

DISSERTATION

INTELLECT, INTER(DIS)COURSE AND IDENTITY: THE PRODUCTION AND
RESISTANCE OF MASCULINITY IN GRADUATE EDUCATION

Submitted by

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In partial fulfillment of the requirements

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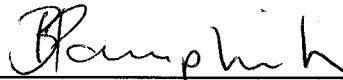
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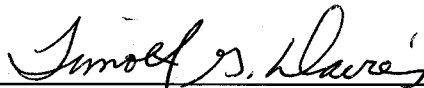
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DISSERTATION ABSTRACT

INTELLECT, INTER(DIS)COURSE AND IDENTITY: THE PRODUCTION AND RESISTANCE OF MASCULINITY IN GRADUATE EDUCATION

The purpose of this dissertation was to examine how male graduate students make sense of what it means to be a man in order to illuminate potential links between higher education and the production of male subjects. These links were conceptualized in three foci: *Theory* – as (hegemonic) masculine domination in higher education, *Practice* – as academic discourses taken up to construct gender and masculinity, and *Process* – as engaging in critical reflection (Brookfield, 1987, 1998) and critical resistance (Hoy, 2005) of the proscriptions of normative masculinity.

Designed as a narrative inquiry and using an interview method called an *inquiry of discomfort* (Wolgemuth & Donohue, 2006), this study engaged 5 male graduate students from counseling, social economy, computer science, media analysis, and social science disciplines in conversations about masculinity and their experiences as graduate students. These conversations occurred across a semester and were captured in five to seven audio recorded interviews. The interviews were analyzed in three stages, likened to the process of gathering materials to paint: deconstruction-trace analysis (pencils), argument analysis (brushes), and resistance analysis (paint). The analyses produced *subjectivity portraits*, write-ups of the participants' interviews, describing the subjects they constructed, the *hegemonic* and *ideal man*, and their "*Others*", and how they affected *critical resistance* (Hoy, 2005).

Guided by the work of Foucault and Butler, the findings were discussed in terms of the dissertation's three foci. Theoretically, a new understanding of male dominance was proposed, one that redefined male dominance as *negotiated*. In practice, academic

discourses (sociobiological, humanist, social science, (pro)feminist, and postmodern) were found to be taken-up to construct masculinity and make sense of the gender order. And the process of engaging in critical reflection was found not to necessarily entail critical resistance (Hoy, 2005).

The three foci were woven together in five “lessons learned” that inform supervisors’ work with male graduate students to foster critical resistance. The lessons were: (a) Emphasize male dominance as negotiated; (b) Identify and challenge gender implications of academic discourses; (c) Identify and challenge the gender implications of the “ideal” graduate student; (d) Ask questions that maintain reflection as a critical activity and (e) Value ambiguity and the male graduate student as a “subject-in-progress.”

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

If you have both feet planted on level ground, then the university has failed you.
Goheen, 1961

“I am here to learn with you,” he said during a round of introductions on the first day of class. “I’m taking Women in Higher Education to witness your experience, to work against sexism on campus, and to understand how I, as a White man, knowingly and unknowingly contribution to oppression.”

The eight women graduate students who shared the second floor conference room table and the professor were impressed. So impressed, in fact, we were moved to applause. For most of the graduate students, this was our first encounter with a bona fide male (pro)feminist. And he was, as a group of us agreed in our office after class, very cute. Athletically built with short blond hair and bright blue eyes, he met many of our physical ideals, let alone our intellectual and political ones.

He and I became friends over the semester, close enough to learn over beers one night that our first day applause had made him uncomfortable. “Why should my being a feminist be special?,” he asked. But, despite my encouragement, he didn’t bring up his initial discomfort with the class. To my confusion, he seemed to partly enjoy the attention he received from our women classmates and the professor. He talked a lot and we listened attentively. When he hadn’t spoken in awhile, we asked him questions like, “Well, what’s the male perspective?”

“It’s male privilege,” he confessed to me one day. “I don’t even like talking that much. But I’ve learned that if I don’t speak my mind people will think I’m not thoughtful or intelligent. Worse, they’ll think I’m a pushover. As a man, I feel like I’m supposed to be confident and have the answers or at least *an* answer. So what am I supposed to do? Maybe I should silence myself in class and let the women talk? What are the situations where I should speak up and use my privilege and power for social justice?”

“I don’t know,” I admitted. And, really, if I’m very honest with myself, I still don’t know. But now, writing this introduction after having finalized the remaining dissertation chapters, I do have some ideas about what happened in that classroom. I better understand why and how my friend struggled with masculinity and his (pro)feminist identity.

Truth be known, I’ve made him up. I don’t really have a blond haired, blue-eyed (pro)feminist friend who also took Women in Higher Education in the Spring of 2003. But I suspect my interest in studying men in graduate school happened, in part, because I knew (and was attracted to) so many men like the fictitious friend; male peers who simultaneously resisted and reified male dominance in my classes. This dissertation was an attempt to understand masculinity and male dominance in higher education as they are constructed and negotiated by male graduate students; to learn how male graduate students are both productive of and produced by masculinity in the academy.

Making Connections

One of the important lessons I learned from observing my male friends and gender interactions in classrooms was that sexism is not solely a male crime, locatable only in male bodies. Rather, both biological men and women can and do enforce gender codes. The discourses that seek to lock us into gendered identities, constricting and limiting possibilities, are everywhere. They make male feminists notable, worthy of applause, and women feminists unremarkable. They permit men to dominate classroom conversations, and women to remain silent. They tell us where and how men and women belong in higher education.

Institutionally, I began to see links exist between academic disciplines and gender. When men cross disciplinary gender boundaries, for example, the reaction tends to be positive. "Bless the few men who get degrees in elementary education," a peer of mine said just a week ago. Whereas women who cross over into male dominated fields are met with "chilly climates," (Crawford & MacLeod, 1990) and "double binds" (Jamieson, 1997).

But currently much literature on higher education acknowledges and/or critiques the *entire* academy as male-centered. Colleges and universities purportedly privilege a male way of being that favors White male students, necessitating women and students of various minority groups seek additional support. This privileging of masculinity is said to be felt more strongly as students progress through higher levels of education. Women and minority students pursuing Master and Doctoral level degrees are thought to especially struggle to complete their advanced degrees in a masculine system that favors competition, individual work, and rationality. Texts that offer guides on how to get a

graduate degree address this problem in a kind of deficit-remediation model. They talk about “how to survive,” recommending women and minority students educate themselves about the academy’s male bias, create support groups, and find sympathetic advisors (Leonard, 2001; Massey & Walfish, 2001; Phillips & Pugh, 2005; Rossman, 1995).

What these texts often fail to acknowledge is that male privilege does not necessarily confer immediate success to male graduate students. They are not explicit about the kind of masculinity that is privileged, leaving one to wonder if all or just some kinds of male graduate students are conferred an advantage. Nor do these texts advance their critiques by suggesting male students ought to be responsible for undermining and resisting male privilege. Much insightful and challenging feminist and critical research has documented the struggles and triumphs of women and minorities in higher education (e.g., Glazer-Raymo, Townsend, & Ropers-Huilman, 2000). However, little is known about the struggles and resistances of male graduate students.

Overall, three questions arise from the masculine-privileging-academia thesis that remain relatively unexamined. First, what kinds of masculinities are privileged in the academy? And to what extent can they be seen as hegemonic? Second, in what ways do academic disciplines produce and privilege masculinity? And third, how can (and do) male graduate students resist a system that privileges their gender?

Theory, Practice, and Process

This dissertation concerns these three questions and names them, in order, *Theory*, *Practice*, and *Process*. They are three strands that structure the dissertation and interweave to address its overall purpose: to examine the production and resistance of masculinity in higher education.

Theory

Theoretically, this dissertation asks how the academy is best understood as a masculine institution. Specifically it engages two theoretical concepts, Connell's (1995) structural *hegemonic masculinity* and Whitehead's (2002) discursive *masculine subject*. Much (pro)feminist scholarship has employed hegemonic masculinity as a useful theoretical tool to describe institutionalized male dominance. Connell (1995) defined hegemonic masculinity "as the configuration of gender practice which embodies the currently accepted answer to the problem of the legitimacy of patriarchy, which guarantees (or is taken to guarantee) the dominant position of men and the subordination of women" (p. 77). Critical of hegemonic masculinity's reliance on a fixed male structure that denies a way to theorize resistance, Whitehead (2002) advocates the masculine subject. As a discursive rather than a structural production, the masculine subject simultaneously is positioned and positions himself within masculine discourses.

While this dissertation sympathizes with and draws from many of Whitehead's (2002) arguments that counter so-called structural or critical conceptualizations of masculinity, I did not altogether abandon hegemonic masculinity. Indeed, hegemonic masculinity was an important component of the analysis and subsequent results. The

results suggested that hegemonic masculinity be reconceptualized to connote not a monolithic, structural masculinity, but a negotiated phenomenon by which masculine subjects construct themselves.

Practice

In *Practice*, this dissertation asks how academia and its disciplines produce masculine subjects in graduate school. It seeks out the discourses, or predominant ways of thinking, that circulate in academic disciplines and how they are taken up to construct masculine subjects. It attends to the “Others,” subjects (i.e., women and sexual minorities), consolidated through “exclusion and domination” in opposition to masculine subjects (Butler, 1990). It also asks how these discourses allow and limit the ways gender can be thought. The findings revealed that sociobiological, humanist, and social science discourses reified traditional, unequal, or oppressive masculinities while critical feminist and postmodern discourses emerged in the construction of more progressive, egalitarian, and transgressive masculinities. The findings suggested graduate schools should attend to the implications of their dominant discourses and work toward an intentionality around the kinds of academic subjects they wish to tout.

Process

The *Process* component of this dissertation is concerned with resistance and responsibility, or how male graduate students can resist the forces in higher education that mark them as men. This is an important move away from the higher education literature that addresses masculine domination by remediation, providing “support

services” for women and minority students. Instead, this dissertation aligns with (pro)feminist literature that argues men ought to actively work against male dominance (e.g., Goldrick-Jones, 2002; hooks, 1992; Kipnis, 1995; Messner, 1997). Certainly understanding how men resist dominance is contested and complicated. Regardless, an important component of this process is based in gendered “awareness” or men coming to see themselves as gendered subjects. With this awareness comes the possibility of resistance. But how is resistance best understood? This dissertation interrogates the concept of resistance and how it is and can be enacted by male graduate students. Therefore “process” refers to the ways male graduate students (can be made to) resist the proscriptions of masculinity.

The focus on *Process* also attends to the interview process that was expected to foster critical reflection (Brookfield, 1987, 1998). The interviews, on which this dissertation was based, asked male graduate students to critically reflect on what it means to them to be men in their academic disciplines. The findings revealed that men do resist hegemonic masculinity, but this resistance cannot always be characterized as “critical” (Hoy, 2005), undermining their desire to be men. The findings also suggested that providing the space for reflection and asking critical questions about gender does not necessarily result in the construction of resistive subjects. The intersubjectivity inherent in any dialogic encounter entails both the processes and the subjects that emerge from those processes are mutually negotiated.

Research Questions

From the *Theory*, *Practice*, and *Process* foci emerged five research questions addressing the contents and processes of masculinity in graduate school:

Content Research Questions

1. What kinds of masculine subjects do male graduate students construct?
2. What “Other” subjects emerge in relation to the masculine subjects?
3. What academic discourses make these constructions possible?

Process Research Questions

4. How do male graduate students relate to (resist, comply, submit) these constructions?
5. What were the outcomes of critical reflection, in terms of resistance?

Inquiry and Analysis

This study employed a narrative inquiry to address the five research questions. In this way, the study elicited stories, focused on meaning-making, and attended to interview responses as texts for analysis (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Josselson, Lieblich & McAdams, 2003). Five male graduate students were selected and each participated in five to seven private hour long interviews over the course of the spring semester 2006. These interviews were transcribed and analyzed in three passes: deconstruction analysis, discourse-argument analysis, and resistance analysis. The first two analyses, deconstruction and discourse-argument, addressed the first three content research questions. The resistance analysis concerned the last two process research questions. In Chapter 3, each analysis was likened to a step in gathering the materials

(pencils, brushes, and colors) to paint the participants' portraits. Through the painting metaphor, the participants' write-ups were named *subjectivity portraits*, made possible by the analytic processes that preceded their painting and reliant on the painter's vision.

Vision of the Painter: Assumptions and Researcher Perspective

This is the first, but not the last, time I make explicit and center my involvement in the dissertation. What, in Chapter 3, I come to call my *personal narrator* voice (as opposed to the academic narrator voice) is one way I attend to the qualitative validity criteria of reflexivity, authenticity, and transparency.

In this section my personal narrator voice (hereon appearing in *italic typeface*) partially conveys my researcher perspective and combines with the dissertation's assumptions. The point is that the dissertation's assumptions are not simply academic, but are interwoven with how I have come to understand myself and the world in which I live. These assumptions broadly concern the nature of the (gendered) self, the nature of knowledge, and the nature of reality.

The Nature of the (Gendered) Self

This dissertation draws on poststructural conceptualizations of the self. It assumes the self to be an action or process, rather than an inherent, fixed or stable entity. Drawing from the work of Foucault (1975/1995, 1982) and Butler (1990, 1993, 2004), this dissertation does not study "true" or "natural" individuals, but discursive selves that are simultaneously produced and self-productive in relation to "Others." Gender, then, is seen as socially and institutionally disciplined (per Foucault) and as a performance in

which iterative enactments both belie and create the illusion of gender's naturalness (per Butler). The desire to make man real (to consistently perform male) is named the masculine ontological project (Whitehead, 2002). The masculine ontological project is the focus of this dissertation, as I am studying how male graduate students construct the kinds of men they *aspire to be*.

Together, these assumptions mark this dissertation as a poststructural feminist project (Weedon, 1996) and "poststructural feminist" is also the name I give my own ontological project. Just as I believe the gendered self is socially constructed, disciplined and performed, critiquing the social forces that (re)produce gender is a way of disciplining and performing my personal version of a poststructural feminist.

"I prefer the company of men to women," I said in all seriousness to a group of sweaty friends I'd run with over the summer.

Chris, CSU's Director of Women's Studies, was shocked. We'd become close over the last year, running, having coffee, skiing, attending protests and poetry nights, and during it all, talking about gender.

"Jenni, how could you say that?," Chris balked. Her message was clear. How could a self-proclaimed feminist who wanted to dismantle the sex/gender hierarchy and challenge the binaries of sex and gender make such an essentialist statement?

From Chris's reprimand I learned "poststructural feminist" is also a social construction that requires an iterative performance and discipline. I do not raise this discovery to suggest being a feminist is contradictory and therefore ought to be abandoned. Rather it is an instructive reminder that even our critical perspectives can become performances, creating an illusory fixity, enabling certain forms of feminism and

excluding others. Similarly, the male graduate students' ontological projects can be seen as performances that enabled certain kinds of masculinities (allowed by the academic and otherwise discourses from which they emerge) and excluded others.

The Nature of Knowledge and Reality

This dissertation similarly assumes knowledge and reality are social constructions. These social constructions can be “got at” through narrative inquiry. How ourselves, the world, and the ways we operate in that world are all products of narrative construction.

The ontology of narratives varies from realist, where “reality is mirrored more or less imperfectly in narrative” to poststructural, where there is “no outside to inside text,” (Boje, 2001, pp. 15-16). This dissertation also takes a poststructural position on the construction of narratives holding that the text is not a unitary or direct representation of gendered experience (Weedon, 1996). Rather, even before experiences are relayed, they are “at once already an interpretation and in need of interpretation” (Scott, 1991, p. 779).

What a poststructural take on the nature of the self, knowledge, and reality means for the study of masculinity is that the study of “men” is not the exploration of individual identities, but of the discourses, the academic and cultural languages, that circulate and create “men.” The male graduate students' constructions of masculinity are portrayed as part of an “exclusionary matrix” where a variety of social, academic, and personal texts meet to create certain kinds of possible (and impossible) subject positions (Butler, 1993, p. 3). Overall, the subjectivity portraits I paint of the male graduate students in Chapter 4

are not direct representations of who the male graduate students are, but approximations of who they can be.

The following definitions are presented to assist the reader and make clear some terms that may be unfamiliar, imprecise, used in a special way, or newly invented.

Definition of Terms

Binary Opposition -- A language structure in which terms derive their meaning by being defined against what they not. Man/woman, inside/outside, life/death are some examples of binary opposites. Critical theorists critique binary oppositions for privileging one term over another, resulting in the oppression and the construction of "Others." Derrida's (1967/1997) deconstruction acts on binary oppositions by revealing how one term is privileged over another, destabilizing their hierarchical relationship, and advocating their instability. This dissertation employed deconstruction trace analysis to examine how masculinity was constructed in a system of binary opposites.

Critical Reflection -- A four component process of self reflection described by Brookfield (1987, 1998) involving examining assumptions, their cultural and historical contexts, imagining other ways of thinking that challenge those assumptions, and thinking in a way that temporarily suspends attachment to those assumptions. This dissertation also employs critical reflection less precisely to refer to the process of self examination engendered in interventions with undergraduate men.

Critical Resistance -- Resistance that is emancipatory and works against domination. Critical resistance is distinguished from "resistance that has been co-opted by oppressive forces" (Hoy, 2005, p. 2) and "resistance that is reactionary" (p. 5).

Deconstruction Trace Analysis -- One of three components of subjectivity portrait analysis drawn from Boje's (2001) deconstruction analysis. Deconstruction trace analysis involves searching for binaries, identifying the privileged term and the "Others" the binary affects, and noting how the binaries are reversed and/or fall apart in interview texts.

Desubjectification -- The practice of "risking one's deformation as a subject" (Hoy, 2005, p. 100). Hoy's desubjectification is a form of critical resistance, following Foucault's (1997) and Butler's (1997) theories of subject formation, that involves "dissolving your sense of who you are" (Hoy, 2005, p. 89).

Discourse -- A discourse is anything that carries meaning and structures the way reality is viewed. Alsop and colleagues (2002) note “language, images, stories, scientific narratives and cultural products are all discourses” (p. 81). This dissertation understands discourses as involved in the creation of individuals (Butler, 1993) and specifically seeks to understand how academic discourses are taken up to create gendered academic subjects.

Discourse-Argument Analysis -- One of three components of subjectivity portrait analysis drawn partly from Pamphilon’s (1999) zoom model. The discourse-argument analysis examines the discourses and ways of thinking participants take up to construct their subjectivities.

Hegemonic Man -- The culturally, socially, and politically dominant and taken-for-granted version of what it means to be a man (Connell, 1995).

Heterosexual Matrix – A “grid of cultural intelligibility through which bodies, genders, and desires are naturalized” (Butler, 1990, p. 151). The heterosexual matrix makes it possible “for bodies to cohere” by suggesting a “stable sex expressed through a stable gender (masculine expresses male, feminine expresses female) that is oppositionally and hierarchically defined through the compulsory practice of heterosexuality” (Butler, p. 151).

Ideal Man – The kind of man men imagine they would like to be. The ideal man is the telos of the men’s masculine ontological projects; their pursuits of masculinity (Whitehead, 2002).

