

# INTRODUCTION TO MASCULINITIES AND THE WORK OF SONKE GENDER JUSTICE NETWORK

10 APRIL 2011  
WESSEL VAN DEN BERG

- Day 1 - Some concepts of masculinities
- Day 2 - The work of Sonke

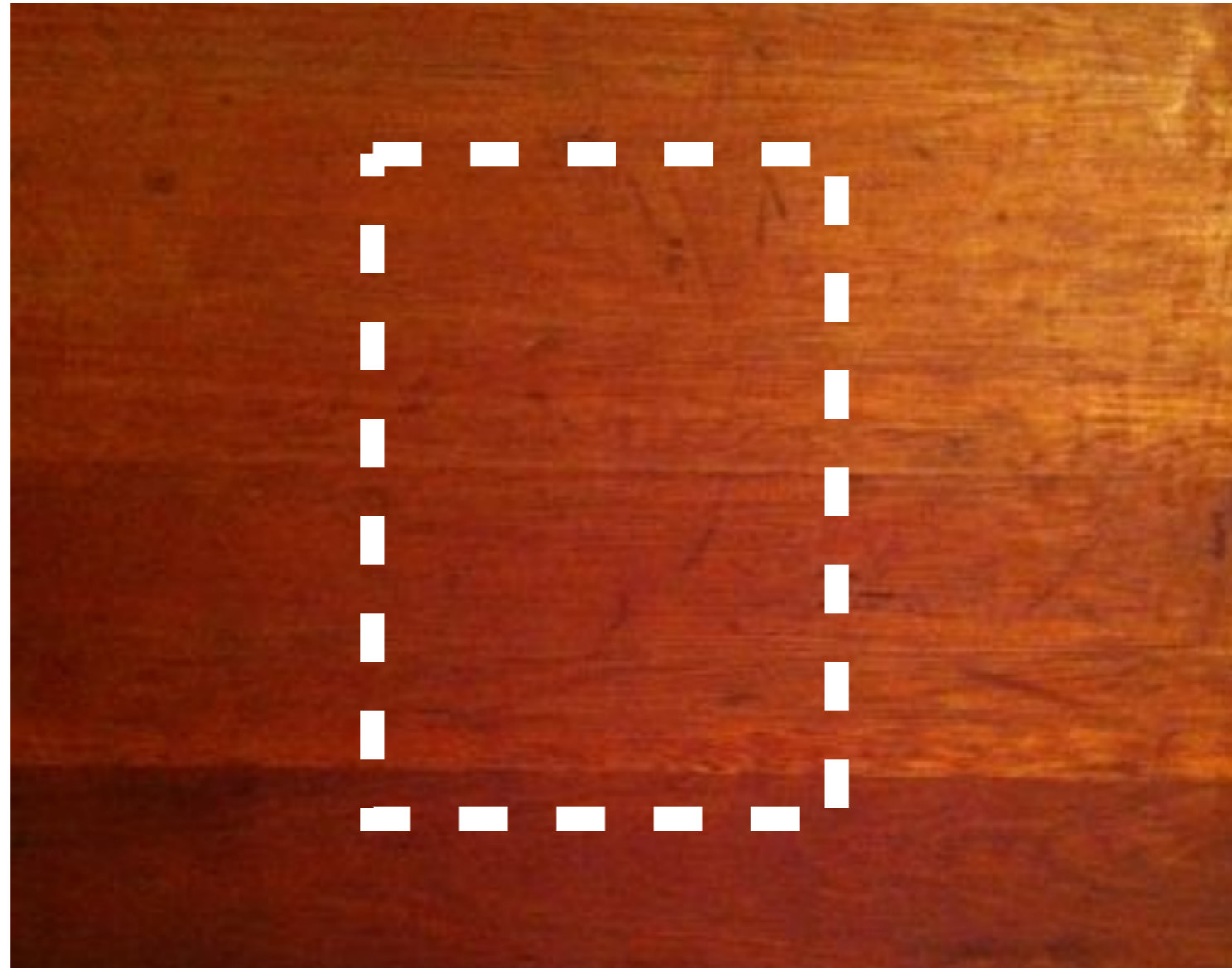
# Blue Stockings Books



**Is it appropriate for  
men to join the feminist  
movement?**

Is it appropriate for  
**men** to join the feminist  
movement?

