴⁴⁶ Anon, ‘Guardians of SA beer brands look to youngsters to keep the foam frothing’, *Sunday Times*, 2022, p.8.

⁴⁴⁷ G. Moodie, ‘Down a Lion – it may be your last’, *Sunday Times*, 2003, p.5.

Another brand consultant agreed with this summation, writing that the trick was to change in changing times but to remain the same brand in essence. He continues arguing that the Lion brand proposition was the great and rugged outdoors, braaivleis, rugby, sunny skies, and Chevrolet proposition.⁴⁴⁸ He further notes that as society changed Lion got saddled with the baggage of old South Africa. Lion Lager's association to rugby and the discourse contained in its adverts which promoted a white masculine all led to its demise post-1994.

The formal end of apartheid necessitated a change in marketing strategy for SAB that worked to forge an inclusive national identity where race and class were obliterated.⁴⁴⁹ Mager writes that sporting arenas became places where multiracial nationalism was imaged as spectacle.⁴⁵⁰ Castle Lager, which had started portraying multiculturalism in its adverts in the 1980s and the principal sport sponsor in the country, was in a position to claim this spectacle for its brand identity. Castle Lager harvested this national sentiment culminating in the popular 1998 New York advert below which is captured in series of still images of the television advert.

Figure 29 begins with a single man pushing a covered cart through the streets of New York. He is identified as a South African by the small embroidered South African flag on his shirt. The man pushes the cart into an apartment building, all the way to the top of the building where a group of male friends are waiting for him. The man unveils the cart which contains many bottles of Castle Lager Beer. The men have set up camp chairs and a braai stand and buckets of ice for the beers. The advert then splits between different shots of the men reverentially drinking Castle Lager, with one particular shot of boerewors turned over on a grill alongside mealies, and Toto's 'Africa' playing in the background. Towards the end of the advert the men walk to the edge of the building where a South African flag can be seen flying in the background. The men place their Castle Lager beers over their hearts and then raise the bottles in the air in a salute. The voice over then states, "All over the world, a South African's home is his castle" (0:46). The end closes with the Castle Lager logo and the tagline 'The taste that's stood the test of time.'

⁴⁴⁸ A. Rice, 'How they downed Sa's famous Lion', *Sunday Times*, 2002 p.13.

⁴⁴⁹ A. Mager, 'One Beer, One Goal, One Nation, One Soul': South African Breweries, Heritage, Masculinity, and Nationalism 1960–1999', *Past & Present* 188(1), 2005, pp.163-194.

⁴⁵⁰ Ibid.

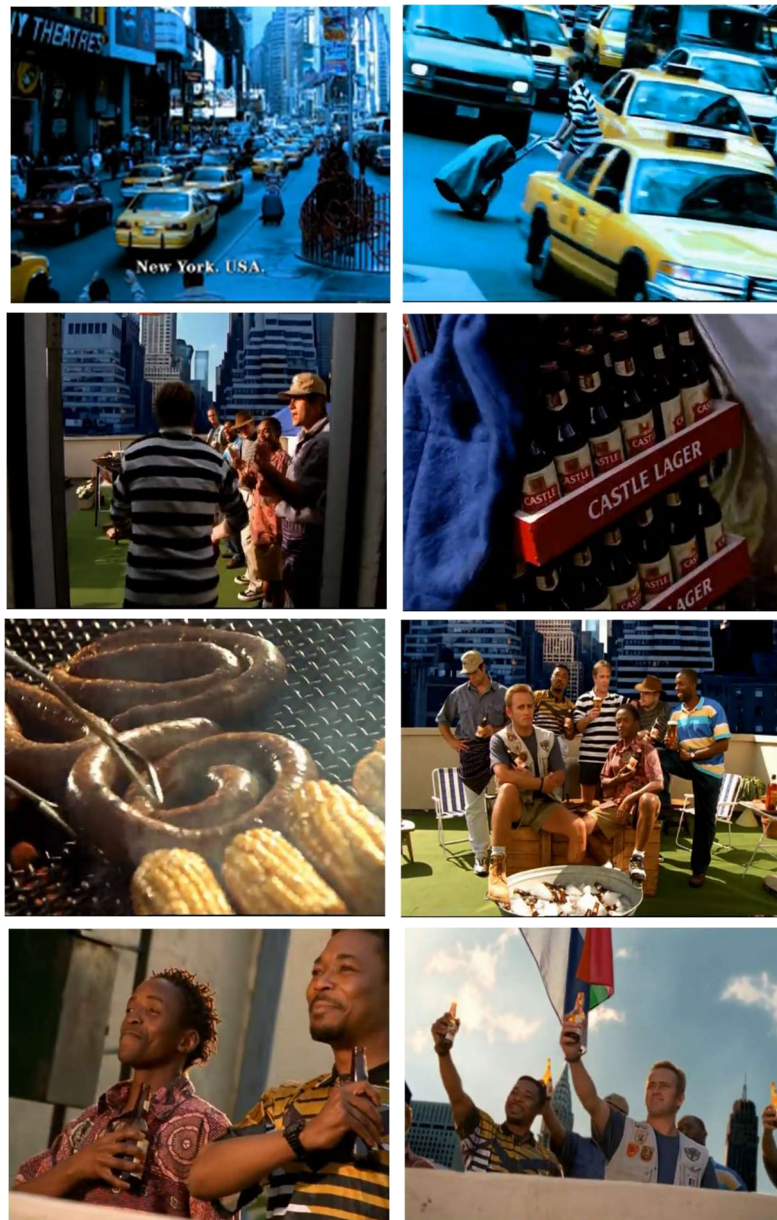


Figure 29: Castle Lager, 'New York' advert, 1998.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0x1K2UL0t0o>

Playing on similar themes of belonging, Figure 30 above, the 'Coming Home' advert of 2015 takes place at the fictional Chaf Pozzi, a famous Sowetan shisanyama. The beginning of the advert features a group of male friends enjoying a drink at the famous shisanyama, reminiscing about one of their friends who is not present at this gathering,