Inquiry of Discomfort -- An approach to research inquiry that seeks to foster subjective transformation in research participants. The aim of an inquiry of discomfort is to identify and promote an intentional and conscious shift from dualistic, categorical, and entrenched positionality to a more ambiguous engagement with social reality (Wolgemuth & Donohue, 2006).

Masculinity and Heterosexuality – This study concerns masculine subjectivities. Yet Connell (1995) importantly notes that to be an ideal man or the hegemonic man is to be one who sexually desires/prefers women. Thus, the term “masculinity” denotes both masculine and heterosexual subjectivities as they di/converge to produce various masculinities.

Masculine Ontological Project – The “pursuit of being and becoming masculine by the masculine subject” (Whitehead, 2002, p. 210). The masculine ontological project is process by which men make masculinity real.

“Others” – The repudiated subjects affected within binary oppositions. This repudiation naturalizes hegemonic identities by marking what they are not and consolidating those “nots” in excluded and dominated identities or “Others” (Butler, 1990).

This dissertation sought the “Others” that emerged from men’s constructions of masculinity, particularly women and gay men.

While not used in this dissertation, “Other” can also refer to any person, “whether conjured or existing,” who is identified as “not me” (Butler, 2008, p. 29). This is the “Other” Butler (2004, 2008) draws on when she describes selves as called into question in conversations.

Performativity – Butler’s (1990) theory of gender performativity holds that subjectivity is not a noun, but a verb. Specifically, gender is a performance. For Butler, gender derives its illusion of fixity by the process of repeat performances. “The performance is effected with the strategic aim of maintaining gender with its binary frame” (p. 140).

Practice -- One of the dissertation’s three foci. The *Practice* focus concerns how masculine subjectivities in graduate school are produced through academic discourses and arguments.

Process -- One of the dissertation’s three foci. The *Process* focus concerns how male graduate students can and do engage in critical resistance.

Resistance Analysis -- One of three components of subjectivity portrait analysis. Resistance analysis examines the relationship between hegemonic and ideal subjects elicited in interviews and the interviewees desire to be those subjects.

Subjectivity Portrait Analysis --An analysis consisting of three components (deconstruction trace analysis, discourse-argument analysis, and resistance analysis) that yields an understanding of how participants construct and resist various selves, both those claimed and denied.

Theory -- One of the dissertation’s three foci. The *Theory* focus sought a new understanding of the hegemonic man and male dominance in higher education.

Weaving the Three Strands: Theory, Practice, and Process

The four remaining chapters separate and weave the dissertation’s three foci. In Chapter 2, Literature Review, I draw on the theoretical and empirical literature on masculinity and graduate education and discuss each in terms of *Theory*, *Practice*, and *Process*. In Chapter 3, Inquiry and Analysis, I describe the dissertation’s design, procedures, and analyses. Also in Chapter 3 I introduce the artist metaphor that frames

the analysis, results, discussion, and myself as the author-painter. Chapter 4, Results, presents each of the participants' write-ups or subjectivity portraits, attending to their constructions of the hegemonic and ideal man, "Others," and the topic of critical resistance. Chapter 5 looks across all the participants' write-ups and asks, taken together, what they say about male dominance and the hegemonic man in higher education (*Theory*), how and what academic discourses are taken up to construct gendered subjects (*Practice*), how well the interview fostered critical reflection and resistance (*Process*) and how to facilitate critical resistance in the supervision of male graduate students.

Significance of the Study

Overall, this study is important because it empirically interrogates the concept of male dominance in graduate education and begins to draw critical links between disciplinary discourses and the construction and privileging of masculinity. On the level of intervention, it is significant because the study itself engaged male graduate students in the process of critical reflection. Critical reflection is an important skill, especially now as men are increasingly being recognized as gendered and called upon to develop feminist sensibilities. This dissertation examines the effectiveness of critically reflective interviewing and makes substantive suggestions for how graduate programs and supervisors can work with male graduate students to work against male dominance in the academy.

In the next chapter, Literature Review, I present the knowledge base on which the study was built, including deeper descriptions of its epistemological and ontological assumptions. But it is important to note the review of literature does not cease on the last

page of the Literature Review chapter. Both Chapters 3 and 4, Inquiry and Analysis and Results, draw on theoretical and empirical literature to make their points. The review of literature, then, is best viewed as occurring throughout the dissertation, but mostly concentrated in the following chapter, focusing on the dissertation's three foci. Structured as three separate, but intertwined arguments the Literature Review chapter presents the pertinent theoretical and empirical literature associated with the *Theory*, *Practice*, and *Process* foci to lay the ground work and argue the need to study masculinity in higher education.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

...academia...is a place (yet another place) that actively constitutes gender: a site within which individuals construct and reconstruct themselves as gendered subjects by engaging in masculine and feminine ways of thinking and talking, and sexual and other social interactions.

Leonard, 2001, p. 7

This study focuses on the intersection of masculinity and higher education, specifically graduate education. But before I take us there, up the educational hierarchy to the realm of hard won assistantships, research mill laboratories, dank basement offices, and the little studied experience of male graduate students, I have a broader story to tell. This story originates in the student affairs literature on undergraduate men in higher education, which draws on masculinity studies, which is informed predominately by feminist literature, and to a lesser extent, queer theory. The story is mostly theoretical, somewhat empirical, seductively simplistic, and certainly didactic. It is as follows:

The “Crisis of Masculinity” in Higher Education Story

*Once Upon a Time...*there was something or someone called traditional masculinity (Capraro, 1994). Traditional masculinity said men were the providers and protectors of women and families. Men came to the hallowed halls of colleges and universities secure in their gendered roles, seeking to increase their (l)earning potentials (Clatterbaugh, 1990).

But then something called the “feminist movement” happened, men’s dominance over women was brought to light, and now it is common to talk about a “male crisis” in higher education (Davis & Laker, 2004; Kimmel, 2004). Decreasing enrollment tops the crisis list. Men are enrolling in colleges and universities dramatically less than women; in the US there are now “133 girls getting B.A.’s for every 100 guys” (Conlin, 2003, p. 2). Other characteristics of the crisis include lower academic achievement (Kellom, 2004; Kimmel, 2004); campus involvement (Murray, 2002); and poor health associated with excessive drinking, sexual risk, and violence (Courtenay, McCreary, & Merighi, 2000; Davis & Laker, 2004). It doesn’t look like a good time to be a man in higher education.

The Story Twists

Like a good foil, Kimmel (2004) complicates the plot arguing “the evidence for this crisis is spotty at best. The presumed causes turn out not to hold up empirically at all” (p. 97). Men’s enrollment, for example, continues to increase over time, it is just that men’s (over)representation relative to women has decreased (Kimmel, 2004). Within this story twist “crisis” is a contested term, one that depends on the men to whom it refers. Men at risk in higher education tend to be of lower incomes and men of color (Clayton, Hewitt, & Gaffney, 2004). While women constitute a gender majority in the Humanities and Social Sciences, men continue to dominate the “hard science” and Engineering disciplines (Andres & Adamuti-Trache, 2006). Kimmel (2004) therefore offers a redefinition of the so-called male crisis:

The crisis of males in higher education has to do with masculinities – with both the multiple definitions of masculinity articulated by different groups of men and the intersections of gender with other lines of identity and inequality, such as race, class, ethnicity, and sexuality. (p. 98)

Reenter the Traditional Man

The crisis of masculinity in higher education therefore concerns not overall decreasing male undergraduate enrollment, but male students' ability to live up to the expectations of traditional masculinity (Davis & Laker, 2004). The consequences of trying to meet the traditional man's expectations is taken up by psychologists and named the "gender-role conflict" (O'Neil, Helms, Gable, David, & Writsman, 1986). The gender role conflict scale includes four factors: "restrictive emotionality; socialized control, power, and competition; restrictive sexual and affectionate behavior; and obsession with achievement, work, and success" (Davis & Laker, 2004, p. 50). Now seen as pathological, traditional masculinity is largely perceived as the cause of the male crisis (Pleck, 1981).

Denouement

Here is where the story ends and the moral is imparted. To address the crisis of masculinity in higher education, student affairs professionals agree on the following recommendations (See also, Davis, 2002; Kimmel, 2004; Davis & Larker, 2004; Davis & Wagner, 2005). Male students should be provided opportunities to "examine their masculinities, engage in critical reflection about their gendered behaviors, and encounter a wide variety of productive masculinities" (Harris, 2006, p. 25). They are encouraged to participate in male only programs where they deconstruct masculinity and work

collectively to end violence against women (Capraro, 1994; Davis & Larker, 2004; Davis & Wagner, 2005). Evaluations of these interventions suggest men learn to change their attitudes towards women and challenge sexist language (Barone, Wolgemuth, & Linder, 2007). Overall, student affairs professionals are, with increasing frequency, advocating men be added to the varying student groups (Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer (LGTBQ); women, students of color, etc...) in need of special attention and assistance. It's about time. Well, sort of.

Why "Sort of?" or (Further) Problematizing the Masculinity Crisis Story

The masculinity crisis story is an important one, marking several major shifts in how masculinity is conceptualized in higher education. While the story focuses on undergraduate males, its implications extend across various masculine subject positions within the academy. First, it challenges the presumed normalcy of men in the academy by acknowledging they too have genders. Second, it moves the critique of masculinity in higher education away from individual males and toward social constructions by suggesting men also suffer at the hands of traditional masculinity. As hooks (2004a) said, "Men are not exploited or oppressed by sexism, but there are ways in which they suffer as a result of it" (p. 578). Finally, it assumes men have a responsibility, perhaps unique to their gender, to undercut or resist traditional masculinity. In this way men and women can begin to work together in the name of "social justice" (Davis & Wagner, 2004, p. 29).

But the story also begs some questions. It fails to interrogate the qualities of the "traditional man." Is he the same in every university, in every discipline, for every male

student? Or does he differ in important ways that may impact the way we understand how men attempt to live up to his expectations? The story also does not consider the men's programs, their courses of study, as potential sites for the production of masculinity. While interventions include analyzing "commercials, sit-coms, movies, magazine ads, and other cultural transmitters" (Davis & Wagner, 2004, p. 36), none involve a critical analysis of the academy and its disciplines as conduits of gender messages. This is despite much feminist literature that points to rampant male privilege in the academy and the association of scientific discourses with masculinity (e.g., Harding, 1986, 1991; Keller, 1985; Leonard, 2001). Third, the story moves very quickly from critical reflection to action, working with men to end sexism and violence against women. Little attention is given to how critical reflection is understood and what are its effects. How, then, is critical reflection understood when men examine masculinity and what are the identity and resistance outcomes of engaging in critical reflection?

These questions weave to form the three foci of my dissertation: *Theory* (What is the traditional man and how does he dominate in the academy?), *Practice* (How do different disciplines produce masculinity?), and *Process* (What is the relationship between critical reflection and acts of resistance?). But before I move to reviewing the literature on each of these foci and the study's philosophical/theoretical stance, I will briefly discuss what is currently known about men and graduate education.

Men in Graduate School

What is known about gender and graduate degree completion is relatively minimal. Reviewing the literature and studies on doctoral education, Nyquist & Wulff (2007) identified three important themes: (a) Graduate education does not match the needs and demands of a changing academy and society, (b) There is a lack of appropriate supervision for doctoral students [especially women and minority students], and (c) There is a growing attrition rate among doctoral students. Using nationally representative US data collected from the 1993/03 Baccalaureate and Beyond Longitudinal Study, Nevill and Chen (2007) found rates of fulltime enrollment were higher among men than women (54% versus 46%) and men were more likely to earn a doctoral degree (7% versus 3%). Parenthood was found to have a stronger negative effect for women than men, where parenthood was negatively related to degree attainment at all levels for women and only negatively related to men's professional degree attainment. Women, however, were more likely than men to have earned a master's degree (49% versus 44%). In 2004, men in science and engineering disciplines were more likely than women to attain a research assistantship, fellowship, or teaching assistantship (69% versus 58%) (National Science Board, 2004).

Despite this data suggesting gender is of import in graduate education, there exists no parallel story about the crisis of masculinity in masters or doctoral degree programs. Student affairs professionals predominately focus their attention and efforts on the development of undergraduates, leaving the training and development of graduate students to departments, faculty, and supervisors. Whereas undergraduate students are seen to be engaging in the final stages of identity formation, graduate students are meant

to focus on becoming professionals in their fields (Weidman & Stein, 2003) and academic professionals in general. And, as Hirt and Muffo (1998) note, “departments are guided not by institutional standards but by the norms of their discipline” (p. 18). Therefore a department’s culture, including the faculty’s attitudes and activities, is integral to the process of socializing graduate students into their fields (Girves & Wemmerus, 1988).

Gender is infrequently considered as part of the process of becoming an academic professional. Some notable exceptions include Ferreira’s (2003) work on gender and graduate student attrition, Barata, Hunjan, and Legatt’s (2005) study of feminist women’s experiences in graduate school, Leonard’s (2000, 2001) critique of masculinity in academic professionalism, Part II of Ropers-Huilman’s (2003) edited book, *Gendered Futures in Higher Education: Critical Perspectives for Change*, and Part III of Glazer-Raymo, Townsend, and Ropers-Huilman’s (2000) edited book, *Women in Higher Education: A Feminist Perspective*. More often than not, however, when gender becomes a part of the graduate student conversation, it generally follows a deficit model that treats women (as opposed to their male counterparts) as in need of special services and remedial attention (e.g., Phillips & Pugh, 2005).

Even more rarely does the graduate student literature study or theorize men’s experiences in graduate school. For example, while Ferreira (2003) asked male academics about their awareness of the “inhospitable working environment that many of their women colleagues experienced,” this study did not ask how the men were positively or negatively impacted by such an inhospitable environment (p. 982). Nor did it ask how the men may have resisted this environment. Overall, much work has been done namely

in the field of student affairs to study and theorize the undergraduate male experience (e.g., Barone, et al., 2007; Capraro, 1994, 2004; Davis, 2002, 2004, 2005; Harris, 2006; Kellom, 2004; May, 1988; Murray, 2002), but little is known about how masculinity plays out for men at the graduate level.

Purpose

The purpose of this dissertation was to study masculinity in graduate education from the perspective of male graduate students. Similar to the work on masculinity done at the undergraduate level, it assumes men's normalcy can no longer be taken for granted and that men should be responsible for challenging sexism. But differing from the undergraduate masculinity literature, this study did not assume a monolithic hegemonic or traditional man, that graduate disciplines are outside the realm of gender production, or that critical reflection is sufficient to resisting gendered oppression.

The following literature review begins by discussing the epistemology of the "man" who is the study's object. I make clear the male subjects I studied and analyzed are social constructions rather than coterminous with the men who brought them to life in our interviews. I discuss two predominate ways the masculinity studies literature theorizes the male subject and show how the study was framed by a combination of the two approaches. I then delve more deeply into the literature on male domination in the academy (*Theory*), the production of masculinity in graduate schools (*Practice*), and fostering critical resistance in male graduate students (*Process*).

Theoretical Background: What is a Man?

“Man” is the object/subject taken up by the field of masculinity studies, but how is this man understood? Is he indistinguishable from the material male bodies with which he is associated? Is he a social construction for men to navigate? The following section provides a brief description of masculinity studies, to historicize and contextualize the literature review, and introduces two predominate ways of theorizing male subjectivity.

Masculinity Studies

Authors suggest differing dates for the intellectual beginnings of masculinity studies. Some present men’s studies as beginning in the 1950s, associated with the prominence of sex-role theory (Connell, 1995; Whitehead, 2002). Others place the “origin” of masculinity studies in the 1970s, emerging in tandem with the early feminist movement (Alsop, Fitzsimons, & Lennon, 2002; Capraro, 2004; Pleck & Sawyer, 1974) and still others, later, in the 1980s, growing out of the men’s movement (Mansfield, 2000) and sociology’s social construction theories (Connell, 2000). Whether masculinity studies began in the mid- or late-twentieth century, its authors generally agree on the predominant views that constitute what we now refer to as the field of masculinity studies (Alsop, et al., 2002; Carrigan, Connell, & Lee, 1985).

Masculinity studies concerns itself with masculinity as opposed to maleness (Capraro, 2004). While maleness is associated with a biological sex and, hence, presumes a fixity and rigidity of “man,” masculinity is the study of how men act according to predominant social mores. Further, masculinity studies has been largely influenced by and associated with the feminist and gay and lesbian movements and their feminist and queer theories (Connell, 1995; 2000). Most men’s studies scholars would

consider themselves activists, engaged in the larger project of changing society and men (Capraro, 2004; Kimmel, 1987). Adams and Savran (2002) put it succinctly, “perhaps the most desirable goal of scholarship on masculinity would not be the formation of another interdisciplinary field but the radical transformation of its objects of study” (p. 7).

Another body of work, called masculinist studies, rejects, either overtly or covertly, the political principles of feminist and gay and lesbian studies (Alsop, et al., 2002). Examples of this work include *Iron John* (Bly, 1990) and *The Fragile Male* (Greenstein, 1993) whose authors argue the (pro)feminist movement has done harm to men by challenging masculinity and, therefore, men’s roles in society. As Bly (1995) argues, “If there is no such thing as masculinity, then a man has no center in himself from which he can speak” (p. 272). Masculinist work draws on naturalizing discourses and largely posits that men are intrinsically, naturally, and necessarily different from, and hence rightly occupy different social positions than, women. These gender theorists hold that “gender is... fixed, universal, inevitable, and, thus, beyond our control” (Whitehead, 2002, p. 11). Masculinity studies theorists argue that masculinist studies lacks a critical scrutiny of power and oppressive gender relations and is very dangerous in its maintenance and fortification of the social violence done to women and sexual minorities (Alsop, et al., 2002).

Masculinity is a Social Construct: Critical Theory and Poststructural Views

Thus, masculinity studies is not characterized by the examination of fixed biological sexes and their role variations, but begins axiomatically that “masculinity (like femininity) is a social construct” (Alsop, et al., 2002, p. 131). Critical gender theorists

stop here and argue masculinity's social construction does not negate its "reality" in terms of material effects of rape, abuse, and assault on women (Whitehead, 2002). Nor does masculinity's social construction negate the "patriarchal" (Millett, 1970) or "hegemonic" (Carrigan, Connell, & Lee, 1985) power men can possess over women. But poststructural takes on masculinity seek to dismantle the relationship between masculinity and the male sex, arguing that employing the critical gender theorist approach runs the risk of positioning women as victims (Elshtain, 1981), oversimplifying male-female relations (Pollert, 1996), and/or reducing complex power dynamics to male and female bodies (hooks, 1981). In this way, poststructural theorists take both the categories of gender and sex to be reality producing social constructions (Mansfield, 2000). Masculinity scholars of this ilk are less interested in exposing and criticizing the historical patriarchy "than they are with deconstructing the masculine/feminine binary in its various forms and understanding its endless capacity for reinventing and reaffirming gender difference" (Nye, 2005, p. 1938).