ACT LIKE A MAN



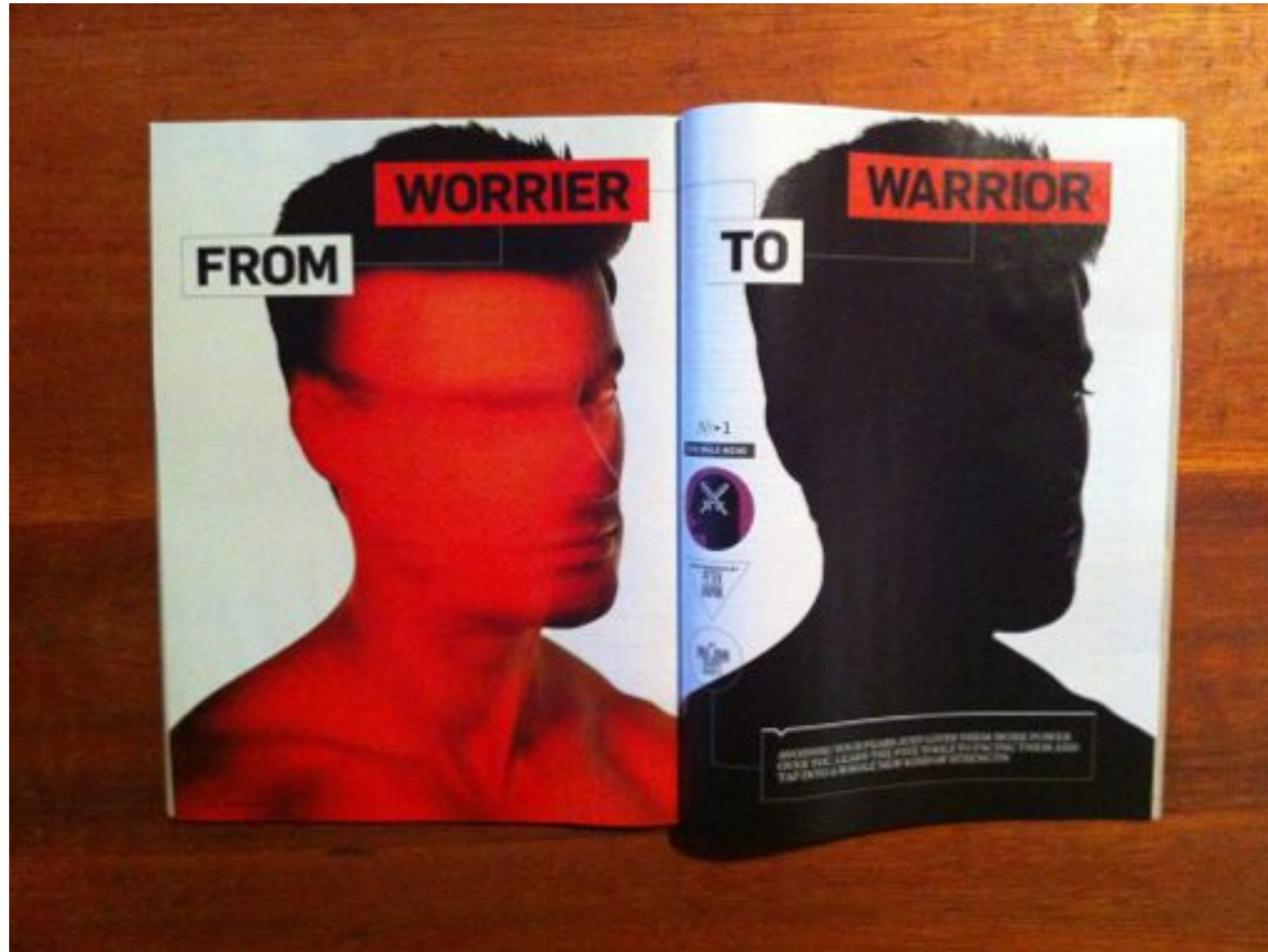
Where does the box come from?



Sonke Gender  
Justice Network  
HIV/AIDS, Gender Equality, Human Rights



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# Robert Bly and the 'Men's Rights Movement' (*Ratele, 2008*)



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‘...you cannot go around with half - baked, ahistorical, dangerous ideas about men, women and children whose intention is simply to blame others ... for whatever pain or sense of powerlessness men are experiencing.’  
*(Ratele, 2008: 27)*



Is it **appropriate** for  
men to join the feminist  
movement?