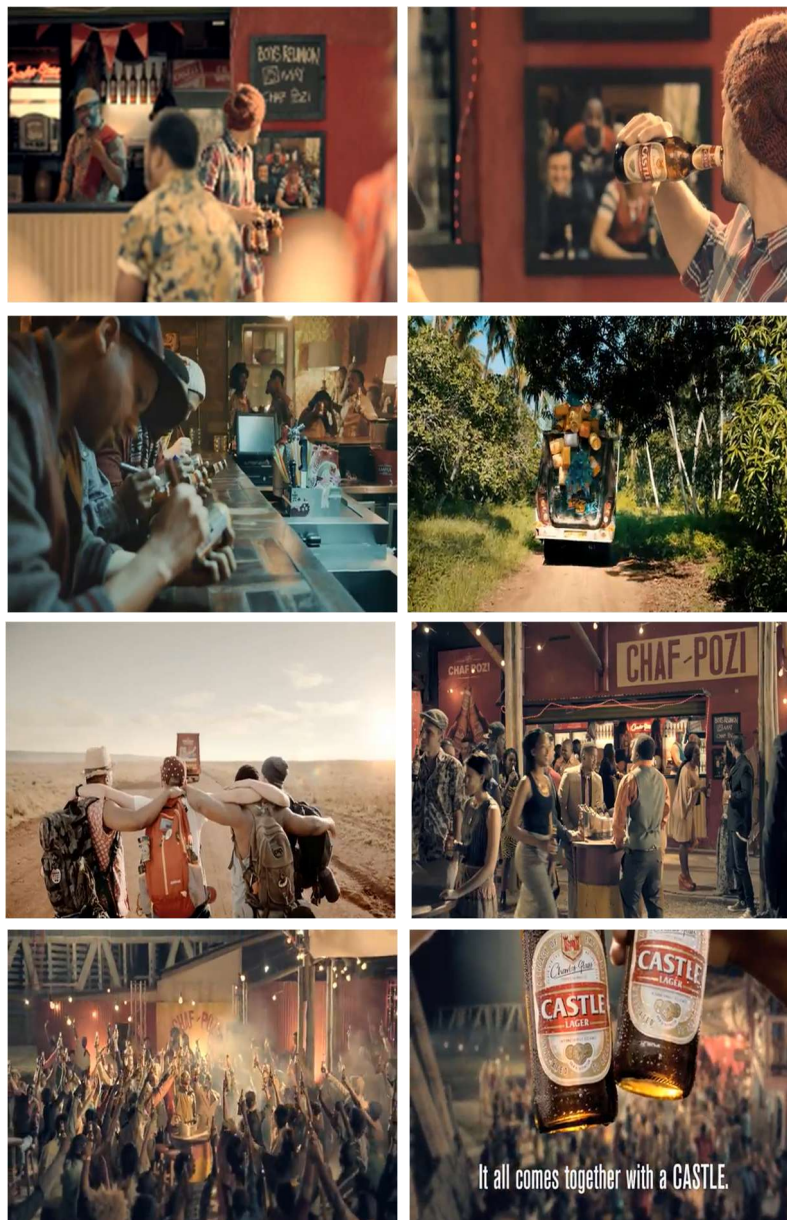


Figure 30: Castle Lager, ‘Coming Home’ advert, 2015.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=53jwEvDxb5E&rco=1>

“How great would it be to have Sia back at this reunion? (0:12). No chance. (0:15). He’s been traveling Africa for years. (0:16). He’s impossible to get a hold of. (0:18). We know what he drinks. (0:20). Let’s find him. (0:21). Yeah? (0:22) Yeah! (0:23).” On the wall of the famous shisanyama, written on a chalk board is “Boys reunion.” The advert centres around this group of friends trying to contact their missing friend. They travel across Africa using Castle Lager beer bottles to leave messages to their friend in the hopes that he will come across the messages when drinking Castle Lager. The advert shows the friends in multiple locations across the continent. Towards the end of the advertisement, we see the friends returned to South Africa at

Chaf Pozzi, drinking and wondering whether their plan worked when the long-lost friend walks in. The end of the advert shows the entire shisanyama toasting his return and while we don't see any direct images of braaing we see multiple points of smoke giving the impression of braai fires.

Figure and 29 plays on themes of patriotism, male bonding, and cultural nostalgia, while both Figures 29 and 30 focus on beer and braai as central symbols of South African identity, regardless of where South Africans find themselves. Both adverts construct a masculinised South African national identity that transcends geographical borders. Knowing what Siya drinks allows the male group, to find him. The implication here is that South African men drink Castle Lager and are distinct from men of other nations. The presence of the braai in both ads is presented as an important part of this male bonding experience, framing the braai as a core tradition for South African men which they carry in the case of Figure 30, even in foreign places like New York. Here the braai therefore serves as a symbol of continuity that links South African heritage to the masculine identities of the male friends despite being away from home.

The visual narrative of Figure 30 is grounded in a famous Sowetan shisanyama, a traditionally masculinized space by virtue of the act of braaing. This space serves as backdrop to male friendship. While the advert does not directly portray the braai, the presence of smoke at a historic and famous shisanyama thus symbolizes or references the act of braaing. The braai is therefore represented as a masculine ritual where men get together and share their cultural and national identity. Castle Lager in both ads is portrayed as a symbol of national pride and identity, evidenced by the opening lines of Figure 30, and is reinforced by the song playing in the background, 'I am coming home', tying the Castle to a sense of home. In similar reverence Figure 29 shows the group of friends gathered on the roof holding their beers reverently over their hearts before raising them in a salute. This act, resembling military rituals of allegiance and loyalty, expresses national pride and loyalty.

Castle Lager bottles as a vehicle to send messages across Africa positions Castle Lager as a symbol of male connection and communication, and by extension beer consumption is framed as a way for men to not only connect to their masculinity, and their heritage as South Africans but also as way may to represent masculine values and express loyalty, unity, and pride. This is emphasized by the taglines of both ads "All over the world a South African's home is his castle" and "It all comes together with Castle." The nostalgia and patriotism evoked by the adverts is expressed through a masculine lens. The adverts use the masculine symbols of the

braai and beer drinking as vehicle for the expression of the male groups' heritage, patriotism, nostalgia, and national identity. The absence of women in the adverts reinforces this. Featuring an all-male group participating in these rituals reinforces broader social norms where men are seen as the primary bearers of national identity and cultural traditions, further marginalising women from cultural heritage and identity.⁴⁵¹ South African men thus share a unique sense of community around specific cultural symbols like the beer and the braai, upholding a gendered vision of South African national identity and heritage.