Also within critical understanding, masculinity remains a *thing*, imbued with power and possessed by (or imposed on) social actors (Mansfield, 2002). In contrast, poststructural takes define masculinity (and any identity category) as something one *does* (Ferguson, 1993). Most notably, in *Gender Trouble*, Butler (1990) lays out a poststructural theory of gender as performance. For Butler, gender is "not a being, but a doing; it is an effect and exists only in its various manifestations. Gender identity is performatively constituted by the expressions that are said to be its results" (p. 25). Gender derives its illusion of fixity by the process of repeat performances:

This repetition is at once a reenactment and a reexperiencing of a set of meanings already socially established. Although individual bodies enact these significations, by becoming stylized into gendered modes, this 'action' is a public action. The performance is effected with the strategic aim of maintaining gender with its binary frame. (Butler, 1990, p. 139-140)

What is important about the reenactment of gender is that if gender must be continually performed and reconstituted then these performances are neither arbitrary nor innocuous and the cultural, social, and political factors that compel and dictate gender performances ought to be explored and critiqued (Mattley, 2002).

In the paragraph above, I broadly introduced two ways the masculinity literature theorizes the male subject and named them "critical" and "poststructural." While these labels are useful for organizing this section and talking about two familiar takes on the male subject, I do not intend to imply these categories are fixed, exclusive, or hierarchical (although this dissertation tends toward the poststructural position). Indeed, just as quickly as I have taken them up, I drop them to discuss two particular theories associated with each: the hegemonic man (Connell, 1995) and the masculine subject (Whitehead, 2002). Overall, working against exclusivity, part of my project is to determine the extent to which critical gender theory's hegemonic man can inform the poststructural masculine subject.

Critical Theory: The Hegemonic Man

In 1985 sociologists Carrigan, Connell, and Lee published an article in *Theory and Society* that first fully introduced the concept of the hegemonic man. Borrowing Gramsci's (1971) concept of "hegemony," they argued masculinity is not a matter of psychological inherency, but what it means to be a man is embedded in social institutions

such as schools, governments, corporations, and families (Connell, 1995). Therefore, *the hegemonic man is the culturally, socially, and politically dominant and taken-for-granted version of what it means to be a man*. Hegemonic masculinity in Western society hinges “on heterosexuality, economic autonomy, being able to provide for one’s family, being rational, being successful, keeping one’s emotions in check, and above all not doing anything considered feminine” (Alsop, et al., 2002, p. 141). However, this hegemonic male is an ideal and is not embodied by all men; in fact it is not considered the form most common to men (Connell, 1993). Connell’s work (1993, 1995, 2000) shifted masculinity from a unitary to a multiple concept in which several forms of masculinity were seen to be available to men. Fearing, however, these forms would dissolve into character types, Connell (1995) began to theorize relationships between multiple masculinities. These relationships were named subordination, complicity, and marginalization.

Subordination. Gay men, for example, can be seen as subordinated. They are men who deviate too far from the hegemonic man, rendered “not men,” which is to say they are ridiculed for being what Arnold Schwarzenegger (in complicity) refers to publicly as “girlie men.” The use of the feminine here is not inconsequential. Poststructural theorists, such as Derrida (1972/1981) and Butler (1990), hold that terms have meaning in relation to their opposites and woman is the necessary “Other” of man. Just as women are subordinated to men, men are subordinated to other men via association with femininity.

Complicity. Few men fully meet the normative ideals of the hegemonic man, yet many men reap a “patriarchal dividend” accorded the hegemonic project (Connell, 1995, p. 79). Connell names these masculinities “complicit” in that they are constructed “without the tensions or risks of being frontline troops of patriarchy” (p. 79). These masculinities are found in the men who watch, rather than play, professional sports; put a national flag in their trucks’ rear windows, rather than enlist in the military; and make concessions with, rather than nakedly dominate, women.

Marginalization. Connell (1995) defines marginalized masculinities as those that emerge external to the gender order. They are the masculinities that arise in particular class and race structures, like Black and working class masculinities. Marginalized masculinities can be seen as “authorized” by hegemonic masculinity. For example, movies elevating working class heroes such as Eminem in *8 Mile* (2002) may be seen to meet a hegemonic ideal, but do not confer a social authorization to working class men in general.

Recent Developments. Most recently, Connell & Messerschmidt (2005) have called for a “rethinking” of hegemonic masculinity. Reviewing realist and poststructural critiques, the authors recommend, for example, the gender hierarchy implied by marginalization, subordination, and complicity should better recognize the “agency of subordinated groups as much as the power of dominant groups” (p. 848). They also call for an examination of masculinities on local, regional, and global levels; a more sophisticated treatment of embodiment; and an acknowledgement of “democratizing

gender relations, of abolishing power differentials, not just of reproducing hierarchy” (p. 853). Connell & Messerschmidt (2005) argue the latter is accomplished by touting a positive hegemonic masculinity; a masculinity committed to gender equality between men and women.

Uses. Certainly hegemonic masculinity and its resulting theorization of multiple masculinities and their relationships marked an important move away from simplistically conceptualizing masculine domination as monolithic, ahistorical, and context independent. Hegemonic masculinity allows critical gender theorists to simultaneously signal the multiple and complicated character of male practices and remain loyal to an underlying structure of masculine domination (Whitehead, 2002).

One strength of the hegemonic man concept, particularly for this study, is its association with social structures and context dependency (Connell, 1993, 1995, 2005). At the regional level, it stands to reason what constitutes hegemonic masculinity in higher education may differ from other institutions, such as prisons, government agencies, and so on. At the local level, it also stands to reason that different disciplines within higher education may contain different normative standards of masculinity than others. What it means to be a “real” man in computer science, may very well differ from what it means to be a “real” man in a counseling program.

To examine how the characteristics of the hegemonic man may differ by discipline, this study analyzed male graduate students’ perceptions of the kinds of men they are expected to be. Although individual men may enact a wide array of masculinities in some settings (for example, mixed gender [see Coates, 2003]), they are

also able to perform the hegemonic man when it is called upon to do so (for example, in same-sex groups [see Nye, 2004]). “Even if men stake out and perform masculinities at odds with the hegemonic masculinity of their own society, they must know the code in order to oppose it, and so they know, in a pinch, how to enact it” (Nye, 2004, p. 1953).

Critiques. As suggested earlier, the hegemonic man concept is not without its critics. To move the discussion from the hegemonic man to the masculine subject, I first take up Whitehead’s (2002) poststructural critique of the hegemonic man.

Following Foucault (1980, 1982), Whitehead (2002) critiques hegemonic masculinity for relying on a juridico-discursive conceptualization of power. Juridico-discursive theories understand power as hierarchical, material, possessed, and oppressive or prohibitive. Critical gender theorists therefore tend to argue men are positioned in a hierarchical order which confers them greater access to material wealth, power, and a status that oppresses women. Connell’s (1995) hegemonic man extends this model of power among masculinities by positing dominant and subordinated masculinities. But Whitehead (2002) critiques this model of power within hegemonic masculinity as “dangerously reductive”:

...critical structuralist perspectives ultimately subsume the individual (subject) under a cognitive, strategic and assured deployment of power by rational actors, individual who are themselves somehow excluded from the ideological forces that ‘they deploy’. Consequently, complex gendered power relations are reduced to an ‘oppressor-victim’ dualism, in which multiple subjectivity and self-identity processes are made invisible by the power of political categories of gender and sexuality and their ideological and material forces... to talk of multiple masculinities on the one hand and unchanging structures on the other is not only idiosyncratic; it is dangerously reductive. (p. 99)

To “bring back the resisting subject,” Whitehead (p. 99) introduces the “*masculine subject*, a discursively bounded and enabled individual locked within a political category not directly of its making” (p. 110, emphasis added). For the purposes of this study, theorizing the masculine subject moves the analysis from the individual as subjected to masculinity to the individual as both subjected to *and productive of* masculinity. The analysis is rendered more complex as this perspective shifts the question from “What kinds of men are they?” to “What kinds of masculine discourses do they engage in?” and “In what ways do these discourses enable the performance of new and resistive masculinities?”

Yet poststructural theories of gender also have their critics. Kirsch (2000), argues poststructural theories promote the “self” of the individual as an alternative to wider social interaction... [resulting in] the unwillingness of its authors to investigate the relationship between individuals and society” (p. 79). Selves stripped of their political identities are rendered apolitical and, as Siegel (1998) notes:

...it often seems that calling oneself queer [a poststructural alternative to LGBT identity categories] is a tactic for not acknowledging that one is merely gay, for not shouldering the burden of coming out or the responsibilities that come with accepting the inevitable reality of a sexual identity and getting on with the rest of life. (p. 34)

Their points are well taken and can be applied to the field of masculinity studies. They induce the question, “To what extent does positing masculinity as illusory and a performance, rather than a stable identity, relieve individual men of the responsibility to work against gendered oppression?” There is a similar danger that the refusal of identity reverts back to normative representations. In this way Whitehead’s (2002) masculine

subject runs the risk of being assumed to be White and middle/upper class, and hence relieved of his responsibility to engage issues of racial and class privilege (Frye, 2000).

Uneasy Divides, Troubled Selves: Between Connell and Whitehead

In their summary of a chapter on the social construction of gender, Alsop and colleagues (2002) offer the following thoughts:

We have discussed two main accounts. The first lays emphasis on gender and other aspects of our identity as constructed by our positioning within social institutions and structures [critical gender theorist].... The second account pays attention to gender as produced by our subjection to discourses [poststructural]. Despite the tensions between them, both aspects seem required if we are to explain gendered positionality as an aspect of both social organization and, interconnectedly, of individual subjectivities (p. 93).

This dual view of masculinity implies working both with and against Connell and Whitehead to study the construction of masculinity in higher education. We can assume the oppressive potential of masculinity in the academy, but simultaneously wonder how this potential oppression differs in its effects, locations, and instantiations. Turning toward a discussion of masculinity as discursive permits a conversation about dominant discourses and an examination of by whom and in what ways they are taken up and/or resisted. In this way the hegemonic man can be seen as a dominant discourse (Pease, 2000), or per Butler (1990), a kind of scripted performance. Alsop and colleagues (2002) argue the concept of hegemonic masculinity “as a cultural ideal is consonant with Butler’s argument that gender performances which we enact are performances in accordance with a script” (p. 142). While Butler’s gender “script” is certainly neither structural nor ideological, it stands to reason that hegemonic masculinity may function as a discursive construction against which individual men evaluate their masculine

performances. Against Whitehead (2002) who argues it is impossible to hold on to both a structuralist (critical) and poststructuralist position, I tend to side with Hall (1997) who reinterprets hegemony's power as circulatory, rather than hierarchical. In this way the hegemonic man is seen less as containing a fixed set of characteristics and marking domination and better viewed as a product of and site for individual negotiation.

Yet a key concept on which this dissertation hinges is that of a masculine domination in higher education. Positing a monolithic masculine dominance suggests a juridico-discursive power in which academic males dominate academic females. As noted previously, strict adherence to this model perpetuates a woman-as-victim and man-as-oppressor discourse in which women are given special or remedial attention in order to survive (Phillips & Pugh, 2005; Leonard, 2001). The following section introduces the first of my dissertation's three foci: *Theory*. It considers the current models for understanding "masculine dominance" in higher education and introduces the first purpose of the dissertation: To seek a new theoretical understanding of a male domination in the academy.

Theory: Male Dominance in Graduate School

What is meant when scholars name and critique the academy for being male-centered and male dominated? Who is the male around who the university is centered and what is assumed to be true about him? This section concerns the "hegemonic man" underlying discussions of male domination in higher education. It assumes a relationship exists between the hegemonic man and male domination, but this relationship is neither structural nor given. Therefore I do not rely on Connell's (1995) definition that the

hegemonic man is the “configuration of gender practice which embodies the currently accepted answer to the problem of legitimacy of patriarchy” (p. 77). Rather the relationship between the hegemonic man and male domination is affected at the level of identity construction, where the ways in which the hegemonic man is constructed and negotiated can be seen as producing instances of male dominance.

The proceeding section discussed two ways of thinking about the hegemonic man. The first is associated with critical theory and was largely rejected because it implies the fixed and structural power of the hegemonic man. The second view is preferred as it suggests the hegemonic man as a point around which men and women navigate their identities. This perspective certainly allows the hegemonic man to vary in form contextually and temporally. However it dangerously suggests a totalizing theory of the benchmark; that the hegemonic man always serves as a point around which men and women navigate their identities. Is it possible, for example, that the hegemonic man may serve a minor role in the construction of gender? Or might he be viewed as a lesser form of masculinity? This dissertation seeks a new theory of the hegemonic man in higher education, one that allows the hegemonic man to vary both by form and function. To link the hegemonic man to male dominance in higher education, a brief understanding of how the literature treats the topic of male dominance in higher education is warranted.

The literature on gender in higher education reveals three separate, but overlapping, discussions of male dominance in higher education. These are named and addressed in the following order: the “by the numbers” perspective, the “cultural dominance” perspective, and the “discursive” perspective.

By the Numbers

The first way authors address male dominance in higher education is by reporting absolute numbers of males versus females. This “by the numbers” approach argues or implies male dominance is evidenced by men’s overrepresentation in certain disciplines and leadership positions. For example Ferreira (2003) says, “Despite the gains of the past 20 years in the representation of women in scientific fields, their numbers continue to lag behind their male counterparts” (p. 969). In 2005 females received 45.2% of all U.S. doctorates awarded, most often from the social science, humanities, and education disciplines (Hoffer, Welch, Webber, Williams, Lisek, Hess, Loew, & Guzman-Barron, 2006). In contrast, women represented 26% of physical science and 18% of engineering U.S. doctoral awardees in 2005 (Hoffer, et al., 2006). The relative decrease in numbers of women as they move up the education hierarchy, from administrative assistants to undergraduates to presidents of colleges is aptly termed “vertical gender stratification” (Lie & Maik, 2000, p. 447). Lie and Malik (2000) argue:

Since advanced degrees are necessary for a career in higher education, it is clear that the low proportions of women on university faculties is determined, to a large extent, by the low proportions of female advanced-degree recipients. (p. 447)

So while women are beginning to outnumber their male counterparts in undergraduate programs (the situation prompting the “male crisis” in education), women’s numerical dominance is slow to trickle up the academic hierarchy (Ropers-Huilman, 2003).

Certainly it is important to document and report the numbers of women and men in higher education. Where men and women constitute a clear majority may be indicative of more pernicious gender stereotypes and discrimination. Attending to representation qua representation also allows individual programs to focus their

recruitment efforts on underrepresented students. However focusing solely on issues of representation entails some risks. For example, this position assumes a dangerous natural connection and a suspicious directly proportional relationship between masculine domination and individual males. The more men in a department or level of authority, the more masculinity dominates and women are oppressed. Focusing on representation, therefore, runs the risk of reifying gender differences and the (dis)advantages they entail by positioning men as dominant and women as victims. In this scenario, the “logical” solution then is to “help” women. Phillips & Pugh (2005) discuss “how to survive in a predominately British, White, male, full-time, heterosexual academic environment” (p. 112) and make the point:

What does this mean for research students who are not members of the majority group? They may experience forms of discrimination including racism, sexism, heterosexism, ageism, and the barriers that we erect against the disabled. They therefore may need help through equal opportunities policies and practices. (p. 112)

In addition to potentially naturalizing the link between sex and gender, focusing solely on issues of representation leaves unexamined the cultural and discursive practices that may account for the reasons women and men gravitate to certain disciplines and positions in the academy. The following section considers the literature that defines male dominance in higher education as a cultural phenomenon.

Culture

Many authors who critique male dominance in higher education do so at the level of culture. These authors critique disciplines, such as science and engineering, and the entire academy as containing and privileging characteristics associated with masculinity.

One of the most influential of these authors is Keller whose 1982 article entitled *Feminism and Science* convincingly critiqued science as harboring a “masculinist ideology” and argued the benefits of conducting a feminist critique of science (p. 39). The epistemologies of Western science including objectivity, rationality, and independent inquiry are critiqued as modernist, developed by men and privileging male experiences. Or, as Adrienne Rich is attributed, “Objectivity is just a word men use to describe their subjectivity” (quoted in Morris, 1992). Harding (1986, 1991) extends this critique to the methods and procedures of science arguing they are permeated by a masculine bias, “in both definition of what counts as a scientific program and in the concepts, theories, methods, and interpretations of research” (1986, p. 82). Later Keller (1985) draws a connection between masculinist ideology and student identities. She points out, “any scientist who is not a man walks a path bounded on one side by inauthenticity and the other by subversion” (p. 174). The point is the link between the scientist identity and masculinity implies women cannot be scientists, a woman must be trained in such a way to “render her identity invisible” (Subramaniam & Wyer, 1998, p. 13).

Several authors extend this criticism to all of higher education’s doctoral programs. Townsend (1995) argues a “hidden curriculum” exists in doctoral programs that predominately use texts and knowledge generated by White males. She argues a course on organization and governance in higher education, for example would often be better titled: “Organization and Governance in the Four-Year Sector Using Models Developed by White Males” (p. 4). This hidden curriculum inadvertently sends the message that the contributions by women and minorities are either non-existent or unimportant. Ellsworth (1999) refers to the “essentially paternalistic project of education

itself” and argues the power imbalances between teacher and student render complicated instructors’ attempts to “empower” and “give voice” to students (p. 487).

Certainly the value of feminism’s cultural critiques of higher education cannot be overstated. Women are now participating in higher education more than ever and universities, disciplines, and programs have worked to revise practices, change climates, modify curricula, and improve instructional practices in response to the work of (pro)feminist scholars. But as Whitehead (2002) rightly points out, positing male dominance as unyielding and pervasive seems at odds with these (pro)feminist success stories. Both men and women have and do resist male dominance in higher education. To continue to theorize male dominance in higher education as structural harshly limits the possibility of imagining or recognizing future instances of resistance.

Together the critiques of science, education’s paternalism, and the hidden curriculum signal the presence of critical theory’s hegemonic man whose structural dominance creates a “chilly climate” for women (Crawford & MacLeod, 1990). Similar to the argument of male dominance by representation, the critique of academia’s masculine culture runs the risk of unproblematically linking male bodies and power. Women students, faculty, and administrators are therefore all painted as victims of an oppressive academic culture. While importantly pointing out how masculinity is privileged in higher education, the cultural argument relies on Butler’s (1990) heterosexual matrix which assumes a known and dominant masculinity to entail the exclusion of a known and subordinate femininity. The characteristics of this known masculinity in higher education can be seen to paint a portrait of the academic hegemonic man. He is rational, independent/autonomous, powerful, objective, critical, and detached.

And his purchase on what it means to be an academic, scientist, researcher, or faculty person makes him an oppressor of women. But Butler (1990) warns feminist critiques of this kind to be wary of “totalizing claims of a masculine signifying economy” (p. 13).

She states:

The effort to identify the enemy as singular in form is a reverse-discourse that uncritically mimics the strategy of the oppressor instead of offering a different set of terms. That the tactic can operate in feminist and antifeminist contexts alike suggests that the colonizing gesture is not primarily or irreducibly masculinist. (Butler, p. 13)

The problem then becomes how “male dominance” in higher education can be talked about in a way that attends to the risks of reifying the heterosexual matrix, resists totalizing characterizations of masculinity and power, and makes way for critical resistance (Hoy, 2005).

