



Gender Talks Series

*African Feminisms and Fictions of
Neo-Traditional African Masculinities:
The Secret Lives of Baba Segi's Wives*



Speaker: Dr Nonhlanhla Dlamini

Date: 20 May 2022

Time: 12:30 – 14:00

Moderator: Dr Moorosi

RSVP: khosholome@ufs.ac.za

[Click here to join the meeting](#)

Inspiring excellence, transforming lives through quality, impact, and care.

www.ufs.ac.za

[f UFSUV](#) | [t UFSweb](#) | [y UFSweb](#) | [i ufsuv](#)



Dr Nonhlanhla Dlamini works as a lecturer in the University of the Free State's English Department (QwaQwa campus). She obtained her PhD in African Literature at the University of Witwatersrand. She has published several journal articles on gender studies, specifically in the field of African feminisms and African masculinities. Her research interests are African Masculinities, African Feminisms, Literary Theory, Queer Theory, African Literatures, and Literatures of the Black Diaspora.

This paper grapples with the economics of knowledge production and use, particularly in the field of research on African masculinities and African feminisms. It asks: how do feminist use and adapt Eurocentric methodologies to read the African contexts, especially in thinking with and about the performances of African Masculinities and femininities? It argues that the reading of the performances of African masculinities and their anxieties is incomplete if we ignore the role that culture and African forms of feminisms and femininities' performances.

This paper's interest lies in how the novel, *The Secret Lives of Baba Segi's Wives* (2010) uses irony, humour, narratology and juxtaposition to analyse and depict the relationships that exist between expressions and performances of Neo-traditional Nigerian masculinities of and femininities.

I conclude that Shoneyin's novel does not only disrupt narratives of dominant masculinity construction, but also proffers ways of reimagining multiplicity of female sexualities foregrounded on local expressions of sex, and parodies socio-economic constructs of ruling masculinities premised on siring of children and male sexual virility. The exposure of the secrets of Baba Segi's three wives transforms the Alao family, thus coercing it to rid itself of the deadly competition among the wives, rendering it a space of safety and healing, offers Baba Segi a new set of looking glasses that enable him to review his definitions and discourses on masculinity, male sexual virility, siring of children