Figures' 31 to 35 all present similar discursual traits of male friendship, national identity, and heritage. Where they differ from Figures 29 and 30 is the use of sport among the symbols of masculinity, with the Springboks featuring prominently. Sport is major driver of the beer marketplace.⁴⁵² Figure 31, below titled the Replay, first airing in 2001 is the first Castle Lager ad to feature the Springboks. It begins with a man inviting his friends to a remote location to socialize; the friends appear puzzled by the location, with one friend asking, "why here?" The get together continues with the group of friends grabbing beers, drinking, braaing and socialising. The initiator of the get together turns on a television that has been brought to the remote location; the final match of the 1995 Rugby World Cup between South Africa and New Zealand is being broadcast to the apparent joy of the group of friends. The ad then shows clips of the final, showing South African fans at the game enthusiastically supporting the Springboks.

⁴⁵¹ J. Nagel, 'Masculinity and nationalism: gender and sexuality in the making of nations', *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 40(2), 1998, pp. 242-269.

⁴⁵² L.A. Wenner & S.J. Jackson, *Sport, Beer, and Gender: Promotional Culture and Contemporary Social Life*, p.8.



Figure 31: Castle Lager, 'Replay' advert, 2001.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AtyuKyBnLVc>

The crowd is dotted with South African paraphernalia, including flags. The South African flag features prominently in the advert, with the flag shown in the very first shot of the advert, flying on a small flagpole at the remote location. The friends are then interrupted by a low flying Boeing, leading the group of friends to stand up and cheer at this nostalgic moment from the 1995 World Cup final where a Boeing with “Go Bokke” painted on the belly of the plane flew over Ellis Park stadium. The advert ends with an image of the ascending plane with “Bok supporter till the last drop” written across the screen. This Castle Lager advert contains the

same group of friends from the biggest braai in the world advert which will be addressed later in the chapter.



Figure 32: Castle Lager, ‘South Africa vs Ireland friendly’ advert 2011.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2N-T1Crtq3Y>

In the next advert, Figure 32, the same group of friends are headed to Ireland for an international friendly between the Springboks and Ireland. The premise of the advert taken with the transcript seems to be comparing the ‘supporter beers. The advert begins with the group of male friends boarding a plane to Ireland. The advert shows them on the plane then jumps to the first scene, with dialogue. We see the friends cramped into a taxi where they are greeted by an elderly Irish taxi driver with a “Welcome to Ireland boys!” The men, dressed in South African flags, scarves and Springbok paraphernalia respond with “In South Africa, we have our

favourite supporter beer, made with local barley, hops and golden sunshine.” The advert then shows them in a sunny, warm location, raising the local beers in the air in reverence.

Taken with the transcript this location is South Africa. The advert’s tone is then sharply contrasted by the change in imagery, Ireland, which is depicted as dark, dreary, and cold. The men are then shown looking at the hops at a brewery and tasting the beer in Ireland which disgusts them. Their trip is salvaged by the arrival of a crate of Castle Lager. The men are then shown standing around a braai stand socialising with Irish locals drinking Castle Lager. This scene changes the atmosphere of the video. The men are exasperated when it starts raining and their braai is thwarted by the weather.

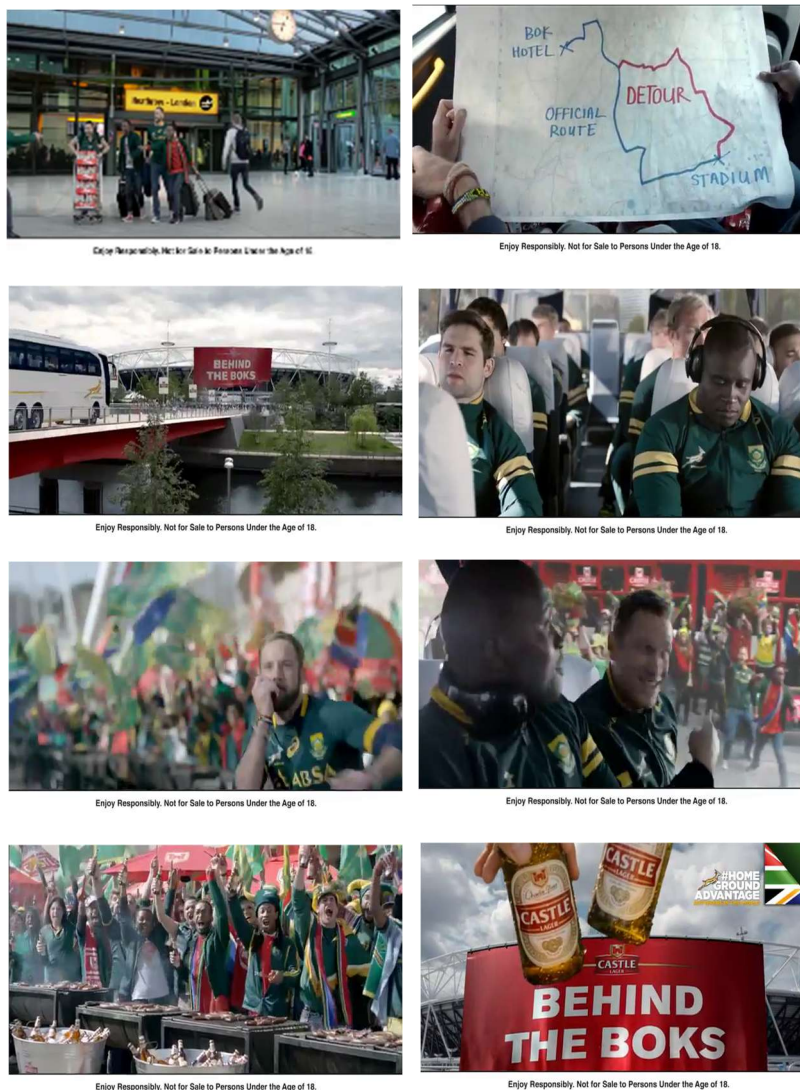


Figure 33: Castle Lager, ‘Behind the Boks’ 2015.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xPmtzRQLXfU&rc=1>

In Figure 33, the Castle Lager Behind the Boks ad is centred around supporting the Springbok Rugby 2015 World Cup campaign. There is a group of male friends who have flown over to England to support the Springboks at the 2015 Rugby World Cup. The advertisement shows them mobilizing South African supporters along the Springboks’ bus route to the stadium. The Springboks on the bus start noticing and pointing out South African supporters along the bus route. The advertisement culminates with more supporters lining the route. Along this route to the stadium are hundreds of braais manned predominately by men wearing Springbok jerseys and South African flag and scarves. There is a moment of patriotism where the Springboks put their hands on their hearts in appreciation of the supporters; this is mirrored by the supporters putting their hands, which happen to be clutching Castle Lager on their hearts.