Discursive

To address the problems of reification, totalization, and resistance, poststructural scholars put forward a discursive model of masculinity. Whitehead (2002) refers to this move as “bringing back the resisting subject” and names him the “masculine subject” (p. 99, p. 110). As noted earlier, the masculine subject is both bounded by and productive of discourses of masculinity. But, first, what is meant by discourse?

For Foucault (1969/1972), a discourse is anything that carries meaning:

“Language, images, stories, scientific narratives and cultural products are all discourses” (Alsop, et al., 2002, p. 81). Discourses masquerade as truths about an independent reality, but in fact they structure the way reality is viewed. Most important to this

discussion, discourses are both languages and practices that *create* individuals. As Butler (1993) states:

“...there is no ‘I’ who stands *behind* discourse and executes its volition or will *through* discourse. On the contrary, the ‘I’ only comes into being through being called, named, interpellated... and this discursive constitution takes place prior to the “I.” (p. 225)

Thus it is through discourses that we come to know (the limits of) our selves and the world in which we live. Importantly, discourses are not benign, but are associated with power. Discourses transmit and reinforce, yet undermine and expose power’s effects (Foucault, 1984). Turning to masculinity in higher education, the discursive view allows scholars to analyze dominant discourses of masculinity, but also seek out the marginalized, resistive, and variable masculinities that (can) exist within the academy’s social web (Whitehead, 2002). The next section focusing on *Practice* will more deeply discuss the role of academic discourses and the production of masculine subjects. For now it is important to note the discursive view of male dominance allows for the theorization of masculinity as something that is *produced* in social institutions.

The Discursive Production of Masculinity in Higher Education

Leonard (2001) draws on the discursive subject when she talks about higher education as a place that constitutes gender:

...academia itself is not an institution which just reflects (or exacerbates) pre-given gender identities which people bring into it. Rather it is a place (yet another place) that actively constitutes gender: a site within which individuals construct and reconstruct themselves as gendered subjects by engaging in masculine and feminine ways of thinking and talking, and sexual and other social interactions. Its own social structures and discourses constrain, but do not dictate, individuals’ possibilities. (p. 7)

From the discursive perspective, the academy is critiqued as a site that produces gendered subjects. But these gendered subjects are not taken to be determined. Just as men and women are produced in the academy through gendered discourses, they are also productive of their genders. This production is enacted by taking up available discourses that give gender its intelligibility. Depending on the context, these discourses can be disruptive, resistive, compliant, and/or reproductive of male dominance. The important point is that the discursive perspective offers a way to theorize male dominance in higher education without assuming gender's naturalness, relying on a structural model of power, or turning a blind eye to resistance. But now I've come back to the still problematic concept of the hegemonic man who signals male dominance in higher education. While Whitehead (2002) pulls the rug out from underneath the hegemonic man's feet by dismissing him as structural, I believe this move is too hasty a dismissal of a useful concept.

(Re)thinking the Hegemonic Man

Thinking back to the concept of the hegemonic man, it would seem reasonable, as Pease (2000) suggests, to posit the hegemonic man as a dominant discourse of masculinity. However this reconceptualization runs the risk of "structuralizing" dominant discourses such that they refer back to a monolithic male (dominance). Taking up the hegemonic man as a point of negotiation (Hall, 1997) is a promising way to theorize male dominance in the academy as it works at the level of identity construction. If the hegemonic man can be seen not as an *a priori* fixed masculinity (Connell, 1995), not as always a benchmark against which men negotiate their identities (Hall, 1997), and

not as a dominant discourse with which men and women must contend (Pease, 2000), but as a discursive construction potentially important in the process of constructing masculine identities and effecting instances of male domination, then it seems possible a new understanding of male dominance (and its resistance) in higher education could emerge. The point is not to argue men too are “victims” of dominant forms of masculinity, nor is it simply, as hooks (2004a) suggests, to acknowledge men’s struggles with the proscriptions of masculinity. Rather, the point is to note the complex dynamic between men and the proscriptions of masculinity. It is to suggest the variability of the form and function of the hegemonic man in a way that accounts for both the potential acts of power and powerlessness of the hegemonic man.

Within this section I covered three ways in which male dominance in higher education is conceptualized: by the numbers, as cultural, and as discursive. While a discursive model of masculinity attends to the problems associated with structural power, monolithic characterizations of gender, and nullified resistance, it too quickly dismisses the hegemonic man as a potential important force in identity construction. If it is agreed the hegemonic man can be integral to the process of identity negotiation, perhaps signaling male dominance, then a new theorization of the hegemonic man’s form and function has implications for how male dominance in higher education is understood. This leads to the first of three foci of this dissertation: To, through an interrogation of the hegemonic man, seek a new theoretical understanding of a male dominance in higher education.

Purpose: Theory

To seek a new understanding of male dominance in higher education this dissertation focused on male graduate students' constructions of masculinity. In this way the dissertation attended to what Whitehead (2002) refers to as the "masculine ontological project," the process by which men seek to make their masculinity/ies real. Specifically, it sought out the men's constructions of the "hegemonic man" and how (if) he functioned as a benchmark against and with which the men understood their masculinity and roles as graduate students. Extrapolating "up" to the level of theory, examining how the hegemonic man was produced by and productive of male graduate students, the analysis sought a better understanding of the hegemonic man's form and function in higher education and how male dominance is affected at the level of masculine identity work.

The next section moves from *Theory* to *Practice* and concerns the production of masculinity in higher education. Through Butler's (1990) heterosexual matrix and Foucault's (1972, 1978) concept of discourse, I seek an understanding of the production of masculinity in higher education. While it is theorized scientific discourses are associated with male dominance, little is known about how these discourses are taken up by individual academic men to construct their masculinity. It is especially important to understand how male graduate students, privileged by their apparent sex and as socialized future representatives of their disciplines, take up different academic discourses to allow and/or deny other gendered/sexed subjects. Therefore the purpose of this dissertation's focus on *Practice* is to illuminate the academic discourses that are potentially complicit in the making of men and marginalization of women and "Other" subjects.

Practice: Production of Masculine Subjects in Graduate School

It is perhaps impossible to understand the production of the masculine subject without attending to the binary sex/gender discourse that permits his emergence. This discourse is what Butler (1990) names the “heterosexual matrix” (p. 12). Refusing a division between a biological sex and a social gender, Butler argues the primacy of neither, but the illusion of both. Sex and gender are produced within a presumed binary division between male and female to which heterosexuality is central. Heterosexuality can only exist within a framework that insists on a separate and oppositional difference between men and women. For Butler (1990), the heterosexual matrix designates a “grid of cultural intelligibility through which bodies, genders, and desires are naturalized” (p. 151). The heterosexual matrix is, importantly, hierarchical:

...for bodies to cohere and make sense there must be a stable sex expressed through a stable gender (masculine expresses male, feminine expresses female) that is oppositionally and hierarchically defined through the compulsory practice of heterosexuality. (Butler, p. 151).

Thus the production and privileging of masculine subjects is effected through a dichotomized language that “brings into existence the gendered and sexualized status of the body – woman and man, straight and gay” (Whitehead, 2002, p. 105). As Fus (1991) points out, it is through the oppositional binary ordering of masculinity and femininity and heterosexuality and homosexuality that each category is rendered dependent on the other. Masculinity and heterosexuality are not things in and of themselves, but are only intelligible by maintaining a difference to their “Others” – femininity and homosexuality. Sedgwick (1990) points out a paradox that masculinity and heterosexuality are supposed to be different from femininity and homosexuality, yet they are simultaneously necessary

for the construction of and perceived as threats to masculinity and heterosexuality. Masculinity and heterosexuality therefore must continually work to recuperate themselves from collapsing into femininity and homosexuality (Luhmann, 1998).

While the “power of discursive regimes of (gender) truth lies in the very language that dichotomizes” (Whitehead, 2002, p. 105), the heterosexual matrix is not all powerful, but actually quite fragile. The subjects it produces are required to constantly ward off the threats of the “Other” and establish themselves as distinct. This constant warding can be seen in Butler’s (1990, 1993) concept of performativity where gender’s illusory fixity is effected by iterative gender performances. More insidiously, the desire to drive out the “Other” can turn aggressive, resulting in violence against women and gays (Luhmann, 1998). Turning to masculinity in higher education, the point is that the construction of male graduate students can be seen to entail an oppositional and “lesser” female graduate student. This has potential implications for female graduate students who may be constructed, as argued earlier, as less rational, less independent, and, overall, less capable of being successful graduate students than their male counterparts (Leonard, 2001). Yet both these subjects are neither given nor stable, they are fragile constructions that can be resisted at multiple points. Therefore they require constant attention in order to appear natural. One way to maintain their natural distinctiveness is to draw on discourses that uphold the division between male and female.

Production of the Masculine Subject through Discourse

As described above, the heterosexual matrix is the name Butler (1990) gives to the *discourse* that governs the intelligibility of sexuality and gender. Discourse was also defined earlier as anything that carries meaning and thereby involves the production of subjects. It is with this understanding of discourse that subjectivity is seen to involve a process of subjectification in which our selves are produced by being subordinated (Butler, 2002). Our selves are made “by becoming subject to norms which are implicit in the discourses which provide our self-understandings” (Alsop, et al., 2002, p. 82). It is through subjectification that we shape and cover our bodies and behave in certain ways to create the man or woman we believe and desire ourselves to be.

But it is essential to understand discourses are neither monolithic nor omnipotent. In what Foucault (1976/1990) terms the “rule of the tactical polyvalence of discourses” (p. 100), discourses have multiple effects and meanings. As Foucault says:

We must not imagine a world of discourse divided between accepted discourse and excluded discourse, or between the dominate discourse and dominated one; but as a multiplicity of discursive elements that can come into play in various strategies.... Discourse transmits and produces power; it reinforces it, but also undermines and exposes it, renders it fragile and makes it possible to thwart it... there can exist different and even contradictory discourses within the same strategy.... (p. 100-102)

Therefore an analysis of discourses of masculinity must attend to how these discourses are taken up and to their meaning(s) within the contexts they are articulated. But more importantly, Foucault’s discussion insists discourses must not be seen as acting alone. Rather, there exists a multiplicity of discourses that constitute men and women (and their binary opposition). A thorough analysis of masculinity in higher education should therefore attend to the network of supporting and competing discourses that are taken up

to construct masculinity. For example, in an analysis of masculinity in New Zealand rugby teams, Pringle (2002) describes several discourses to which New Zealand males are subjected:

New Zealand males are clearly influenced by a range of discourses and bodily experiences which impact on their subjectivities. For example, young males are often encouraged in various contexts to be respectful of others, and increasingly men are disciplined to take care of their bodies through various practices, such as moderation in alcohol consumption, safe sex, and safe driving practices. Furthermore, the second wave of feminism and the gay rights movement have also impacted strongly on understandings of masculinities and femininities. New Zealand men... are therefore influenced by multiple competing discourses which come to the fore in a pastiche of different social contexts. (p. 61)

Given men are produced by and productive of masculinity through the taking up of various (gendered) discourses, it is certainly reasonable to assume academic discourses would feature strongly in the construction of masculinity in graduate education. I have already discussed the “cultural” critique of male dominance in higher education where scientific discourses are seen to associate with a particular masculine way of being (Harding, 1986, 1991; Keller, 1982, 1985; Longino, 1996). While this critique runs the risk of naturalizing masculinity to male bodies, it does importantly suggest scientific discourses, for example, can be picked up to create gendered subjects and mobilized in oppressive ways. Yet other academic discourses may be drawn on to counter oppressive discourses and create alternative subjects.

Hughes’s (2001) study of “student scientific identities” provides a new entrée into the intersection between gender and academic disciplines in higher education. In this study, Hughes interviewed science students at a UK city school and at a post-16 college, aiming “to take the gender and science education literature a step further by relating the discourses and practices of science education to the production of individual scientist

identities” (p. 287). The subjectivities the students adopted were largely dependent upon their position in relation to the dominant scientific discourse. Students who adopted the dominant position performed subjectivities that constituted a traditional gender binary of men as rational, natural scientists and women rejecting a “scientist identity because this gender subjectivity is not compatible with a scientist subjectivity produced within dominant discourse of science” (p. 281). Other students, both male and female who adopted the scientist identity did so through employment of their ethnic identities. The Vietnamese female, for example, was able to “be a scientist” by rejecting other females and emphasizing her ethnic experience of having high parental pressures and expectations and her enthusiasm for science. What all these students possessed in common was the adoption of a science identity based on a traditional discourse of science. However, one student navigated scientific subjectivities while also challenging the traditional scientific assumptions. This biology student constructed a biologist identity that:

...rejects the subjectivity of the ‘clever’ science student who confirms predictions without question and uses this to establish intellectual status, but takes up a new scientist subjectivity of being original and self-reliant.... It [scientific subjectivity] allows her to assert confidence in her own knowledge and ability so that, although as a black female she is positioned as a nonconformist and academically unexceptional by her teachers, she can present a strong scientist identity. (p. 286)

Hughes takes this student’s construction as a call to revise the science curriculum to incorporate constructivist, student-led investigations so that science is available “beyond the traditional limited range of mainly male and some female academically well-positioned students” (p. 288). What is important for this discussion is that, through a

competing or alternative discourse on scientific inquiry, this student was able to construct a different way of being a scientist.

What remains relatively unexamined, however, is the role academic discourses play in the production of *gendered* subjectivities, rather than academic subjectivities. In other words, how is a traditional or alternative discourse of science adopted to describe the differences between men and women and to ascribe them certain characteristics? Potts (2002) points to this connection in an analysis of the “discursive construction of the unreasonable ‘penis-self’” (p. 105). Potts draws on a “modernist human(ist)” discourse common in higher education that constitutes the subject “in terms of the spatial division, mind/body” (p. 105). In this discourse men are associated with the world of intellect and women the corporeal. However, problematizing this dichotomy, rather than “reversing” the body to a privileged position over the mind, Potts analyzes the “ways in which the man perceives a split between his interior self and his exterior penis-self: a penis self... that has a mind of its own” (p. 106). In this way Potts reveals how the mind/body discourse is taken-up to distance men from the behavior of their bodies during sex, reifying male sexuality as necessarily animalistic and risky.

Purpose: Practice

Similar to Pott’s analysis, this dissertation seeks links between academic discourses and the construction of male subjectivities. Therefore the purpose of the second *Practice* foci is to highlight and examine the academic discourses male graduate students take up to construct masculinity. It asks what kinds of masculine subjects academic discourses (can) produce and to what extent they reify and/or resist the heterosexual matrix.

Yet while particular academic discourses may better lend themselves to various reifications and/or resistances, it is in their local instantiations that the extent to which they present challenges to the gender order is best understood. Therefore the third foci, *Process*, concerns the question of resistance. It asks how academic men critically reflect on and construct their masculinities. It asks questions about the link between critical reflection, the production of (pro)feminist male subjects, and critical resistance. Finally, reasons and modes for encouraging critical resistance in male graduate students are considered. The purpose of the *Process* foci is to examine how male graduate students can and do resist the proscriptions of masculinity in ways that make their disciplines open to and productive of a wider variety of gendered subjectivities.

Process: Intervening with College Men and (Critical) Resistance

At the beginning of this chapter, I introduced the “masculinity crisis” story that resounds predominately in the student affairs literature. College men, as the story goes, are experiencing a crisis that is rooted in the pressure to live up to the traditional (hegemonic) social constructions of masculinity. By attempting to meet the expectations of hegemonic masculinity, men suffer psychologically, academically, and physically (Harris, 2006). It would therefore seem to be in men’s best interests to “fight” back against the hegemonic man; to resist his mandates. However hegemonic masculinity is also what confers men their position of dominance in the gender order, legitimizing patriarchy and the oppression of women (Connell, 2000). So men, in order to maintain their dominant status and its privileges, would also appear to have a very good reason to

perform a masculinity that reifies (Davis & Wagner, 2005) or is in complicity with (Connell, 1995) the hegemonic man.

Intervening with College Men

Student affairs and masculinity studies professionals attempt a two-pronged attack in intervening with college men. First, these interventions address the reasons men have to resist the hegemonic man, arguing men's academic, social, and physical lives will improve if they "express their gender identities in a healthy and responsible manner" (Harris, 2006, p. 26). Second, they seek to educate men about the oppressiveness of hegemonic masculinity, holding that men ought to be responsible for dismantling their privilege (Barone, et al., 2007; Capraro, 1994, 2004; Davis & Wagner, 2005; hooks, 1991; Seidler, 1997; Stoltenberg, 2000). The programs that stem from these two ideas are most often informed by feminist perspectives (Capraro, 1994), tend to involve same-sex groups (Capraro, 1994, 2004; Davis & Wagner, 2005; May, 1988), and attend to men's gender identity development (Capraro, 1994, 2004; Davis & Wagner, 2005; Harris, 2006; Laker, 2004).

Programs intervening with college men are new in the US, all developed in the early 2000s. According to the Men's Project Collaborative (2007) there are currently nine U.S. universities that house college men's anti-sexism groups: Amherst, Colorado State, Dartmouth, Haverford, University of North Texas, University of Rochester, Southern Methodist University, Tufts, and Tulane. Davis and Wagner (2005) lay out the features of a typical intervention program. Men are encouraged to (a) acknowledge their privilege, (b) critique gender scripts associated with hegemonic masculinity, (c) discuss

their contradictory experiences related to male dominance, and (d) become allies with women in the work against violence and sexism. Overall, these programs encourage men to develop “antisexist or profeminist” identities (Davis & Wagner, 2005, p. 38). Yet college men “tend to resist the feminist perspective” that “challenges their assumptions about what it means to be a man” (Capraro, 1994, p. 29-30). They are said to generally go through the stages of “preawareness,” where they either blindly or actively accept the oppressor role; “awakening,” where they start to acknowledge the reality of sexism; “emotional involvement,” where they become invested in challenging traditional roles and experience guilt; and “reflection,” where they integrate their understanding of sexism into their lives and critically examine male roles (May, 1988, p. 13). Moving through these stages men critique hegemonic masculinity that confers male domination, exploring “their own experience” and developing “a new language for talking about that experience” (Capraro, 1994, p. 31). In what Stoltenberg (2000) refers to as “refusing to be a man” (p. 9), these interventions challenge college men to resist the proscriptions of the hegemonic man. But what is this resistance and what impacts is it likely to produce?

“Resisting” the Hegemonic Man

Earlier, the literature review revealed the hegemonic man as a problematic theoretical construct, one based on a juridico-discursive model of power (Foucault, 1980, 1982) that inadvertently mobilizes the very structure of male dominance it seeks to dismantle (Whitehead, 2002). Most of the interventions described above are founded on the assumption of male dominance and therefore involve a critique of hegemonic masculinity. A typical session has men examining the media and their personal histories

for masculinity messages and discussing who is harmed and benefited by various representations of gender (Davis & Wagner, 2005). At the same time, facilitators of these discussions are sent explicit messages about how men relate to one another (Pollack, 2001). Facilitators are told to “seek out and provide alternative pathways for expression (that is, relate while engaging in action-oriented activities)” (Davis & Wagner, 2005, p. 37), employ a “male-student-centered pedagogy” that is “single-sex, peer-facilitated, small-group, interactive, experientially based, residentially based, and required” (Capraro, 2004, p. 30), and to “role model emotional expression” (Ludeman, 2004, p. 82). It would seem the intervention literature, similar to media representations, entails its own representations of masculinity that reproduce hegemonic norms – where men are the holders of power, prefer action to discussion, experience to conversation, and struggle to express their emotions.