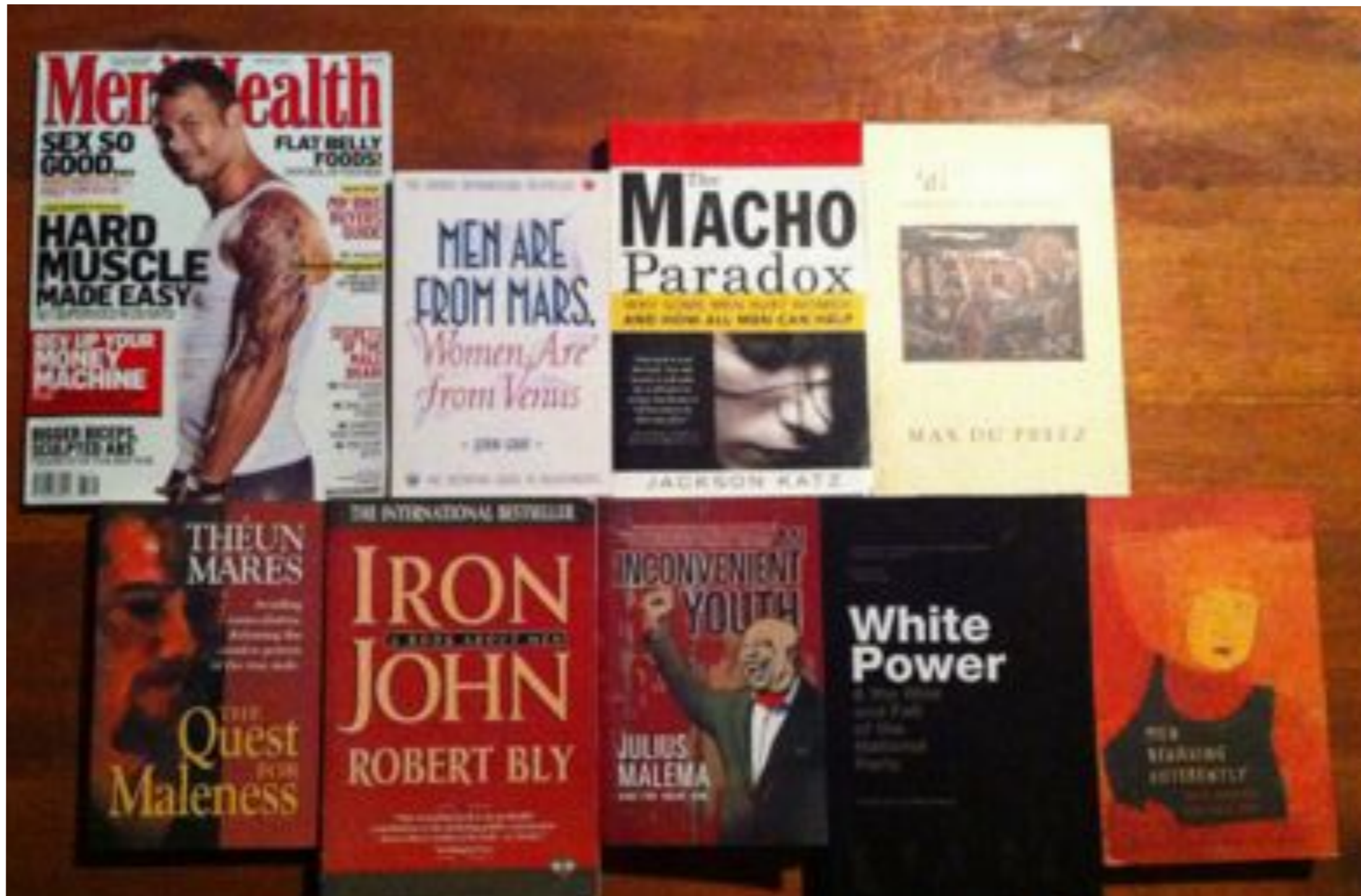
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## The Grand Narrative Trap

or

**My Masculinity is ALWAYS better than  
your Masculinity**



masculinities

Connell (2005) Judith Butler (1990)

**MASCULINITIES ARE  
CONTINGENT  
CONNECTED  
CONTEXTUAL**



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# POWER

OUTER

GENDER

ECONOMIC

CULTURAL

POWER

POLITICAL

INNER

EMOTIONAL

PHYSICAL

**Is it appropriate for  
men to join the feminist  
movement?**

**This is contingent on  
how masculinities are  
determined, and in  
which contexts by who.  
or...**

Depends on  
who  
and where.

*“...any investigation of changing masculinities can and should, conceptually and practically, contribute to promoting women’s rights and altering gender relations in society.*

*...‘engendering’ men does not necessarily contradict the struggles for gender equity...”*

*-Godwin Murungu-*



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*“...guard against the possibility of them (men) subverting the struggle by seeking to take leadership to dominate the struggle...”*  
*-Godwin Murungu-*



‘the male is not the other, but part of the human same’

‘African women’s willingness and readiness to negotiate with and around men...is quite pervasive’

Obioma Nnaemeka



**Step 1: a fish did not invent water**



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## Step 2: One Man Can...



## Step 3: The Spectrum of Change

# Some Spectrum levels:

# Individual and Family Relationships

2 out of 5  
South African  
children live  
with their  
mother only.  
  
(SAIRR, 2011)



# Service Providers

Annals of Internal Medicine

| ORIGINAL RESEARCH

## Life Expectancy of Persons Receiving Combination Antiretroviral Therapy in Low-Income Countries: A Cohort Analysis From Uganda

Edward J. Mills, PhD, MSc, LL.M.; Celestin Bakanda, MSc; Josephine Birungi, MBChB; Keith Chan, MSc; Nathan Ford, PhD, MPH; Curtis L. Cooper, MD, MSc; Jean B. Nachega, MD, PhD; Mark Dybul, MD; and Robert S. Hogg, PhD, MA

“After adjustment for loss to follow-up, crude mortality rates (deaths per 1000 person-years) ranged from 26.9 (95% CI, 25.4 to 28.5) in women to 43.9 (CI, 40.7 to 47.0) in men...

This finding builds on an emerging body of literature displaying consistent shortcomings in treatment programs involving men.”



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# Policy and Advocacy

The Traditional Courts Bill affects 17 million people in South Africa, and is patently unconstitutional.

(Law race and gender unit - UCT)