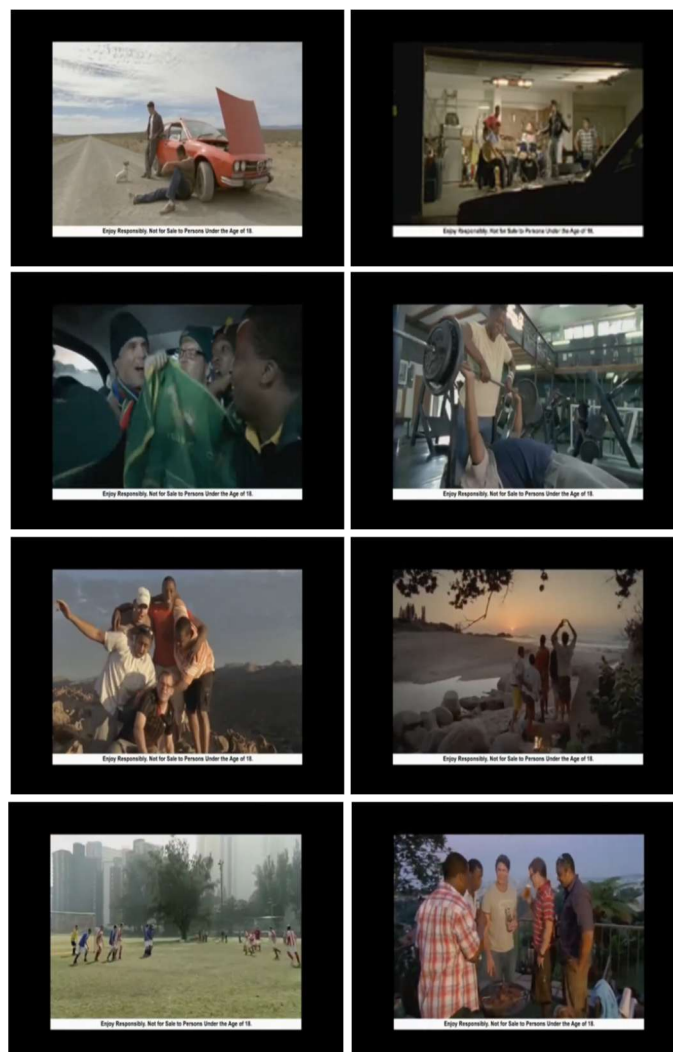


Figure 34: Castle Lager, ‘Brothers advert’ 2014.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AM7Rz-XEptw>

Figure 34, the ‘Brothers’ advert shows a group of friends throughout different stages in their lives. Sport as a theme features heavily in this advert with multiple shots showing the friends engaging in different athletic pursuits, football, hiking, working out in a gym and watching sports, particularly rugby, with one shot showing them crowding the back of a car dressed in Springbok jerseys, South African scarves and waving a Springboks flag, presumably going to watch the Springboks live. The advert shows an attempt at forming a band, a road trip, car troubles, a wedding, where the friends are watching rugby, the birth of child, a visit to a hospital – a member of the group has been injured - socialising outdoors and towards the end of the advert is a scene of the friends braaing with beers in hand. The advert constructs a narrative of lives bound together by shared experiences of the ordinary. The advert contains the following narration, Me, and these guys. (0:23). We go way back. (0:26). We always look out for each other. (0:28). We plan. (0:41). No matter what. (0:45). And I don't think we've ever missed a game. (0:59). We may not be related. (1:09). But we are brothers. (1:12).



Figure 35: Castle Lager, ‘Welcome Home Bru’ advert, 2010.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RGe3uWDVCnE>

Figure 35 is titled the Welcome Home Bru, This Castle Lager advert taps into the 2010 soccer World Cup. The advert begins with a man blowing a traditional vuvuzela. This heralds the arrival of hundreds of people in cars to an open field who are being directed by a group of men who are the organisers of this event. The cars are adorned with Springboks flags, South African flags, or colours. While more and more people arrive at the field the camera pans out and small clusters of smoke can be seen all over the field. As more people arrive the field turns lively and celebratory with men playing football, the arrival of a DJ, shots of potjiekos being cooked on the back of motorcycles. Potjiekos an Afrikaans term which translates as small pot food is a slow cooked stew that is very much a part of braai culture in South Africa. Like the braai, potjiekos is seen as a masculine endeavour and thus fits into the masculinised discourse on braai within these series of adverts.⁴⁵³ Boots of cars are being used as makeshift braai stands with full carcasses being slowly grilled. There is a big countdown clock and when the clock gets to 0 the hundreds of people light flares as a plane is flying past. The camera pans out and “welcome to our home bru” is written on the field alongside the phrase “it’s time to open our hearts and Castles to the world.’ What is most prominent throughout the adverts is the construction of sport as an element of national identity and a medium for the expression of patriotism which is particularly prominent in Figure 33 with the replication of a moment in the 1998 New York ad, showing men placing their beers on their hearts and saluting the Springboks. This can be seen in the framing of the 1995 Rugby World Cup and the 2010 FIFA World Cup as pivotal aspects of South African identity, exemplified by the ‘welcome to our home bru’ in Figure 35. Alcohol, and Castle Lager in particular, is positioned as not only a social connector, through braaing and the consumption of alcohol but also the tie between rugby fans and South African heritage.

This can be seen in some of the taglines, for example, “A Bok supporter till the last drop” and “Behind the boks.” In addition, Castle Lager is framed as an essential component in all these moments of national pride, elevating the place of alcohol to that of cultural agent capable of bridging gaps, enhancing identity, heritage and patriotism as well enhancing social rituals like that of watching sport or braaing. In this regard, the braai has deep symbolism with all the narratives in the adverts, transforming the braai from a cooking practice to cultural tradition aligned to the discourses of identity and heritage. Visually the central elements of this set of adverts, national identity, and patriotism, encapsulated by the presence of the South African

⁴⁵³G. Gaylard. ‘The death of the subject? Subjectivity in post-apartheid literature’, *Scrutiny*11(2), 2006, p. 69.

flag within these ads, sociability through consumption of alcohol, engagement in sports and braaing are masculinised. Women are marginalised in these ads not just by their absence but also by the foregrounding of male experiences of leisure, sport, braaing and alcohol consumption. There is not a single image which prominently features women engaged in drinking beer or braaing or taking the lead in supporting the national teams featured in these ads. These elements are already known to transmit masculinised discourses. Castle has integrated these elements to provide a masculine landscape throughout to sell their beers. The frequency with which rugby features in these ads suggest a potential heritagisation of the Springboks particularly in light of the cultural and political spectacle of the 1995 Rugby World Cup, seen as a transformative moment in South Africa's race relations and a significant moment of reconciliation post-apartheid. This would be in line with Castle Lager's early positioning as a multicultural product and the maximisation of its positioning post-1994.