Through Butler (1990, 1993, 2004) it has also become clear that insistence on a binary division between men and women, masculine and feminine, “as the exclusive way to understand the gender field performs a regulatory operation of power that naturalizes the hegemonic instance and forecloses the thinkability of its disruption” (Butler, 2004, p. 43). The interventions with college men described above similarly assume a dualistic gender order discretely divided into men (who hold power) and women (who seek empowerment). For example, focusing on “men’s experience” and employing “single-sex” groups (Capraro, 2004, pp. 24, 30) makes use of the gender binary by assuming men, as a knowable group, have experiences different from those of women and, taken together, form a single sex.

Overall, the interventions described in the men's studies and student affairs literature are based on the assumption that gender is a binary construct and power is hierarchical and located in knowable male bodies that are "the primary agents maintaining and supporting sexism and sexist oppression" (hooks, 2004a, p. 563). In these interventions men are encouraged to come to terms with and change their sexist behaviors, mobilizing their male power to work against, rather than for, the patriarchy. But while these interventions allow individual men can challenge the hegemonic man and recreate their masculine identities (Capraro, 1994), relying on a juridico-discursive model of power means *the structure of male dominance and the power of the gender binary remain unchecked* (Whitehead, 2002). So for all their focus on limited notions of agency and transformation, these interventions maintain a pervasive and unchanging account of masculine domination. Overall, their association with juridico-discursive accounts of power and insistence on a binary gender mean these interventions with college men will invariably render complex genders and their relations to an oppressor-victim dualism in which men hold all the power and women are painted as victims, "somehow innocent of divisive, exclusionary, and oppressive tendencies" (Grimshaw, 1993, p. 56).

But before I get too far ahead of myself, I want to be clear this dissertation in no way argues colleges and universities shouldn't intervene with and work to educate men about the dangers of normative masculinity. On the contrary, my work insists colleges, universities, and their departments ought to be responsible for encouraging male graduate students to resist traditional masculinity and engage in the project to end violence against women (Barone, et al., 2007). The above critique, rather than halt the current work with men, calls into question the kind of resistance permitted within these interventions by

critiquing and rethinking the theoretical concepts on which they rely. As I've argued, the juridico-discursive model of power assumed by the interventions is productive of a limited resistance, one that suggests individual transformation, but ultimately maintains an assumed structure of male dominance. The next section considers the topic of resistance and introduces "critical resistance" (Hoy, 2005) as an alternative to the kind of ideological resistance currently engendered in intervention programs with college men.

Differentiating Between Resistance and Critical Resistance

Resistance comes when one senses not only one's dependence on these constraints, but also one's tendency to give in to them.

Hoy, 2005, p. 100

To understand resistance, it is first important to grapple with the concepts of power (What is being resisted?) and agency (How is resistance possible?). First, poststructural accounts hold society cannot exist without power relations and therefore give there is no ultimate emancipation from power. Foucault (1975/1995, 1976/1990), for example, holds that power is productive, shaping individuals (disciplinary power) and populations (bio-power). This positive view of power does not negate power's dominating effects. Power can be exercised in a way that entails dominance, but not all exercises of power are oppressive. While some critics argue poststructuralists' inability to imagine a society without power entails relativism, (Detmer, 2003; Eagleton, 1996), an apolitical stance (Callinicos, 1990), or a philosophy of the status quo (Walzer, 1986), poststructural theories remain concerned with resistance and social change. Indeed, both Foucault (1997) and Butler (2002) insist resistance is necessarily tied to power; that one summons the other. As Hoy (2005) says, "We can still use the idea of resisting

oppression without invoking the ideal of a society in which there is no oppression” (p. 207).

Following this understanding of power, an important distinction between agency as “freedom from” and “freedom to” emerges. To insist the point of resistance is to free ourselves from oppression or the proscriptions of the hegemonic man suggests both a society without power and the separation of the subject and the power that gives rise to the subject. It is my argument that when interventions with college men ask them to critique hegemonic masculinity and refuse to be a man (Stoltenberg, 2000), they are advocating a “freedom from” form of resistance. But, as Whitehead (2002) states, “There can be no possibility of the sex/gender dichotomy disappearing, though the ideal representations that configure it are under constant movement and (re)negotiation across countless cultural sites” (p. 218).

In contrast, resistance that invokes a “freedom to” is what Hoy (2005) refers to as critical resistance, involving Foucault’s (2000) desubjectification and the ability, “to imagine ourselves and others otherwise” (Butler, 2004, p. 29). “Freedom to” is therefore the freedom of opening up possibility. And desubjectification is the process of unbecoming with the aim of resisting the constraints of identity such that other identities become possible. To engage in desubjectifying practices is to willingly put one’s own sense of self at risk (Butler, 2002). It is the process of “dissolving oneself” (Hoy, 2005, p. 90) and denying what one is supposed to be. Butler (1997) argues desubjectification is an ethical practice in which the subject actively seeks to resist the identities that simultaneously confer its intelligibility, but constrain the subject within their bounds.

Masculine Ontology and Critical Resistance

Working with these ideas, Whitehead (2002) introduces the concept of “masculine ontology” (p. 210) to describe men’s subjectification to masculinity. Masculine ontology refers to men’s attempt to make masculinity real or, in Butler’s (1997) terms, how the subject “desires the conditions of one’s own subordination” (p. 9). I’ve argued above interventions with college men aspire to a model of freedom that couches resistance as an escape from or rejection of the hegemonic man. Free from the hegemonic man’s proscriptives, men are subsequently “empowered” to form new masculine identities (preferably anti-sexist or profemist ones). But critical resistance suggests this formation of new identities simply trades one mode of subjectification for another. As Hoy (2005) states, “...critique functions not by providing an alternative account of who you are and what you ought to do, but by dissolving your sense of who you are and disrupting your sense of what the right thing to do is” (p. 89). Critical resistance would therefore imply interventions that interrupt the masculine ontological project, asking men to *critique* their attachment to being men and put their sense of selves at risk.

The question for this dissertation, and the central concern of the *Process* foci, is the nature of critique involved in critical resistance. What are critique’s effects and what current understandings of critique potentially foster desubjectification? These questions are not rhetorical, but have emerged as among those not being asked in interventions around masculinity with college men. The point is not to put forward a set of proscriptive practices, but to critique “critique” and suggest the possible plurality of critique’s effects. It may be that, for example, despite their reliance on juridico-

discursive models of power, the described interventions foster desubjectification in some college men. The process of critiquing the hegemonic man may, for instance, have such a jarring effect on men who strongly align with his practices, that they experience a distancing from themselves. The familiar becomes strange and for maybe even just a moment, these men experience a world of uprooted subjective possibility. But it is also possible that the process of critique has an oppositional and solidifying effect. Instead of remaining open to possibility and keeping himself at risk, the man may seek refuge in an alternative masculinity, further entrenching himself in the original or a new ontological project. Yet this time he would have the satisfaction of having “critically examined” his masculinity and the pleasure of being on the other side of that engagement. That other side may very well be constituted in an anti-sexist or profeminist masculinity, but, as Hoy (2005) points out about resistance to domination, the new masculinities may “not be aware of the extent to which they presuppose the patterns of oppression that they are resisting” (p. 3). If the profeminist man is taken to be the opposite of the hegemonic man then the social organization that presupposes male domination is reinstituted, rather than resisted.

Purpose: Process

Before I become explicit about the purpose of the *Process* focus, I want to return my discussion to that of male *graduate* students. The literature on working with men in higher education focuses solely on undergraduates and as a result, there is little to be said about programs for working with male graduate students. However, much is written about the supervision, mentoring, and coaching of graduate students (albeit largely

without considering gender as part of the process). Chapters 4 and 5, Results and Discussion, draw on this body of literature and consider how supervisory practices can engage male graduate students in self-critique, the kind that may eventuate in critical resistance. I argue intervening with male graduate students is best done within these and other one-on-one relationships. Indeed, the interview method I adopted, an inquiry of discomfort (Wolgemuth & Donohue, 2006), was intended to mobilize critical reflection (Brookfield, 1987, 1998) and foster ambiguity central to critical resistance and desubjectification.

Therefore the purpose of the *Process* focus is two-fold. First, it asks what masculine subjects were produced when the participants were asked to critically reflect on their masculinities and interrogates the participants' relationship with those subjects. Is the relationship one of desire (as found in the masculine ontological project) or distance (as found in desubjectification)? As Hoy (2005) says, "Resistance that was unwilling to be both critical and self-critical would not even be worth attempting in the first place" (p. 239). It is therefore important I engage in a critique of the process by which I hoped to foster critique and resistance. Second, the *Process* focus considers the implications for the supervision of male graduate students. Within these one-on-one relationships, how can supervisors work with men to foster critical resistance?

Conclusion

I'd like to begin this conclusion by addressing some unattended questions, namely those of the "So what?" variety. The questions begin innocently and politely enough, "Can you explain why this study is important?" but eventually they become more direct

and incisive, revealing an important underlying skepticism. “Why should universities bother to work with men in the first place? And even if they should work with *undergraduate* men, why should they concern themselves with graduate men? Aren’t universities in the business of training professionals? Is it really departments’ and supervisors’ responsibility to talk about masculinity? Ultimately, if men want to do this work, shouldn’t they do it on their own?” And so on.... I will attempt to address these questions in turn.

But first, it should be acknowledged there is an important and, fundamental to the purpose of the university, distinction to be made between education and training. Universities are in the business of educating citizens, not of providing a skilled workforce. The question becomes, what will be the academy’s contribution to a civil society?

Why Should Universities Work with Men?

The student affairs literature, as I’ve presented it, argues men are currently experiencing a crisis of masculinity in higher education (Kimmel, 2004). University men are suffering psychologically, physically, and academically and now, more than ever, they require the services of student affairs professionals (Capraro, 2004). Their suffering is located in their struggles with normative standards of masculinity and therefore student affairs professionals ought to design programs that help these men identify and critique these hegemonic messages (Capraro, 1994, 2004; Davis & Wagner, 2005; Harris, 2006). The aim is to foster men’s development of anti-sexist and (pro)feminist identities, assuming the adoption of these identities will help alleviate their psychological, physical, and academic struggles.

While I have spent much space and time critiquing the argument above, it is not my intention to devalue its aims, which seem to be to create campus environments centered on social justice and to provide physical and identity spaces for men to work against violence against women and other targeted groups. It is certainly high time for masculinity to be recognized, examined, and described as a form of gender, rather than presumed a normal state against which the feminine emerges as “Other.” Those who study men’s understandings of masculinity consistently remark that reactions to questions like, “What is it like being a man on campus” are largely ones of incredulity (Davis, 2002). Interventions and investigations that maintain men’s focus on masculinity are important because they challenge the presumed normalcy of something that can be called masculine.

Therefore my aim is not to counter, but to extend, the argument that universities should work with men to critically resist masculinity by drawing on poststructural feminist critiques that the university is always already complicit in the production of subjects (Leonard, 2001). By rethinking male dominance in higher education, studying the impact of academic discourses on the construction of masculinity, and examining the impact of critical reflection, this dissertation seeks to better inform current and future work done with men in higher education. And while I rejected a structural account of male dominance, it would seem the university’s production of subjects favors those who would be male. Therefore, if we accept the role of the university is to promote criticality of received knowledge, part of a university education ought to disrupt the processes that seek to dictate and (perhaps inadvertently) privilege the kinds of men and women students can be. As I’ve argued earlier, this project is not tantamount to creating multiple

masculinities or femininities (Connell, 1995), but involves fostering detachment from the genders that confer students their (un)intelligibility (Butler, 2004). But I am still speaking mostly from the perspective of programs that work with undergraduate men. The question, “Why work with male graduate students?” remains to be addressed.

Why Work with Male Graduate Students?

I’ve argued universities (as all institutions) are complicit in the production of masculine and feminine subjects (Leonard, 2001). And I’ve further identified academic discourses, such as objectivity, as particularly important in the construction of gendered subjects within specific disciplines. Weidman and Stein (2003) note the process of educating graduate students is one of socialization where graduate students acquire the “cognitive and affective dimensions of social roles related to the practice of learned occupations” (p. 642). The question becomes, how can disciplines and their discourses be tied to the production and privileging of masculinity and can (or is) this process interrupted? While the collegiate socialization of undergraduate men tends to be highly group/peer-oriented (Kuh, 1995), graduate students are predominately socialized at the departmental level, where their supervisors and other faculty play an integral role in conveying the mores, identities, and “truths” of their fields and professions (Weidman & Stein, 2003). The kinds of identities graduate students may encounter also vary between disciplines (Weidman, Twale, & Stein, 2001). It is through department faculty that students are introduced and engage the discourses involved in the production of masculine and feminine subjects. And, therefore, it stands to reason that it is through the same faculty students should learn to critique and resist these gendered subjects. It

follows that graduate programs ought not to be only concerned with producing psychologists, engineers, scientists, or even professors, but with promoting critical intellectuals “permanently capable of self detachment” (Foucault, 1989, p. 303).

A Return to Purpose(s)

This dissertation’s aim, therefore, is to examine masculinity in graduate school, how its normative forces can be best understood, what discourses it takes up to convey itself, and how it is (critically) resisted. The literature review concerned these three aims and named them the *Theory*, *Practice*, and *Process* foci. The following chapter, Inquiry and Analysis, describes the methods and analytic processes I used to investigate the three foci. The study is explicitly named *narrative* and I spend some time describing why narrative methods aligned well with the study’s aims.

Overall, the reader may find Chapter 3 feels different than the preceding two chapters. In Chapter 3, I intentionally weave in some experiences and thoughts, in a style I refer to as the *personal narrator*, that were integral to the study’s design and analysis. While I struggled with the extent to which I should write myself in or out of the dissertation, I believe the thoughts I ultimately chose to make explicit in Chapter 3 attend to the important validity criteria of transparency and attest to the autobiographical and contextual quality of narrative research.

CHAPTER THREE: INQUIRY AND ANALYSIS

Research is fun; writing is hard work.

Auel, 2007

I want to be clear, as much as anyone can be said to “own” a story, this chapter is my story. I have spent the last two years of my graduate career designing, conducting, and analyzing a narrative study of masculinity in graduate school. It is a story that rightly privileges my thoughts, feelings, and struggles. But, why rightly? First, narrative research is “strongly autobiographical” in that the decisions around what to study, how to study, and what to report are most often made by the researcher (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. 121). Scheurich (1997) lists the many things researchers bring to interviews from “epistemological inclinations” to “individual idiosyncracies” (p. 73). Importantly, Scheurich (1997) concludes the written product is “largely, though not completely, but a mirror image of the researcher and his/her baggage” (p. 74). I argue the inquiry and analysis chapter is the part of the dissertation project most influenced by the researcher’s “baggage.” It is in the interest of transparency, unpacking the baggage germane to the project (also a baggage laden decision), that the researcher should disclose events, thoughts, and feelings that led to design and analysis decisions.

In this section, I narrate in two (mostly, but not always) distinct voices: academic narrator (regular typeface) and the *personal narrator* (italic typeface). While most of this

chapter is written in the past tense, at times I slip into the present and look about me, reminding myself and the reader that this dissertation was part of my life, written at particular times in particular contexts. For example, the analysis section is set in a coffee shop where I spent many hours coding and writing about the interviews. It is in the present tense I most often reflect on my thoughts and feelings. The purpose of this reflection, what Guba and Lincoln (2005) refer to as “reflexivity” (p. 210), is ethical, analytical, and theoretical.

Ethically, I do not feel I could have asked the participants to critically engage what it means to be a man if I did not believe in the importance of challenge and critique. Chase (1996) reminds us that using narrative participants’ life stories renders participants more vulnerable than in most other qualitative studies. Yet my interview methods made the participants even more vulnerable because I asked them not only to recount stories, but to openly critique them. This process of critical reflection was intended to create deeper, more complex, and more ambiguous stories, an ethical outcome in and of itself, but its one-sidedness was concerning. While I largely refrained from talking about my gender, sexuality, and feminist beliefs during the interviews (they were, after all, about the men’s constructions and not mine), the analysis chapter demanded I be reflexive, critically reflecting on my “self as researcher,” and present this researcher self similarly in process (Guba & Lincoln, 2005, p. 210). Guba and Lincoln (2005) argue:

Reflexivity... demands that we interrogate each of our selves regarding the ways in which research efforts are shaped and staged around binaries, contradictions, and paradoxes that form our own lives. We must question ourselves, too, regarding how those binaries and paradoxes shape not only the identities called forth in the field and later in the discovery process of writing, but also in our interactions with respondents, in who we become to them in the process of becoming to ourselves. (p. 210)

Analytically, writing reflexively provided an entree to major components of the methods and analyses. Through writing, what Richardson and St. Pierre (2005) argue is a method of inquiry unto itself, I reflected on the selves I brought to and were brought by the study, including my woman, heterosexual, graduate student, and poststructural feminist selves. By making my reflections and the dissertation process explicit, readers are better equipped to understand how and why I made certain design and analysis choices at the exclusion of others. This explicitness is a form of research transparency, or what Savin-Badin and Fisher (2002) refer to as necessary “honesties.” Being explicit and reflexive about the multiple selves I brought to the study; the thought processes that led to the formulation of research questions, methods, and analysis strategies; and their complexities ultimately allows readers to better assess the study’s “processes and outcomes” (Guba & Lincoln, 2005, p. 207).

Theoretically, this study seeks to present the selves it involves as nonunitary (Bloom, 2002). While Tierney (1997c, p. 42) believes it is likely “multiple selves demand multiple texts,” I feel writing in a singular voice, even if argued it is one of many, recreates the fiction of the unitary author. By speaking in multiple narrator voices and troubling my subjectivities, I seek to complicate traditional conceptualizations of the author as a singular and objective arbiter of reality. (For a thorough discussion of “Authors as Selves,” see Tierney & Lincoln, 1997, p. 39.) Daiute and Fine (2003) argue the “interpretive function of narrative takes it out of the realm of mere reporting and embeds it in researcher subjectivities and social relations” (p. 63). Therefore the subject positions I perform, whether consciously or unconsciously, are part and parcel of the interpretative process. Bringing these subject positions to light through self-reflection,

when I, for example, introduce the male participants, deepens and makes more complex the dissertation's interpretative possibilities. As Bloom (2002) says, when we engage our multiple subjectivities, "...what we give up in certainty, we get back in richer interpretations" (p. 312).

Design: What's and Why's of Narrative

This study is a narrative inquiry in that it elicited stories, focused on meaning-making, and attended to interview responses as texts for analysis (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Josselson, Lieblich, & McAdams, 2003). But narrative inquiry is not only a method, it also implies an epistemology (knowledge is created by and found within narratives) and an ontology (reality is constructed through narratives). How we come to know ourselves, the world, and how we operate in that world are all products of narrative construction. Simply put, "Experience happens narratively. Narrative inquiry is a form of narrative experience. Therefore, educational experience should be studied narratively" (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. 19).

How we understand the ontology of narratives varies from realist, where "reality is mirrored more or less imperfectly in narrative" to poststructural, where there is "no outside to inside text," (Boje, 2001, pp. 15-16). This study takes a feminist poststructural position on the construction of narratives holding that the text is not a unitary or direct representation of gendered experience (Weedon, 1996). Rather, even before experiences are relayed, they are "at once already an interpretation and in need of interpretation" (Scott, 1991, p. 779). The men's constructions of masculinity were not taken to directly represent the men, but rather as an "exclusionary matrix" where a variety of social, academic, and personal texts met to create certain kinds of possible (and impossible)

subject positions (Butler, 1993, p. 3). This is a study of those texts and their constructions. In particular, this study focuses on two kinds of constructions: The hegemonic (Connell, 1995) and the ideal man.

But Why Narrative Research?

Could I not obtain the same information via less personally invasive research methods such as classroom observations, focus groups, surveys, or brief structured interviews? The negative answer to this question is three-fold. First, the personal narrative is a text and as such it “represents a meaning system complete unto itself” (Chanfrault-Duchet, 1991). This is important as my study was concerned with not just the “whats,” but also the “hows” of the men’s masculinity constructions. Narrative is integral to this study because it attends to those “hows,” eliciting the systems and structures by which the men made meaning of their gender and sexuality.

Second, my study was concerned with the construction of subjectivity as opposed to what Mansfield (2000) characterized as the “true nature” of the Enlightenment’s free and autonomous individual. My study assumed the *discursive* nature of the subject. That is, I took axiomatically that the masculine subject is, as all subjects are, created via languages that are always limited, culture bound, and imbedded in systems of power. As shown above, narrative inquirers similarly hold that reality itself is storied, both on the personal and social levels and should be studied narratively (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000).

Third, narrative inquiry’s focus is on the “self.” Bloom (2002) offers the following three aims of narrative research:

First, narrative research is concerned with using individual lives as the primary source of data. Second, it is concerned with using narratives of the “self” as a location from which the research can generate social critique and advocacy. Third, narrative research is concerned with deconstructing the “self” as a humanist conception, allowing for nonunitary conceptions of the self. (p. 310)

Viewed in this way, narrative inquiry is a well-suited vehicle for the poststructural feminist research project whose aim is social change. It is an ideal method for examining the personal stories of male graduate students, how they constructed their subjectivities, and the greater narratives by which those subjectivities are created. No other method as deeply enters the lives of participants and illuminates them in their relationships with themselves, others and social institutions.

Therefore this narrative study was guided by the following *research questions* addressing the “whats” (contents), and “hows” (processes) of masculinity in graduate school:

Content Research Questions

1. *What* masculine subjectivities were constructed?
2. *What* “Other” subjectivities emerged in relation to the men’s constructions?
3. *What* academic discourses made these constructions possible?

Process Research Questions

4. *How* do male graduate students relate to (resist, comply, submit) these constructions?
5. *What* were the outcomes of critical reflection, in terms of resistance?

The content and process research questions combined to address the dissertation’s *Theory, Practice, and Process* foci.

The Participants

Recruitment

Participant sampling was purposive and involved a combination of homogenous and maximum variation strategies (Patton, 2002). I sought participant homogeneity in gender, sexuality, age, graduate student status, and the desire to critically reflect on masculinity. However, I also sought participants from a variety of graduate programs to elucidate the similar and unique connections between disciplinary discourses and the construction of masculinity. Seven participants were recruited and, of these, five were selected to participate in the study.

Some potential participants were recommended by Ryan, a program coordinator at Colorado State University's (CSU) Department of Women's Programs and Studies. At the time Ryan was co-facilitator of a male graduate student Men's Group that met bi-weekly to explore issues of male gender socialization. Three of the participants were part of the Men's Group.

Participants were also recruited via an e-mail sent to university faculty describing the study and requesting they forward the study information to their graduate advisees. Four participants were recruited from this effort, of whom two were selected to participate. Copies of the recruitment e-mails and participant consent forms are provided in Appendix A.

Selection

Participants were selected based on the satisfaction of four criteria:

1. Their sexual practices and/or self-definitions were predominately heterosexual.
2. They were of a “representational” age for traditional graduate students:
between 24 and 39 years (Syverson, 1996).
3. They were relatively comfortable discussing their gender and sexualities in an interview format.
4. They were willing to critically reflect on what it means to be male.

Critical Reflection

Through a pilot study conducted in the fall of 2003, I learned the necessity of recruiting participants who desire to understand masculinity and how it functions in their lives. It was not enough for participants to answer, “What kind of a man are you?” My research questions required their thoughts on, “What does being a man mean?” and, “How are you that man?”

For the purposes of my study, especially those associated with the *Process* focus, I would therefore need men who were interested in critically reflecting on the topic of masculinity. According to Brookfield (1987), there are four activities central to critical reflection:

1. Assumption analysis – Involves thinking about our beliefs in order to assess their impact on our lives.
2. Contextual awareness – Locates our assumptions in a specific historical and cultural context.

3. Imaginative speculation – Has us imagine alternative ways of thinking in order to challenge our assumptions.
4. Reflective skepticism – Allows us to think about a subject so that our assumptions are suspended or temporarily rejected.

Contrary to Brookfield (1987, 1998), who claims the ultimate outcome of critical reflection is “integration” where the thinker decides “on the work, accuracy, and validity of new ways of thinking or living” (p. 27) and weaves these into the fabric of his/her life, it was my aim to induce reflective skepticism in the interview, maintaining the interview as a place to examine life-forms in the making and to elicit an array of possible assumptions. This meant continually asking and encouraging critical questions that (hopefully) prevented the men from foreclosing on gender identities by problematizing “positions that take identity categories as foundational and fixed” (Butler, 1990). To put it in Gubrium and Holstein’s (2003) terms, I sought to interview actively. This meant interviewing in a way “that the subject’s interpretative capabilities must be activated, stimulated, and cultivated” (Gubrium & Holstein, 2003, p. 75).

Variety of Disciplines

A final criterion was that the men represent a variety of academic disciplines. Selecting male graduate students from heterogeneous departments allowed me to study the potential interaction between disciplines, academic discourses, and subjectivities. Although the intention was not to draw comparisons between “men of academic programs,” undercutting the challenge of a fixed identity by entrenchment in another,

selecting men from various disciplines revealed a broader variation of the ways masculinity is produced, performed, and challenged within the academy.

Screening Interviews

After obtaining Colorado State University's Human Subject's approval, screening interviews¹ were scheduled with seven men who expressed interest in participating. Two participants were eventually excluded from the study. The first participant was excluded because his desire for critical reflection seemed low. He said he had responded to the e-mail solicitation because he was interested in understanding how his sons were being socialized to be men. His responses predominately focused on the external forces (surprisingly excluding himself) that were creating his sons to be certain kinds of boys. From the interviews he hoped to gain a better understanding of the social expectations his sons might be experiencing. While this aim was certainly laudable, his goals were not aligned with those of the study.

The second participant was excluded after the third interview for two reasons. The first was that we had a very difficult time setting up interviews. As an intern, fulltime student, and a college professional, he kept a very busy schedule. Participating in this study was close to last on his priority list. By June 2006, when I'd completed all six or seven interviews with the other participants, I'd only conducted three with him.

¹ All screening interviews were tape recorded and conducted in one of three sound proofed counseling rooms in the basement of CSU's Education Building. These interviews were intended to determine whether the men met the four selection criteria listed above. After completing informed consent procedures, participants filled out an information sheet giving their age, gender, sexuality, degree program, and an educational history. The tape recorder was then turned on and I asked the men two questions:

1. Why do you want to participate in this study?
2. What do you hope to get out of participating?

These questions were designed to assess participants' comfort level with discussing their gender and sexuality and to determine the participant's desire and/or ability for critical reflection.

The second reason was the interviews with this participant were methodologically different than those I conducted with the other participants. These interviews were more like back and forth conversations where the participant and I asked one another questions about our gender and sexuality identities, what Ellis and Berger (2003) refer to as “interactive interviews.” While these interviews facilitated researcher reflexivity by providing a place to discuss methods and emergent findings, the co-constructed conversations were not similar enough to the other interviews to warrant including this man as a sixth participant. It was mutually decided the participant would continue in his role as a research consultant and his three interviews would not be a part of the analysis.

Meet the Men

Sitting in the Colorado State University library with my dissertation support group in the western-most study room, I lean back in my chair and chuckle at a typical Colorado weather irony. The window on my left looks out over the southern campus buildings and shows a clear sunny sky. Were it not for the leafless trees, one might think it a beautiful summer day. Looking forward, out the westerly window, reveals a different day entirely. The mountains ahead are covered by a vast expanse of dark grey clouds that better contrast the sleeting snow. The windows remind me I’ve been talking about the participants as if looking only through the winter day window. While the grey clouds allowed me to clearly see the falling snow, they obscured the landscape and created a stale scene.

“It’s about time I introduce the men,” I say to myself, staring out the sunny window. I purposely avoid the term “participants” that by now feels cold and distant

from the men who became my research partners and friends. The academic narrator's voice, while importantly providing a way to clearly talk about the study's methods has left out much of the personal and contextual. Therefore the introductions are written in my personal narrator's voice so they are familiar and more inviting, like the view out the sunny window.

This section privileges my reactions to the participants, painting portraits constructed from my memory of our first encounter. It honors that the research participants were not just enacted upon, they happened to me (Rosenthal, 2003). More importantly, what I choose to write about them is not a direct representation of their experiences, but is (always) an account filtered through my reactions and interpretations (Chase, 1996). Were the men to write about the first interview, no doubt they would tell different stories, from different perspectives. Yet to understand how I analyzed these interviews, how I came to understand these men, entails I be transparent about my thoughts and feelings during the interviews. This is similar to what Ellis and Berger (2003) refer to as the outcome of "reflexive dyadic interviewing" where the write-up includes the researcher's reactions adding context and "layers" to the story (p. 162).

Make no mistake these representations are not "how the men are" or even were, but how they appear to me upon reflection of those initial interviews. It is my hope the participants will emerge as clear personalities by using their words as much as possible and discussing my reflections. Because, even though these are my reactions and interpretations, I am wary of "analyzing and interpreting interview material in a way that makes the research reports I write into fiction," if here we think about "fiction" as the opposite of a situated and temporal truth (Rosenblatt, 2003, p. 237). To help me

reconstruct the initial interviews I have the interview transcripts and notes from those first sessions. I also have the method of “emotional recall” to construct the scenes (Ellis, 1991). Emotional recall is a process in which the researcher-writer relives past experiences in all their sensual and affective detail. The purpose of emotional recall is to evoke “a response in oneself in order to create a more powerful and convincing scene for others to engage” (Tillman-Healy, 2001, p. 176).

I lean back in my chair and close my eyes, focusing my memory on the first time I met Graham², the counselor. A smile plays on my lips. Ours was my first screening interview and I remember being nervous as he walked into the room and confidently sat down on the chair opposite mine...

The Counselor

The man sitting across from me was black. Other than his obvious tallness and thick masculine features, broad chest and large hands, his blackness was the first thing I noticed about him. I knew the chances of him walking through the counselor training room door were slim to none. During the semester we conducted our interviews only 1.4% of CSU’s 3500 graduate students were identified as African American³ (Colorado State University Office of Budget Institutional Analysis, 2006).

² All participants’ names, Graham, Hunter, Franklin, Clark, and Jake are pseudonyms. In the cases of Franklin and Clark, these names were self-selected. Graham, Hunter, and Jake left it to me to assign their pseudonyms. I did so based on literary authors and characters of whom the participants reminded me, even if slightly. Graham refers to the author Graham Green, Hunter is from Hunter S. Thompson, and Jake is the main character in Hemingway’s (1986) novel, *The Sun Also Rises*.

³ While my theoretical framework focused on masculinity and heterosexuality, I opted not to take up ethnicity. I also excluded an analysis based on social class. I feel both topics are significant enough to warrant more treatment than I could provide within a dissertation focusing on gender and sexuality. How male graduate students construct masculinity by drawing on discourses of ethnicity, including normative “whiteness;” culture and class are areas of inquiry that await further investigation.

I was excited about the perspectives and discourses Graham, as a “black man,” might bring to the interviews. But I had to catch myself. Just as my aim was to avoid universalizing masculinity, Graham’s ethnicity certainly was not monolithic. “What kind of a black heterosexual male graduate student is he?” I wondered to myself.

“I’m so nervous,” I confessed after I’d fumbled around with the interview tape.

Crossing his legs, Graham smiled kindly and laughed, “Yeah, people tend to be nervous around me. I think it’s because I’m a big man and I wear a tie. It makes them think I’m important or something. I don’t want you to be nervous.”

“Oh, I don’t think it’s you,” I said, wanting him to know nervousness was natural for me, that it didn’t have anything to do with his professional attire or football player’s build. “It’s because you’re my first participant. Let’s start and see how it goes. I’m sure I’ll become less nervous. Uhm, tell me about your program.”

“I’m in my 2nd semester of the counseling program. It’s really feminist focused. So I’ve been learning a lot about myself and about stuff like that,” Graham said.

“A feminist-focused program? What’s that been like?” I asked.

“Well it’s tough. Coming from a feminist program I feel caught between two worlds. The feminist world and the world I grew up in. And sometimes it feels like I don’t have a voice in my program, you know? Every now an then...,” Graham nervously laughed, cutting himself off.

“Wow, here is an interesting development,” I thought to myself. Graham clearly was struggling to make sense of feminism and maybe saw it as a challenge to his current worldview. And he felt silenced in his program. I’d talked to men about being in feminist classrooms and their struggles seemed to center more on how to privilege women’s

voices and minimize their own. I was eager to explore his views more in depth. But I knew that would have to wait for another interview.

"That's interesting. I hope we get a chance to talk about that more. Can you tell me a little bit about yourself as a man?" I inquired.

"Well, I'm a graduate student. That's who I am right now. But as a man, though? I'm a father. I'm married. So that means a lot in terms of, I have others I'm responsible for. And as a man it seems to be something that I think that's one of the things that often gets overlooked. Men feel pressure that they should be strong or they need to be able to offer some security to others. I think about that, but I'm okay...." Graham ended once more with nervous laughter. I was beginning to wonder if it was just I who was nervous.

"That sounds like a lot of pressure." I validated Graham, but in my mind two forces competed for primacy. One empathized with Graham and agreed the conscriptions of the masculine gender role are very demanding. The other countered, if you think that's bad, try being a woman! I wondered to myself why he chose to end with "But I'm okay." What prevented him from resisting those pressures? For the time being, I bracketed the two voices in my head and turned to the next question, "So why do you want to participate in this study?"

"I think masculinity is an important issue. It needs to be discussed. What it means to be a man, it doesn't seem to be cut and dry and dichotomous. Right now at least compared to how it traditionally has been so I'm interested in helping out and being honest about who I am. Contributing one perspective. Plus I'm interested in basic

research and continually trying to learn, trying to push back the tides of the unknown,” Graham said.

By the end of the interview my nervousness had disappeared and Graham seemed more comfortable, especially at the suggestion we could meet in other settings. He had played football in high school and junior college and was keen on meeting near CSU’s practice fields. It was especially important for me that the participants largely decide when and where we would meet, as long as these locations were safe and private. I would be invading these men’s lives, asking them potentially tough questions, and I felt obligated to make the process as comfortable, convenient, and beneficial as possible. I hoped by the end of the study they would feel they’d gotten as much, if not more, out of the process as I.

The Social Economist

Hunter was the only participant I would have considered an acquaintance prior to the interviews. We had worked in the same office for a few months, but had never gotten to know one another well. What I did know about him was largely from observation. He maintained a fastidious unkempt appearance with disheveled hair, clay stained pants cut off at the bottoms, and loose fitting button-down shirts underneath ratty sweaters. His appearance seemed to match his “let’s not get too serious” attitude. I admired Hunter because he always did good work, but I struggled between appreciating his eccentricity and wanting him to be more professional.

True to form, Hunter responded to my e-mail invitation with a joke: "Can I talk about my guns?" read the subject line. "Only the big ones," I responded, scheduling our first meeting for Wednesday morning.

I watched Hunter from a second story window as he locked up his old bike with a basket, peeled off his knit hat, and headed into the Education Building. We arrived at the counseling room at the same time and, as I fumbled with the combination key, he talked about his pottery class. He'd been teaching pottery at a local studio and had to head there sometime today to take his pots out of the kiln.

"You in a hurry?" I asked.

"No. I can pretty much go in whenever I want. The pots will be done this afternoon so I'll go on a run or a climb with a buddy and then I'll head over. It's a great way to be," he responded with a grin, settling himself down into the chair opposite mine. With long legs and a thin, muscular body, Hunter certainly looked like he could run and climb great distances.

"Yeah, it's nice not having a set schedule and to be able to exercise whenever you want," I agreed. After going through the consent form, I turned on the recorder.

"So why do you want to participate in this study?"

"It seems like an interesting endeavor. I haven't thought about it much. And it seems like there would be some conflict in the idea of masculinity in graduate school. Because I don't really feel like most people in graduate school are overtly masculine," he answered.

This was something I hadn't expected. The tone in Hunter's voice suggested he was critiquing graduate school for not being masculine. "What do you mean?" I asked.

"Well, in comparison to the other realms of life that I've been in. So I've done graduate school and I mean I don't see myself as solely graduate student. Where some people are solely graduate student. I've taken breaks to be a mountain guy. I've taken breaks to just go hang out in the woods. And in comparing the people that you run into there, and granted they're starkly different, to a large degree, I mean there's obviously differences in people and realms. But for the most part I think that people are not necessarily very masculine in graduate school, at least in social economy," he said.

"And I'd be interested in kind of a better definition, I guess. Of what it means and where masculinity sits within that realm of graduate school. Because I think it's kind of an interesting thing. And I never really sat down and thought about it, obviously, but I've always been kind of curious to see what that definition is and how that's affected me. I mean, really it's probably at a root of my frustrations in graduate school anyway."

Similar to Graham, Hunter reported he'd never thought much about what it meant to be a man. This admittance pointed to the privilege men have to not think about gender. I was excited this might be one of the unique times men had come face-to-face with their gender and their sexuality. I wondered what Hunter would find.

When the interview wrapped up, I gave Hunter a copy of the interview questions. Reading from the list, he said laughingly, "How is or is not your version of being a man working for you? I like that one." Gathering his hat and water bottle, Hunter headed toward the door.

"I think it's working out pretty well," he answered, whether to me or himself I wasn't sure.

The Computer Scientist

Like an old friend, Franklin walked through the counseling room door and shook my hand. "It's good to see you," he said earnestly.