Figure 36: Castle Lager, 'Our Beer Our Braai' 2011.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=agXNinM7-9o>

Castle Lager’s 2011’s, “Biggest Braai in the World” (Figure 36) and 2022’s, “It’s Braai o’clock” (Figure 37) feature the braai most prominently. The premise of Figure 36 is encapsulated in the title and depicts a group of male friends sitting around drinking beer, when one of them says “*boys let’s have the biggest braai in the world*”. These friends embark on a promotional tour for this event using various means to campaign. Through this campaign the ad show images of small groups in different settings braaing in solidarity with the campaign. This culminates in the biggest braai in the world, showing thousands of people gathered to watch an enormous circular fire being lit. The ad shows groups of men standing braaing, before closing with the voice-over, “*our beer our braai, it all comes together with a Castle.*”

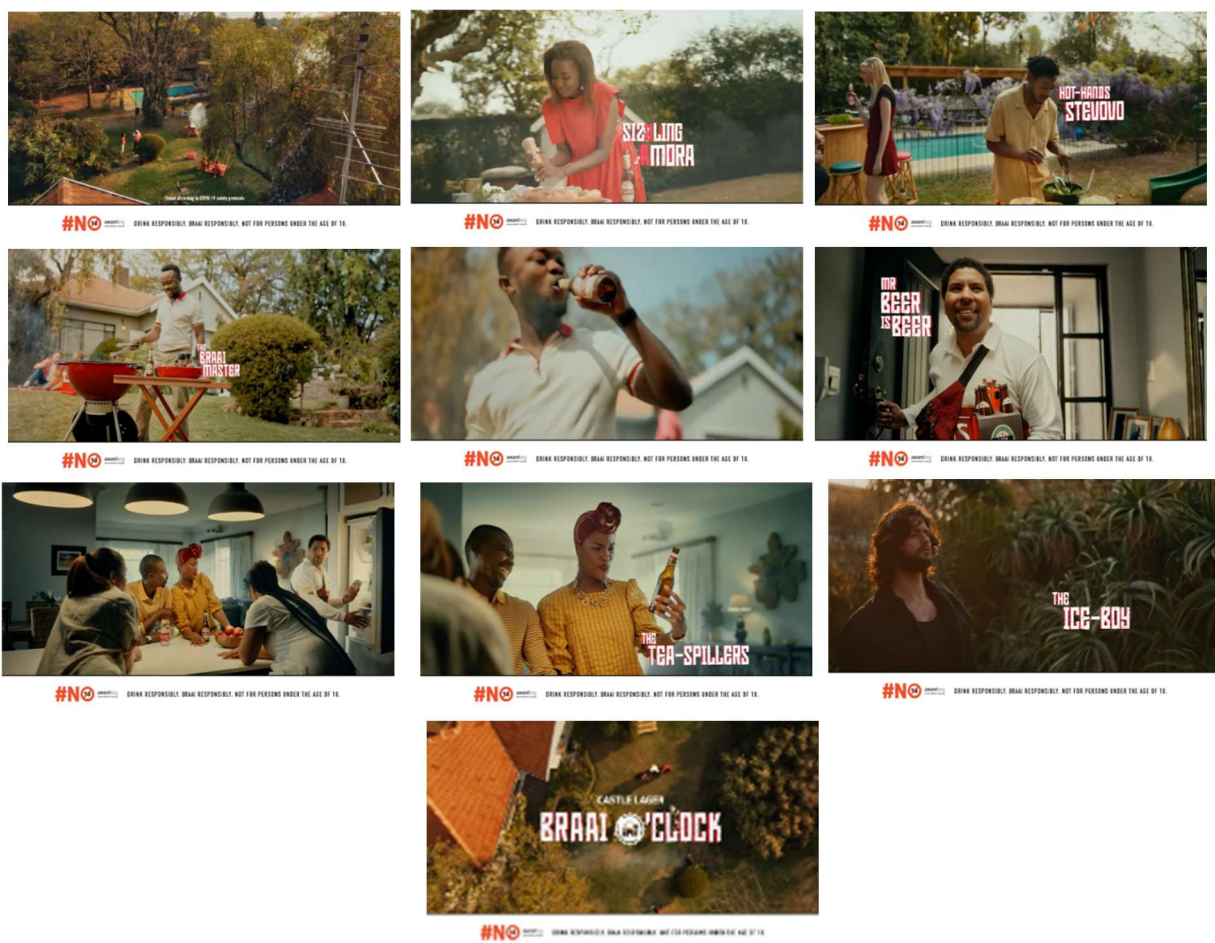


Figure 37: Castle Lager, ‘Braai o’clock’ advert, 2022. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_yp5QoH5AsQ

Figure 37 depicts a summer get together beginning with an overhead shot of a backyard with a crystal-clear pool and subtle hints of smoke rising into the air. The camera pans in and focuses on a braai stand, billowing smoke in the back yard. The narration to the ad starts with, Cheers

to great South African braais and to the braaimasters. (0:00). The camera then pans to a woman, titled, 'Sizzling Samora' who is seasoning some kind of side dish. The camera next pans to 'Hot hands Stevovo,' who is tossing a salad. The narration continues, 'those who time their flips to castle sips and when the last drop is done, so's the meat.' (0:04). At this the ad introduces a man, 'The Braai master,' flipping chicken on the braai stand, taking a sip of Castle Lager. The scene then changes and walking through a door is 'Mr Beer is Beer' holding a six-pack of 3 Star, a fictional beer brand. His arrival is greeted with, 'Cheers to Mr Beer is Beer, he knows what he's drinking and it's not what he brought.' (0:09). Mr Beer is Beer is then shown walking into a kitchen and opening and pulling out a Castle Lager can. Here he is met by a group of four people standing around the kitchen island in conversation, three women and a man, 'The Tea Spillers.' On the island table is a can and a bottle of Castle Lager beer, 'The Tea Spillers' look at Mr Beer is Beer in contempt, he promptly puts back the beer and closes the fridge walking out of the kitchen. The camera then pans to a man, 'Johan Snow,' and the voice-over intones, 'Cheers to Johan Snow, who can sense just when the castles are cold enough.' (0:18). 'Johan Snow' (a play on the *Game of Thrones* character Jon Snow) is shown pulling a beer out of a cooler box, passing it over to 'Mr Beer is Beer.' When fire, friends, and Castle meet, it's braai o'clock. (0:23). The ad ends with, 'So braai our beloved country, because Braai Time is Castle Time.' (0:26).