"It's good to see you too," I responded. Immediately put at ease by his kindness and thoughtful demeanor, Franklin reminded me of an affectionate older brother. Before we began the interview he asked me several questions about my study and why I'd chosen this topic. They were not interrogative questions, but ones that conveyed his curiosity and desire to know me not just as a researcher, but a person.

I chuckled to myself thinking he matched my image of a computer science graduate student. Franklin was tall, skinny, and pale and his long blond hair, tied back in a pony tail, hung straight down the back of his blue and red flannel shirt. His narrow face contained hazel eyes that often made contact with my own.

I remembered meeting Franklin in the fall semester when Ryan and I presented on men's role in ending violence against women at the weekly campus wide Women at Noon session. Franklin had approached Ryan and me after the presentation and gave us his card. He was the only man I'd contacted directly to participate in the study.

After we'd finished talking and going over the informed consent procedures, I turned on the recorder. "So why do you want to participate in this study?" I asked.

"Oh, let's see, if I remember correctly, we were talking about the stuff you did in the presentation. It was just the first time I'd ever really come across a coherent package of the issues I've dealt with all my life. And there seemed like a lot of interest from other men in the group who were attending that presentation... the one you did with Ryan."

"Yeah," I said, wondering where he was headed.

"I feel like our society doesn't really do men a very good service, bringing them up from boyhood to manhood. There are a lot of cultural and social images we see that just don't make a lot of sense. In particular, sexual imagery, the contrast between the, I don't know what to call this, the fantasy life and then the real life."

"You mean what is portrayed in the media contrasted with what you see in your daily life?" I asked.

"Right," he said. "So from the presentation, there were some things in there I wrote down. I remember vaguely, sort of the stages of moving away from something. And I remember that I was sort of two-thirds of the way there. But the next step is for me is to start integrating it into my daily life. I know now where I come from and why I'm where I'm at. But it's another thing to say okay I need to shape who I am and find my own voice."

Franklin was referring to five steps of men's engagement in ending violence against women posed by Ben Atherton-Zemon (2006), co-coordinator of the National Organization for Men Against Sexism (NOMAS). Franklin had placed himself in the "internalization" phase where men begin to redefine themselves based on a new liberating point of view. He wanted to move to the next stage, called "integration," where he could practice being his new self. Given these perspectives I was curious how Franklin had redefined himself and what behaviors he wanted to practice.

"That makes sense," I said. "So what do you hope to get out of participating in this study?"

"Well, for sure I hope some of your questions will be insightful, prompting me to think deeper about what I do. I think telling stories is cathartic. So maybe I can get rid of some of the unhelpful things I'm holding onto," he responded.

"That's great. There is a lot of literature that talks about the transformative power of telling stories. And I do hope my questions are thought provoking. I'll try to challenge you when I can and I'm sure you'll challenge yourself," I said.

"Good. Yeah, I mean I like to self-reflect so I think I do challenge myself a lot. I've been thinking too that I would be interested in the final product. Because I'm interested in discovering what other men are saying. I'm learning this isn't something you can really go at alone. There's this tidal force you have to overcome and so I think probably part of it would be to develop a community of other examples of people who are trying to do the same thing I am."

Of the three men I'd interviewed so far, Franklin was the only one who'd talked about examining his masculinity in a way that would benefit and be accountable to women. I was unsure what kind of community would emerge in my study and whether the other men were going through some of the same struggles. But, if I described them thoroughly, perhaps they would see a little of themselves in one another.

The interview over we agreed to hold our next interview at Franklin's house. He stood up to leave the room, but not before offering another friendly handshake.

The Media Analyst

"Hey, are you Clark?" I said to the man wandering the hallway outside the counseling rooms.

"That's me," he said. "I wasn't sure which one we were in and I didn't want to just walk in and get counseled on accident."

I laughed as we walked into the room and got settled. Clark looked young and I thought I should probably double check that he was at least 24 years old. He was wearing a pair of faded black jeans and a black t-shirt. His disheveled brown hair hung in curls around his thin face that matched the rest of his slender physique. He gave the impression of being a short man, but standing next to him I realized he was at least 5' 10". Sitting down and crossing his legs, Clark's brown eyes looked at me expectantly.

"Right," I said, responding to his readiness. "Let's get started."

Clark was one of my last participants and I felt much more relaxed. The informed consent procedures moved along like a conversation. He wanted to know how these interviews fit into the broader aims of my study and, more generally, about conducting qualitative research. Clark was working on his Master's thesis and we found we had several experiences in common. We then moved on to the interview.

"The first question I have is why do you want to participate in this study?" I began.

"I'm interested because I grew up in the U.S. South where gender roles were really defined, but they were defined for me. So I couldn't really define them for myself. Being out here in grad school, we read a lot of gender theory and learn about gender politics. So I've really become interested in making my own out of that and figuring things out for myself. So any chance I get to talk about it is helpful for me, to figure out how I stand and where I fit," he answered.

"That's great," I said. "What do you think compels you to do this?"

"Well, one reason is sort of this life quest I have which is to always challenge and better myself, simultaneously. So it's just part of where I am right now in that process," he said.

"So you see this as an opportunity to construct your own definition, a definition you can live with?" I asked.

"Yup, pretty much," he said with a mock southern accent. "It's kind of nice because being from a small southern town, population 587, you don't get a chance to explore things quite as much because there's all these social sanctions. But here I feel I do have a chance to play around with things. And every time I move I feel a chance to kind of recreate my identity. So since this is what I'm playing around with, my gender identity, this study fits where I'm at."

Of all the participants, Clark seemed to be the one who thought about gender most similarly to me. In his world identity was something that was sometimes socially imposed, more so in some social contexts such as his hometown. He seemed intimately familiar with the normative standards of masculinity. But interestingly, Clark presented gender as something that could be (re)created and played with. Would Clark talk about gender as a performance? I was excited to witness the discourses Clark would use to recreate his "gender identity" in our interviews.

Although I thought he'd answered the question, I asked, "So what do you hope to get out of participating?"

"I guess I hope to begin to further articulate for myself where I stand. Because my very redneck masculine dad wasn't around when I was growing up, I feel like I've had a greater opportunity to choose for myself how I want to be as a male. I mean, I

don't really know how to define this; I've kind of had it defined for me throughout my life. But I don't come off as certainly heterosexual. People wonder, people question sometimes. Thankfully my current partner is a woman who I can explore these questions with, who I don't have to be like my dad to be accepted. So this interview is maybe a chance to, I guess in a similar interpersonal way, explore some of these issues I'm concerned about and talk about them in a setting I don't necessarily get a chance to partake in. I'm at a point where all the things that I felt I could be censured for when I was younger, all of my personal inclinations, I feel like I can experiment with those now. Specifically, I feel I can mix gender codes, I guess in whatever way I want. And that's freeing," he ended optimistically.

"That's great Clark," I said. Inside I was thinking I'd hit the participant jackpot. Here was a man who seemed like he'd thought about gender and sexuality for much of his life, probably because his performances didn't match the hegemonic. Had not fitting in enabled the freedom he described? How would he describe his struggles? I was eager to ask more questions, but our time was running out and I asked if I could turn off the tape recorder.

"Don't say anything important," I teased as I shut off the tape.

"I usually don't. Only when prompted do I say important things," Clark said.

Laughing, we scheduled our next interview and I locked the counseling room door behind us.

The Social Scientist

"Forgive my ignorance; I don't get out of my building much except to go to the student center and the library. Would you please confirm the "Ed" building to which you were you referring? Is it "Ed"dy Hall? The "Ed"ucation building or "Ed"wards Hall? Thanks."

Jake's e-mail clarifying our first interview's location made me about fall out of my chair laughing. Although I'd never met Jake, and had no reason to assume the tone of his e-mail was touched with sarcasm, that was how I'd read it. Through our e-mails I gathered his sense of humor matched mine and I was looking forward to our first meeting.

When Jake entered the counseling room, I noted his broad shoulders and athletic build and full head of long bushy red hair tied back in a pony-tail. As we talked about the study, Jake seemed very at ease, but also mentally engaged. He was curious about the study and asked me thoughtful and challenging questions. My intuition told me Jake was similar to the men I befriended or dated and I found myself secretly wondering whether he was attracted to me. "This is not the setting to entertain those thoughts, Jenni," I admonished myself. "And you know from reading about women interviewing men, it is unethical to intentionally or unintentionally use flirtation as a means of establishing rapport so watch yourself (Grenz, 2005). Remember to tell him you've got a partner!" My committee had suggested I wear my old wedding ring during the interviews, just to make it clear dating was not something I had in mind. But being recently divorced, the pain associated with that symbol was more than I could stomach.

Instead I found subtle ways to bring up my partnered status with all the participants during the screening interviews.

"Why do you want to participate in this study?" I asked.

"The first reason," he began after a brief pause, "is that masculinity is one of my areas of interest. When I was an undergrad, I took a sex and gender course, and I just loved it. The teacher emphasized this part of gender studies that people kind of tend to just forget about which is men and masculinity. So the idea that women's liberation or feminism is all about women. But really it's not. Feminism is about gender and males have gender too."

"The second reason," Jake continued, "as a person who is interested in psychology, I naturally am more introspective, I think than the average Joe," Jake paused, "or Jane. So I'm interested to review my life and see what I think it is to be a man. Just see if I can learn anything. Personal development. That's the short answer."

"Very cool," I said. "So in terms of personal development and professional interest, what do you hope to gain from participating?"

"Well personally I'd like to maybe connect some dots that I haven't connected before. It's rare you get to sit down and tell someone your life story. So I figured this was an opportunity and I can do a little bit of self analysis and perhaps, like I said, draw some conclusion or come to some, hopefully some positive conclusion, or gain some useful knowledge to use in the future with my own life decisions. So that's what I hope to gain. Maybe make some sense of my life," Jake concluded.

Agreeing to meet again in two weeks, Jake picked up his backpack and left the room. I sat, wondering that I had not told him I had a partner. "I will next time," I assured myself.

It turns out I didn't need to wait for the next interview. My partner and I went to an event later that week and Jake was among the attendees. Looking back on our interviews, I've come to view Jake as a good friend. Indeed, during the last interview Jake said he felt I'd collected "a year's worth of friendship data" in just three months. Comparing my initial reaction to my current feelings toward Jake, I'm reminded of the power of the "heterosexual matrix" (Butler, 1990) to frame attractions between men and women as sexual. Without denying my initial physical attraction to Jake, the relationship that developed throughout the interviews overflowed a heterosexual discourse that would allow only a certain kind of sexualized interaction. We were also interviewer and interviewee, graduate students, friends, and peers and these relationships were those we (ethically) privileged.

Through the screening interviews, I'd met five unique and fascinating men who were interested in exploring what it meant to them to be males in graduate school. While I hadn't finalized the questions I'd ask or how many interviews we'd conduct, I was excited for the interviews to begin.

Interviews

During the 2006 spring semester, I conducted over 35 interviews with the 5 men. These interviews were held in the counseling rooms in the basement of the Education Building, at my home, or in the participants' homes. The interviews lasted from 1 to 2

hours each and were audio recorded. Agreeing with Bloom (2002) that researchers should respect their participants' schedules, the number and length of the interviews was negotiated. By the end of the study, each man had participated in six to eight interviews.

While no set interview protocol was established before hand, the interview series tended to follow an overall pattern. The first interview was the screening interview and the remaining interviews covered the topics of masculinity, graduate school, heterosexuality, and how the participant felt about the interviews. The content and guiding questions included in the second through seventh interviews are provided in Table 1 in Appendix B.

Interview Method: Inquiry of Discomfort

I call the interview method I used an "inquiry of discomfort" (Wolgemuth & Donohue, 2006). Drawing from Boler's (1999) pedagogy of discomfort and Gubrium and Holstein's (2003) active interviewing, an inquiry of discomfort is concerned with exploring, highlighting, and challenging the mechanisms of gendered, sexed, raced, classed, and other socially pre/proscriptive subjectivities. When I first conceptualized an inquiry of discomfort, I drew largely from the narrative therapy⁴ literature (e.g., Besley, 2002; Freedman & Combs, 1996; Monk, Winsdale, Crocket, & Epston, 1997; White & Epston, 1990; Wiersma, 1992). This literature was helpful in that it supported the notion that participants could be transformed through the narrative inquiry process. In this way an inquiry of discomfort took as its aim a specific kind of transformation: the creation of

⁴ Narrative therapy is a form of psychotherapy currently attributed to and largely developed by the work of White and Epston (1990). Narrative therapists engage their client in the active process of storying and restorying their lives. It is through the process of restorying, in which the client examines old meanings and interpretations and exchanges them for newer, more complex meanings, that the client is seen to undergo therapeutic transformation (Morgan, 2000).

ambiguous and flexible subjects. I argued the aim of an inquiry of discomfort was to identify and promote an intentional and conscious shift from dualistic, categorical, and entrenched positionality to a more ambiguous engagement with social reality.

However employing an inquiry of discomfort, conceptualized as a method of participant *transformation*, presented a theoretical problematic for this study. To foster transformation I would have to think about the subject as, if not unitary, as least having “some stable existence prior to the cultural field it negotiates” or “the capacity for reflexive meditation, that remains intact regardless of its cultural embeddedness” (Butler, 1990, p. 143). Butler (1990) notes this conceptualization of the subject falsely presumes that agency (in the case of transformation, the ability to change “oneself”) can only be found within a “prediscursive I” (p. 143). To talk about transformation requires an identifiable self begin at some knowable starting point and proceed to another, measurable, end point. This theorization of the subject is not compatible with the notions of a discursive self-in-process, the self this dissertation assumes, in which the self is never fixed, but is created via a network of discourses and repetitive actions. To put it in Butler’s (1990) terms, “The subject is not determined by the rules through which it is generated because signification is not a founding act, but rather a regulated process of repetition...” (p. 145).

While I continued to use the processes of an inquiry of discomfort, I began to think of its aim as fostering critical reflection and resistance; as opening up avenues for complexity, previously unintelligible modes of thinking, or pointing out where deconstruction had already occurred. Thus an inquiry of discomfort became not about fostering *participant* ambiguity, but the ambiguity and complexity of the modes of

thought within the interview. In this way the men who participated in this study would “have opened to them multiple and positive ways of being a man, outside of traditional gender stereotypes” (Whitehead, 2001, p. 357).

An inquiry of discomfort remains differentiated from other forms of postmodern/poststructural interviewing in that it *explicitly* seeks to fragment and make ambiguous socially constructed subjectivities. However these subjectivities, for the purposes of this study, are not taken to be coterminous with the participant “selves.” In this study, an inquiry of discomfort sought to create the interview as a social location open to ambiguity and complexity, the same aim the research project sought more broadly in higher education.

An inquiry of discomfort is different from other methods of narrative interviewing in that it asks questions explicitly to facilitate ambiguity. To achieve this aim the narrative inquirer first witnesses the participants’ story or thoughts. The narrative inquirer is not a spectator to the participants’ words, inhabiting “a position of distance and separation”, but a witness who “undertakes our historical responsibilities” and acknowledges our “co-implication” (Connelly & Clandinin, 2000, pp. 185-186). The researcher first listens as the participant reflects and then, overcoming defenses and confronting challenges to his/her own assumptions, bears witness in a way that acknowledges the complicity and complexities of power and subjectivity. Next the narrative inquirer asks questions that elicit participants’ beliefs and assumptions, posing other questions that help participants notice inconsistencies, and still others suggesting alternative ways participants could believe. Finally, the narrative inquirer asks questions to facilitate the creation of new and more complex and ambiguous meanings. For the

purposes of my study, I asked questions to challenge men's taken-for-granted assumptions of what it means to be a man. The participants explored and critiqued their masculine constructions, ideally creating more complex and flexible concepts of masculinity. The aim was both political and ethical:

Inviting men to end men's privileges, and to remake masculinities to sustain gender equality, strikes many people as a strange or utopian project. Yet this project is already under way. Many men around the world are engaged in gender reforms... The diversity of masculinities complicates the process but is also an important asset. As this diversity becomes better known, men and boys can more easily see a range of possibilities in their own lives, and both men and women are less likely to think of gender inequality as unchangeable. (Connell, 2005, p. 1817)

Ethical Considerations of an Inquiry of Discomfort

I hope participation in this study opened up spaces for thinking more complexly about gender and sexuality. Clearly, participation was not without risks. An inquiry of discomfort notwithstanding, narrative researchers point to ethical issues of power (Bloom, 1998), representation (Tierney, 1997b), and identification (Bakan, 1996) that emerge in a methodology relying heavily on the very personal and sometimes painful stories of people's lives. I take very seriously Bar-On's (1996) caution that narrative researchers are "responsible because in such a delicate research, we hold the meaning of people's lives in our hands... our successes will be gratifying, but our failures may become irreversible" (p. 20). Employing an inquiry of discomfort necessitated rigorous ethical considerations. These included: disclosure, empathy, friendship, and hope.

Ethical Disclosure

The informed consent process involved not only sharing the theories, aims, and hoped outcomes of the study, it also included an explanation of the interview method. With the knowledge I would ask some questions to foster critical reflection, men not interested in self-examination could have chosen not to participate. Men who did choose to be interviewed were told they would not have to answer any question I posed and could end a line of questioning, the interview, or participation at any point. Indeed, ignoring or giving terse answers to questions I posed was a common and appropriate evasive strategy. For example participants were often reluctant to share details of their sex lives as shown in the following exchange with Jake:

Jake: Another exciting moment in dating history was the first time I woke up in another person's bed. That was very exciting.

J: When was that?

Jake: Oh, I don't know, after Laura [pseudonym] and I had, you know, decided that we were going to date or whatever.

J: But you never had sex?

Jake: No we didn't. We never had intercourse.

J: You had oral sex?

Jake: Yeah. Uhm... anyway...

J: What was that decision about?

Jake: Oh she didn't want to have intercourse. And I didn't care. I really didn't.

J: You didn't?

Jake: No. I didn't need to have intercourse.

At this point Jake immediately moved on to another topic and I followed his lead. When I received several terse responses in a row I generally ceased a line of questioning. If I felt the topic was particularly important, I might have attempted to return to it later from a different angle. But, in the example above, the details of the participants' sex lives were not necessarily germane to the focus of the study and I did not press Jake again on this topic

Ethic of Empathy

Although Bowler (1999) eschews what she terms "passive empathy," essentially a benign state of "feeling-sorry-for" the oppressed, I believe anyone who uses an inquiry of discomfort must employ an "active empathy." Josselson (1995) argues that empathy is both a "tool and goal of...research... premised on continuity, recognizing that kinship between self and other offers an opportunity for deeper and more articulated understanding" (p. 31). Thus, active empathy takes on central features of client-centered counseling: active listening, approaching individuals with unconditional positive regard, and believing in the individual human capacity to determine one's own growth and limits (Rogers, 1951). Most often I demonstrated empathy by validating and then reflecting back what participants told me, as can be seen in the following exchange with Graham:

Jenni: What are you thinking about, what's bringing that up?

Graham: I think I'm not that ideal man yet because I haven't exactly meshed everything together that I've learned. Especially all the feminism stuff, you know? And so I kinda stutter in making some decisions, you know? And... it's not because I'm processing it, it's because... it's because I'm not exactly sure where I'm at first.