Central to the narrative of both these ads is the braai as heritage discourse, evident in the taglines of, 'our beer our braai,' 'it all comes together with a Castle' and 'So braai our beloved country, because Braai Time is Castle Time'. These taglines link heritage, love of country and love of braai to Castle Lager, by foregrounding the consumption of alcohol within braai experiences. Visually, the way the ads frame the experiences of braaing, place women on the periphery of this experience and reinforces the positioning of women in discourses on the braai. Figure 15 however, challenges traditional notions of masculinised braai with 'Hot hand Stevovo' who subverts the established gender norms around the braai, with the ad showing him preparing salads traditionally imagined as women's domain. Despite the subversiveness in the ad, the ad overall reinforces masculinised representation of the braai, through the male Braai Master, especially in the context of the title of Sizzling Samora. The overt of sexualisation of Sizzling Samora diminishes the other subversive elements in the ad which include the addition of a man in a group of three women titled 'Tea Spillers' located in the kitchen.

Further attesting to the subversive nature of these is the women are not preparing side dishes in the kitchen. In both ads women are excluded from the primary activity of braaing, the lack of any substantial female presence in the ‘Our beer Our braai’ and the tagline implies a strong association between alcohol consumption, braaing and male bonding suggesting that these elements are integral to a masculine sociability. As has been written earlier in the chapter beer drinking is associated with masculinity with its marketing traditionally targeted at men. The above reinforces this association linking both beer drinking and braaing with masculinity thus entrenching a barrier against women’s participation in both activities. With Figure 15, the phrase “those who time their flips to castle sips and when the last drop is done so’s the meat” ties beer directly to braaing. This phrase infuses a rhythm to the act of braaing where beer is consumed coordinated with the process of braaing. The endings of both ads reinforce Castle Lager’s centrality to the tradition of braaing, making it inseparable from South African heritage. By portraying the braai as tied to the collective identity of the country and centring Castle Lager to the braai the adverts link the brand to a masculinised national identity.

Conclusion

Mager argues that the 1998 New York ad, Figure 29 allowed for the reinstatement of the braai as national icon.⁴⁵⁴ In the late 1970s consumers had begun to tire of the limited repertoire and formulaic renditions of white male outdoor social interaction, renditions which included the braai and is captured in the Lion Lager adverts between 1976 and 1979. As a result, the braai was promptly sidelined in beer advertising by SAB. Analysis of Castle Lager adverts beginning with its first television advert reveals that the braai has been tied to a South African national identity predating the braai as heritage discourse in the mid-2000s. As seen in the sources used in this chapter, the braai was used to symbolise an aspirational white masculinity. Mager argues that in controlling the spatiality of the advertising imagination, a dominant apartheid mindset shaped possible configurations of masculinities in beer advertisements.⁴⁵⁵ While SAB has moved away from these configurations beginning with some of its brands in the 1980s, what has not changed post-apartheid is the braai as embodying a masculinised national identity. This masculinised national identity is more inclusive post-1994 evidenced by some of the Castle Lagers which are more multiracially and multiculturally constituted. One of the reasons that

⁴⁵⁴ Mager, A., 2005. ‘One Beer, One Goal, One Nation, One Soul’: South African Breweries, Heritage, Masculinity, and Nationalism 1960–1999’. *Past & Present*, 188(1), pp.163-194.

⁴⁵⁵ A. Mager, ‘One Beer, one Goal, One Nation, One Soul’: South African Breweries, Heritage, Masculinity, and Nationalism 1960–1999’, *Past & Present* 188(1), 2005, pp.163-194.

this works so well is the construction of masculine heritage that resonates with both black and white men.

This chapter has traced the origins of the braai as heritage discourse to the mid-2000s. Through discourse analysis, the chapter has shown the way the braai has been masculinised within newspaper coverage, advertising, and discourses around heritage. With regard to the braai, the chapter has shown that the braai has been tied to a sense of national identity far longer than the introduction of the braai as heritage discourse. Central to this construction of the braai as a part of South African national identity were commercial interests which fuelled consumption by drafting the braai into an aspirational South African symbology of white, masculine life, leisure, and identity. Advertising was crucial to promoting this white aspirational masculinity through the use of referential symbols of masculinity including, sport, alcohol, the outdoors, and the braai. The advent of democracy in South Africa saw the diminishing of discourses which promoted this kind of masculinity, with corporate South Africa embracing multiculturalism post-1994. This, however, has been replaced by a more inclusive form of aspirational masculinity informed by consumption and symbols of masculinity like the braai. Discourse post-1994 continues to masculinise the braai albeit in much more encompassing way. However, with the braai mainstreaming as heritage, its continued masculinisation entrenches the idea of men as heirs of national identity and heritage.

Chapter Six: Coals and Embers – some concluding remarks

Food is not benign. Food embodies social and cultural meanings; it is also gendered as well as being socially stratified. At its most basic, food is necessary sustenance both physiologically and psycho-socially. As a food item and event, the braai also is not benign, and likewise embodies social and cultural meanings. Cooking on coals or open fire is a universal practice, whether known as the braai in South Africa or the Argentinian asado, the American barbecue, or the Australian barbie. This universal cooking practice has a long and storied history. Its origins lie at the centre of the human story of evolution, the evidence of which coincidentally can be found in South Africa, where this practice has for almost a century played a crucial role in shaping identities and discourses of heritage.

In southern Africa, the antecedents of the contemporary braai method can be traced to the first Khoi roasting method, the vlambraai. However, the heat from the vlambraai method would quickly sear meat without fully cooking it through. This would have been much harder to chew as raw meat is generally much tougher than cooked meat. The modern braai is a combination of grilling meat over hot coals using some type of iron griddle. This reduces the heat and allows for the meat to be more thoroughly cooked, making it tender enough to chew. This way of cooking meat over a flame has become intertwined with South African culture and heritage and has gathered social, cultural and leisure connotations over the years. It is clear that the braai, in its simplest definition without the cultural, social, and even nationalistic associations accrued over the years, has its origins in the development of humankind, and the transformative moment where the earliest representatives of humankind first decided to cook the animals that they had hunted. The braai has since evolved from a rudimentary wood fire for ‘chops and wors’ into a whole culture of state-of-the-art equipment, recipe books, gadgets, and gizmos.

Transcending its biological function, food embedded with social and cultural values serves as a material means through which to convey the more abstract significance of social systems and cultural values. Through this understanding, this research has traced the emergence of the social significance of the braai and the construction of a public discourse in the 1930s to its inclusion in a post-1994 reconstruction of South African heritage. This discourse took this universal practice, practised, by humans for millennia and for thousands of years by the first inhabitants

of Southern Africa, the Khoisan as well as other African groups, and through invented traditions embedded the practice with an Afrikaner identity.

Owing to the political, social, and cultural situation of the period, the mobilisation of an Afrikaner consciousness, for the purposes of nationalism, the braai was linked to Afrikaner history rooted in the Great Trek, establishing continuity with a suitable historic past. Discourses that claimed that Voortrekkers cooked meat over open fires and coals along the trek route constructed a narrative that Afrikanerised the braai which subsequently became closely intertwined with ethnic nationalism and group identity. The nationalisation of the braai was mediated through Afrikaner sociality from the 1930s onwards, during celebrations of important events particularly, the Great Trek centenary celebrations in 1938, which was a significant milestone in the growth and consolidation of Afrikaner nationalism. The braai became a site of political engagement and propaganda in the political machinations of the period with the braaivleisaand used as political platform for campaigns as well to campaign against formation such as the Ossewa Brandwag, labelled as a subversive force.

As discussed in Chapter Two, evidence suggests the use of the braaivleisaand in help-mekaar discourse, a discourse prominent in the PACT Government's attempt to address the politically charged, poor white problem of urbanised and largely unskilled Afrikaners. The sheer popularity of the braaivleisaand rooted in the nationalistic fervour of the period made the braai a staple of fundraising not only to provide financing for the Great Trek Centenary in 1938 but also for various other charitable causes – churches and schools, including the Christmas Stamp Fund. This all contributed to a braai discourse that emphasised community as well as cultural and racial solidarity. Discourse around the braai would continue to be linked to a white, largely Afrikaner South Africanism continuing into the 1940s and beyond.

The Federasie van Afrikaanse Kultuurvereniginge (FAK) established the Voortrekker Movement to oversee the 1938 Trek centenary. An important element of the centenary celebrations was fundraising and braaiaande were one of the most popular events. These occasions witnessed the deliberate recall of a mythologised, heroic Afrikaner past centred around the Great Trek. Afrikaners, through their Trek ancestors, not only conquered new frontiers but also the African groups who inhabited these 'frontiers.' While on Trek, living off the land primarily through hunting and cooking the hunted animal flesh over flames or coals, was routine, or so it was framed during this period. A *Rand Daily Mail* article from September 1933, discussed in Chapter Two, describes a typical braaivleisaand, framed as a novel

entertainment form, replete with attendees dressed in Voortrekker costumes, ox wagons and the induction of young Afrikaners into this mythologised past. The ritualistic enactment of the Great Trek was central to the invention of new traditions, including the Afrikanerisation of the braai as an important component of the Trek.

Along with braai's social, cultural, and political ontology of Afrikaner nationalism, this research has also argued for the masculinisation of the braai. This embodiment of masculinity is fuelled by historical conceptions, discourses, and symbols of masculinity, mainly the outdoors and meat consumption. As a place, the outdoors is linked to masculinity, historically and culturally through narratives that promote the masculine hero and a celebration of an idealised version of masculinity and cultural rituals that locate the outdoors as sites of performed masculinity. One of the most salient instances in which the outdoors features as a site for the performance of masculinity and as witness to a rite of passage from boyhood to manhood is the Xhosa initiation ceremony. Historically, Baden Powell's establishment of the Boy Scouts arguably entrenched the outdoors as a distinctly masculine space. Scouting and the Boy Scouts thus became critical to the construction of masculinity, with an emphasis on survival through strength and endurance. Other masculine-coded practices of leisure including hunting and camping, essential elements of scouting also, which both offer opportunities to craft a rugged masculinity that emphasises physical strength, prowess, and the domination of nature by man.

Both within the South African context and globally, hunting was seen as an important means of food provision. As Chapter Two has shown, the expansion and encroachment of the early Afrikaners, most notably in the Great Trek, and survival on trek in the pursuit of frontier expansion, depended on being able to hunt animals for food, which was cooked on open fires or coals. This history and histories of numerous frontier and settler societies like South Africa are frequently narrativised as 'man's conquest of nature,' including wildlife which was an important source of food. In this regard the outdoors plays a crucial role as a site that constructs and reinforces masculinity through the act of braaing. As an extraordinary meal, distinct from the everyday cooking traditionally seen as the responsibility of women, men engage in the braai as leisure, cooking meals that do not disrupt the traditional boundaries of gender. Because the braai takes place in the outdoors, whether in gardens or more rugged terrain, the outdoors is thus crucial to prevent a blurring of engendered roles of food preparation, where the masculinity of men who cross boundaries into women's work is not diminished.

Adding to the embodied masculinity of the braai is meat consumption, through its symbolism associated with virility and male strength. Meat has historically been designated a male food. Animal flesh, and a man-eating meat is an exemplar of maleness. Meat is a foundational element of the braai and meat-eating symbolises male strength and virility. As seen in Chapter Three, the absence of meat in a braai, diminishes a man. In this conception of masculinity, a vegetarian man is a contradiction in terms. Though some concessions have been made in recent years for the inclusion of non-meat elements to the braai, these remain exceptions to the general dominance of meat.

The braai's associations with Afrikaner nationalism and identity would change in post-apartheid South Africa, infusing the braai with rainbowism, particularly with the emergence of the braai as heritage discourse in the mid-2000s. This rainbowism is encapsulated by a shift in advertising and media reporting which shifted public discourse away from an Afrikanerised braai to the braai increasingly being framed as a common South African heritage accessible to all South Africans. This is illustrated by the efforts of people like Jan Braai, to conflate and rename Heritage Day as Braai Day. While the method of cooking meat over flames is present throughout out the world, carrying cultural significance across many parts of the world most notably and discussed in the research, Argentina, Australia and America where this method is intertwined with notions of national and in the case of the American South regional identity, the braai in South Africa, more than just representing national identity is actively promoted as a part of nation-building and reconciliation efforts post-apartheid. However, heritagisation of the braai began long before this period with the discourses constructing the braai as a part of South African national identity as far back 1970s, encapsulated by the Chevrolet advert of 1974, which used among others, the braai and rugby as symbols of South African national identity. The advert uses these symbols in a narrative that projects a carefree and aspirational society, which stands in direct contrast to the lived experiences of all non-white South Africans during this period. Commercial interests, seizing on discourses that framed the braai as part of a South African national identity drafted the braai into an aspirational South African symbology of white, masculine life, leisure, and identity fuelling consumption along these lines.

Advertising was crucial to promoting this white aspirational masculinity through the use of referential symbols of masculinity including, sport, alcohol, leisure, and the braai, and its attendant elements. These referential symbols worked to amplify the masculinity of the braai in pre-1994 public discourses around the braai. As argued in Chapter Four, representations of

sport and leisure, tied to the braai, have been crucial in shaping a masculinised discourse of the braai. Leisure practices, whether for the sake of leisure and sociability or as an organised sport spectatorship event, have frequently been organised around a braai. The braai in these instances is heavily gendered and masculinised with both advertising as well as lifestyle journalism either relegating women to the margins or rendering them completely invisible. Through discourse analysis of both language and the visual representation, Chapter Four traced the evolution of this gendered and masculinised braai discourse from the 1970s through to more recent years.

Changes to society post-1994 saw a diminishing of the use of the braai in an aspirational South African symbology of white, masculine life, leisure, and identity, with corporate South Africa embracing multiculturalism post-1994. However, despite efforts to repurpose the braai into a commonly shared pastime, de-historicising and erasing the braai's links to Afrikaner nationalism as well as removing associations to its white symbology of the 1970s, the braai remains a highly gendered activity. South African Breweries, as the dominant conglomerate in the South African alcohol industry, has been at the forefront of this embrace of multiculturalism. Advertisements for Lion Lager and later, Castle Lager, show significant change over time, with the 1970s Lion Lager adverts leaning heavily into white masculinity and leisure while the later adverts of Castle Lager tap into the rainbow nation discourse. In both instances, the braai as a masculine activity, along with beer consumption, is a central motif. The later Castle adverts also link beer and braai to aspirations of national self-hood, patriotism, and national belonging. These adverts, through these elements, arguably construct a highly masculinised national identity.

Visual and textual analysis of sources reveal how media, in particular advertising and popular journalism, reinforce popular perceptions of the braai, especially around the gendered division of labour surrounding the braai. This gendered division of labour places men at the braai and women in the kitchen preparing accompanying food, salads, breads etc. These gendered roles remain largely in place in discourse as can be seen in sources analysed in Chapter Four and Five. While women feature prominently in Chapter Four, their depictions in the adverts discussed largely reinforce stereotypical perceptions of the braai. The adverts also primarily frame the braai as a male domain, with women portrayed as sojourners to the braai experience, with some adverts completely rendering women invisible and irrelevant, despite some marginal attempts to dislocate this gendered discourse. Analysis of sources in Chapter Five from 1976

to 2021 shows that this trend continues, with few critical discourses, meaning that the stereotypical perception of the gendered roles of the braai remain largely unchanged.

The analysis also shows that discourses related to the many referential symbols of masculinity such as sport, leisure, alcohol continue a masculinised discourse of the braai. South African Breweries, through its flagship product Castle Lager, taking on the mantle of multiculturalism post-1994 has created a masculinised landscape in which alcohol serves as the ultimate agent of sociability within South Africa, but a heavily masculinised sociability.

Within public discourse Castle Lager positions itself as not only a heritage brand, but a brand committed to preserving heritage as can be seen in the 2011 'Our beer Our braai' advert. Within the masculinised landscape of alcohol consumption created by Castle Lager, the braai is framed as a national icon and patriotic pastime. It is invoked to reinforce alcohol's masculinised sociability, creating a masculinised and multicultural heritage-alcohol-braai nexus, informed by national identity and patriotism as seen in the analysis of some of Castle Lager's adverts especially the 'New York,' 'Replay' and 'Behind the Boks' adverts.

Discourses in these adverts marginalise women and, in the process, masculinise national identity and heritage. While the braai's yoke of nationalism and white leisure has been shed in discourses post-apartheid, it continues to be masculinised particularly in the heritage-alcohol-braai nexus, creating, and privileging masculinised national identities, both white and non-white. This suggests that the braai is a place, and an event, where both white and non-white masculinities meet in convivial celebration of national belonging. Apartheid shaped the possible configurations of masculinity in beer adverts, creating discourses in advertising that disseminated an aspirational white masculinity. In this regard white masculinities were reaffirmed and reinforced in public discourse to the disadvantage of black masculinities. Black masculinities are now recast in the same aspirational masculinity fuelled by consumption, only diverging on race in advertising discourse, while white masculinities are reaffirmed and reinforced in the reproduction of the braai in discourses of aspirational masculinity with all its attendant symbology pre-1994. Through the use of the braai as a symbol of masculinity in heritage discourses, the braai as heritage becomes the inheritance of men.

This research has looked at how the gendered nature of the braai is reflected in public discourse using discourse analysis applied to both textual and visual sources. This is done through the understanding that food is communication, representing ethnicity, nationality, region, class,

age, sexuality, culture, and gender. In this regard the language used to speak about the braai carries significant cultural and social implications. Language is not just a collection of words and rules but is a dynamic medium of interaction. This means that studying discourses in images, texts, cultural productions, and conversations reveals how language functions in social practice.

The research argues that braai is ontologically masculine through an analysis of the elements that make up the braai, the outdoors, leisure, and meat consumption which make the braai a gendered leisure activity. Situating the braai in post-apartheid efforts at nation building, the research traces the braai as heritage discourse and looks at the way this discourse has reestablished the braai as cultural icon and national heritage. In this regard, the research looks at the origins and socio-cultural emergence of the braai to trace its socio-cultural significance in South Africa. Given this socio-cultural significance, the braai lends itself to be used in post-apartheid South Africa as a symbol of national cohesion. Looking at and examining discourses on heritage and the braai, the research shows how the braai's continued masculinisation within heritage post-apartheid has reconstructed, reproduced, and reaffirmed masculinised national identities. The research has also shown how the divisive origins of the braai impact social-cohesion evidenced by the tension between Heritage Day and Braai Day. This impacts post-apartheid nation-building and social cohesion with women marginalised in the reproduced conceptualisation of the braai as heritage.

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