Jenni: Yeah, that's hard.

Graham: Yeah... to know where I'm at so you can listen and do all that. So I still have some development... I still have to develop all that I want and so that's where I would say I fall short is that when I want to make good decisions, or whatever... I'm not sure where I'm at first. So when I'm hearing all this stuff, like I'm not like... the mayor or whatever, the CEO, the boss who can be a good leader, listen to all that, but already kinda knows, kinda has their self together. So that's what I'm saying, I don't actually have myself together yet.

Jenni: Right. You haven't figured it all out.

Graham: Yeah. Exactly.

Jenni: No, I hear you it's... when you don't, when you're uncertain about this, about yourself, it's really tough to have good foundation...

Graham: Exactly.

Ethic of Friendship

If empathy is the ethical stance by which inquiry of discomfort researchers approach participants, then friendship is the overriding structure for that stance. In a narrative-ethnographic study of friendship between hetero- and homosexuals, Tillman-Healy (2001) adopted an "ethic of friendship." She argued:

...most any topic could be investigated with the practices, at the pace, and/or with an ethic of friendship... meaning that we treat them [participants] with respect, we honor their stories, and we try to use their stories for humane and just purposes. (p. 212)

Friendship means that researchers must concern themselves with the whole of participants' lives, privileging the participant's feelings, experiences, and needs over data and information gathering. A paradox emerges that comfort is a prerequisite for discomfort. Both the participants and I must feel comfortable to share our beliefs and assumptions and vulnerabilities and it was my responsibility to attend to the interview's comfort levels. Overall, I conducted the interviews with the understanding that comfort

creates a space for fully experiencing the discomfort of ambiguity and complexity.

During the final interview Graham validated that, for him, this style of interviewing had felt comfortable, like friendship:

Graham: I felt it was more than just research. It was like a friend. You know like a real friend, not someone's who you just goof off with or people that you know, but someone who's really trying to help you too. I felt like you were trying to do that. You were helping yourself, but you were helping me too by helping yourself because a real friend would say, "Hey man, like why'd you do that? Why? What do you say that for?" They would do that, they would ask you questions. They wouldn't just say, "Whatever my friend does, it's fine because they're my friend and I'm going to defend them no matter what." A real friend would say, "Hey, I think you're wrong there man." You know? So I think that was really cool. That I could see how in circumstances like this, you know it's just like getting the information and making the person feel real comfortable you know and really accommodating you know? And I think it was comfortable, but you know at the same time you were like, hey I really want to know what's going on here and if I don't understand something, Graham I'm going to ask you. And I really appreciated that because it seemed more real.

Ethic of Hope

It was my main concern the participants felt they were getting something out of the research. I therefore made it my responsibility to explain, advocate for, and support the participants' explorations of alternative and complex subjectivities. While I came into each interview with a set of questions, the participants' concerns and questions took primacy. In this way, I desired to create a "participant-centered" atmosphere, one that focused on the hope the participants and I would mutually benefit from our encounters. During the last interview, for instance, Clark reported he'd gained insight as a result of participating in the interviews:

Clark: Well, I definitely learned things about myself that have been kind of helpful. Like that conversation we had about the patterns. Like that was really, like I kind of knew that, but that was the first time I had a conversation about it and how that connected to my gender identity. So I definitely learned about that

and I think that's really kind of helped me notice when I'm noticing things. So kind of like meta-thought.

Ethic of Intersubjectivity

I am a white, heterosexual, female (performing) researcher who studied the gendered and sexed lives of male participants. As a researcher, I held a position that implied power over participants and the methods of an inquiry of discomfort in part mobilized that power to achieve what I believe is an ethical end. And yet I am a woman, conferred less social power than men. Just as the stories the men told are not sacrosanct accounts of personal experience, but were co-created in interviewing, our genders and sexualities were similarly intersubjective (Ellis & Berger, 2003; Gubrium & Holstein, 2003). Their masculinities and my femininities were constructed not just in the masculine and academic discourses on which they drew, but also in our interactions where both the interviewer's and interviewee's "baggage" comes into play (Scheurich, 1997). Grenz (2005) notes feminist researchers have paid great attention to the role they play in co-constructing knowledge, but largely this careful consideration is done in the interest of research on the marginalized. Feminist researchers attend less to ethical issues of interviewing the privileged. "In the context of research on privileged positions..., the researcher cannot remain outside either. She joins the discursive reproduction of gendered identity to a certain extent, even if she would rather stay innocent" (Grenz, 2005, p. 2103).

Therefore my responsibility was to pay attention to the kinds of men constructed in the interviews and the kinds of women I performed in relation to these men. As with Jake, I privileged and attended to performances of the female researcher, friend, graduate

student, and peer over the more sexualized heterosexual performances. In some cases I found myself performing femininities I hadn't expected to arise in the interviews. Hunter, for example, brought out my "woman-as-athlete" self and we would sometimes run together after conducting the interviews.

Just as I attempted to conduct an inquiry of discomfort with the participants, I had to be willing to engage in a process of discomfort with myself. This study would have been grossly one-sided and unethical otherwise. During the interview and analysis phase I reflexively asked myself many of the discomforting questions I posed to the participants. Throughout the dissertation I have asked many uncomfortable questions about myself, the analysis procedures, and findings. Broadly speaking, this dissertation is a project of discomfort where what it means to be gendered, sexed, and a graduate student are not decided, but shown to be complex and changing.

From Transcription to Analysis

I transcribed the interviews as immediately as possible after they were conducted. While "immediately as possible" was sometimes the day of the interview, it was more typically between 3 to 5 days later. I began by typing my reactions to the interview. During the transcription, I jotted notes in the margins to identify major themes, questions for clarification, and other reflections. I then used these to type up a set of reactions at the end of the transcript. When the interviews were transcribed, I sent a version with my comments deleted to the participants. While not all participants read the interview transcripts, for those who did we often began our subsequent interviews discussing the content of the previous interviews. In many cases, participants returned to questions

they'd raised or drew connections between ideas in previous interviews. The transcriptions and interviews were analytic in that men analyzed their interviews and proposed connections between, causations for, and theories about their masculinity. The notes I wrote in the margins also served as a basic level analysis, summing up what the participant had said and highlighting key points. The following section details how I developed and implemented the formal analysis framework.

Analysis

While qualitative researchers understand analysis is not a discrete phase, but occurs throughout the research process, from the interviews to the final write-up (Kvale, 1996; Scheurich, 1997; Strauss & Corbin, 1998), this section concerns the six or so months I spent reading the interviews, thinking about the analyses, developing an analysis strategy, implementing and revising that strategy, and drinking heaps of coffee. Set in the coffee shop, this section describes the final three step analysis strategy that seemed best conveyed through a painting metaphor.

Grinding Out the Analysis at the Coffee Shop

"So what brings you here so often?" Chaz, the broad shouldered red-headed barrista asks, almost dismissively. It's a polite question, the kind of casual conversation small business owners strike up while preparing your order. He doesn't really want to know, I think, but I answer him in that unselfconscious detailed way of mine that often results in far-away looks and strings of mumbled "Uh huhs."

"I'm working on my dissertation. I just finished the analysis phase so I'm pretty lost right now. I've got over 1000 pages of interview data whittled down to 200 pages of analyses. My methodologist, Barbara, told me my analysis plan would emerge as I read and reread the interviews and engaged the literature. And that's what the literature on narrative analysis says too (Josselson & Lieblach, 2003). And so I've had to trust that. I mean I tried to be patient and I've definitely done a lot of writing and journaling. I've done something, I at least know that. Today I've got to write up the analysis chapter....," I trail off noticing the growing line of customers behind me and the slow fade of his polite smile.

Gathering my sugar free hazelnut, skim milk latte I return to my table in the corner, the one next to the piano. Grinning to myself, I think of all the people I've subjected to the "I'm-not-sure-I-know-what-the-hell-I'm-doing-with-this-analysis" speech. I have many patient friends. Over the past six months I have read and reread the interviews and searched the literature for analytic tools that would highlight how the participants thought about themselves as men. I sought an analysis strategy that would show how men constructed their masculinity, how their constructions of masculinity related to being graduate students and how they played out in their disciplines, and what they reported getting out of the interview process.

Eventually an analysis strategy emerged, but not without considerable effort. The term "emergent" is deceptive because it implies a passive process, something that just happens with or without the researcher. My analysis strategy emerged after "multiple readings and rereadings" of the interview texts and as much qualitative analysis literature as I could accumulate and digest (Josselson & Lieblach, 2003, p. 268).

Framing the Analysis and Keeping the Messiness

Before I describe the analysis strategy, it's important I (re)introduce three predominant concepts that framed my analysis decisions: hegemonic masculinity, the ideal man, and antenarrative analysis.

Hegemonic Masculinity

In the literature review I discussed Connell's (1995) hegemonic masculinity "as the configuration of gender practice which embodies the currently accepted answer to the problem of the legitimacy of patriarchy, which guarantees (or is taken to guarantee) the dominant position of men and the subordination of women" (p. 77). But in this study I did not assume to know all the characteristics, habits, or strategies of "the" hegemonic man. Following Hall's (1997) interpretation of hegemony's power as circulatory, each participant's interviews were analyzed to determine how he constructed his own version of a hegemonic man.

The Ideal Man

The ideal man refers to the kind of man the participants would like to be. He is the figure behind the men's masculine ontological projects; their pursuits of masculinity (Whitehead, 2002). Asking the participants to talk about the man they'd like to become engaged them in a process of creating their ideal selves. The ideal self is not seen as the entirety of the men's ontological projects, but its outcome. The construction of this ideal male identity can be understood in Foucauldian (1985) terms as the *telos*, the ultimate

goal he is trying to achieve in a “practice of the self” (p. 27). The ideal man’s construction is grounded in the here-and-now, but is a product of the men’s fantasies.

Butler (2004) discusses the role of fantasy in constructing the realm of the possible:

...fantasy is part of the articulation of the possible; it moves us beyond what is merely actual and present into a realm of possibility, the not yet actualized or the not actualizable... Fantasy is what allows us to imagine ourselves and others otherwise; it establishes the possible in excess of the real; it points elsewhere, and when embodied, it brings the elsewhere home. (p. 29)

When the participants described their “ideal man,” they not only engaged in an ontological project to make “man” real, they drew on dreams of what they could become. Butler (2004) says the “critical promise of fantasy... is to challenge the contingent limits of what will and will not be called reality,” and therefore we must be concerned with the “foreclosure of fantasy” (p. 29). For the sake of those who would be transgendered, queer, butch, femme, we must worry about the social forces that oppress and devalue certain forms of fantasy, eliminating the possibility of their cultural intelligibility (Butler, 2004). It is from this perspective that the study concerned itself with the “Others” of the men’s constructions, including, predominately, gay men and women. Therefore each participants’ interviews were analyzed for the kind of man he touted as his own ideal and how his ideal (a) negotiated the hegemonic man and (b) implied, necessitated, allowed, or denied the construction of “Others.”

Antenarrative Analysis

I rejected traditional narrative analyses, ones that consider plots, characters, and settings to create cohesive and linear stories. My research questions required I attend less to tidy stories or arguments in favor of the fragmented, incomplete, irrational, non-linear, and unplotted ones. Presenting the men's constructions as linear and complete would not have allowed me to examine the complexities of masculinity and would have perpetuated the fiction of stable and coherent subjects. As Gamson (2000) notes, "Identities are multiple, contradictory, fragmented, incoherent, disciplinary, diunified, unstable, and fluid—hardly the stuff that allows a researcher to confidently run out and study sexual subjects as if they are coherent and available social types" (p. 356). To study these subjects, the researcher needs new tools.

Boje's (2001) introduction of "antenarrative analysis" provided a new way of analyzing the men's constructions in progress and served as the conceptual framework for the analysis. In antenarrative analysis, the "focus is on stories that are too unconstructed and fragmented to be analysed in traditional approaches" (p. 1). Antenarratives signify meaning-making in progress and suggest experiences that resist or deny coherence. They highlight gender's complexities and ambiguities and do not attempt to oversimplify or tidy their messiness.

Paintings on the Walls

I stretch out my legs, take a sip of my latte, and lean back in my chair, taking time to look around the coffee shop. The bookstore volunteer wheels his bike to the back room, passing the most recent set of local paintings on the art wall. I've seen the artist, a

young blond woman with razor cut hair and large blue eyes, stop by for her morning coffee on the way to her studio. She is outgoing, friendly, and talkative, but in a way that seems to leave people unnerved. She paints portraits with painstaking detail, save for the subjects' faces. Where eyes, noses, cheeks, and mouths should appear are only grey smudges, as if, after meticulously painting them, but unhappy with some imperfection, she smeared them with a rag.

The truth is I know next-to-nothing about painting. But that doesn't stop me from following a line of thought that develops as my eyes scan the row of portraits.

"In a way, I'm painting portraits of the participants," I think to myself. Closing my eyes, I conjure up each participant in my mind and imagine myself sketching him as he poses. I smile thinking about Hunter adopting a goofy pose or Clark's inability to sit still for very long. But, looking down at my hands I wonder at the materials I'd use. What kinds of pencils and brushes? Would I need small ones for detail work or large ones for broad strokes? What colors would I select? Primary and bold, or pastel and soft? And what canvas would I select? Grey and course or white and smooth?

Painting Subjectivity Portraits

The process of gathering materials, the "set up," for painting portraits eventually became the metaphor that framed my analysis, what I call *subjectivity portrait analysis*. In general, the three subjectivity portrait analytic steps were similar to the decision making process I assumed an artist must go through to choose what materials to use to portray a subject. This metaphor was particularly useful because it neatly unfolded to encompass the results and discussion sections. The participants' write-ups became

subjectivity portraits and the discussion section considered how the portraits of their hegemonic men hung together as a body of work (*Theory*), how they fit within their departmental backgrounds (*Practice*), and to what extent they represented a challenge normative discourses of masculinity (*Process*).

Subjectivity Portraits

Narrative inquirers are necessarily concerned with subjectivities, the selves brought to and elicited in their studies (Josselson, Leiblich, & McAdams, 2003). Whether these subjectivities are the focus of their inquiries (i.e., the construction of masculinity in higher education) or an important component of a broader inquiry (i.e., the leadership experiences of women university presidents), understanding how participants understand themselves is necessary for narrative inquirers whose work makes meaning of participants' lives (Chase, 1996).

Subjectivity portraits therefore concern selves, both those claimed to and not to be, and how these selves are constructed and resisted. Subjectivity portraits are important for two reasons. First, they do not err in assuming the naturalness or stability of identity. The narrative inquirer who studies women's leadership experiences should be concerned with what constitutes women's leadership, but also with what is meant by "woman." Second, subjectivity portraits permit the narrative researcher to study participants' relationships with/to their selves. Are these relationships resistive, complicit, complex, and/or uncomplicated?

Describing the analysis process as gathering materials for painting subjectivity portraits makes clear the participants' write-ups were one of many (infinite)

interpretations. As the narrative inquirer I mobilized my “interpretative authority,” just as a painter chooses how to portray her subjects (Chase, 1996). Yet this authority is not supreme. The final product is not a “master narrative,” but one among many possible narratives (Daiute & Fine, 2003).

And portraits do not (typically) end with the final brush stroke. They are displayed in art galleries, analyzed by art critics, made into prints, and taught by art historians. Similarly this dissertation is not final, but is tentatively produced to be engaged. To analyze and present the data as closed would be “to impose counterfeit coherence and order on otherwise fragmented and multi-layered experiences” (Boje, 2001, p. 2). The results of these analyses were meant to be complex, generating questions, opening up spaces for dialogue, and creating new possibilities, rather than foreclosing on a stable and singular meaning.

Subjectivity Portrait Analysis

To analyze the interviews I utilized one type of Boje’s (2001) antenarrative analysis, deconstruction analysis, and developed two others: discourse-argument analysis and resistance analysis.

Pencils: Deconstruction Trace Analysis

The deconstruction trace analysis was my first analytic step that built the frame for the remaining analyses. In this way, the deconstruction trace analysis could be seen as gathering the pencils necessary to draw the portrait’s preliminary sketch. Would I need pencils that produced dark and solid lines or pencils that better created almost

transparent borders? The kinds of pencils I would need depended on the extent to which the men's constructions were solid or mutable, simple or complex. Through this analysis emerged the kinds of gendered subjectivities that were constructed and how the men related to these subjectivities.

I conducted a deconstruction trace analysis to understand how men constructed what male meant to them (Boje, 2001). First, it is important to note Derrida (1990) is emphatic deconstruction is not a method:

Deconstruction is neither a theory nor a philosophy. It is neither a school nor a method. It is not even a discourse, nor an act, nor a practice. It is what happens, what is happening today in what it called society, politics, diplomacy, economics, historical reality.... (p. 85).

Thus it is not that I conducted a deconstruction analysis, rather that I searched the interview texts for deconstructive moves, times when "the text (or story) self-destructs, how the author of a story has reversed his/her own dualized hierarchy of binary terms, privileging the marginal over the dominant," for example (Boje, 2001, p. 23). To make this distinction clear, I therefore refer to Boje's deconstruction analysis as deconstruction *trace* analysis. By this I mean the analysis traced or brought to light deconstructions that occurred during the interviews.

While Boje (2001) acknowledges Derrida's argument that deconstruction is not a method, he nevertheless posits eight "analytical steps" (p. 18). The end result of these steps is to "find a new perspective, one that resituates the story beyond its dualisms, excluded voices or singular viewpoint" (p. 21). The analysis I conducted did not include all Boje's eight steps, but focused on four most pertinent to this project: duality search, finding exceptions, looking for what was between the lines, and resituating the narrative.

I also added an analytic step I call “both/and” analysis. The “both/and” analysis sought to move beyond the dualisms by searching for places in the text where the men adopted both sides of a dichotomous position (Lather, 1991).

The purpose of the deconstruction trace analysis was to elucidate the constructions and break downs of male subjects and the “Others” that were their explicit or implicit opposites. Constructing what it means to be a man is often done so in opposition to what it means to be a woman. For example, Hunter defined men as not being talkers. They are simultaneously uninterested in talking and deficient at communication. This is opposed to women who he feels are natural communicators:

Hunter: I think men have a deficiency when it comes to even wanting to talk about that stuff. It’s not inviting. I mean you’re not really good at it. I found.

J: Really?

Hunter: Terrible. Yeah. You just don’t develop the skills necessary to talk about that stuff. I think my skills about talking about masculinity are horribly deficient in terms of how women would talk about their roles....

Yet this construction of masculinity breaks down when Hunter shares his theoretical understanding of masculinity.

Hunter: Well, I don’t think that masculinity is actually the absence of things that are feminine.... So it [masculinity] was more of a tool to oppress than it was an actual type or index of traits, right?

The deconstruction trace analysis began with a “duality search” (Boje, 2001, p. 23). I identified either explicit (as in, men aren’t as good at communicating as women) or implicit (a man is a leader, implying women are followers) binaries. I then looked for the relationship between the two sides of the binaries, were they “either/or” and/or

“both/and?” Following Scott (1988) I sought to understand the content and function of the differences:

There is nothing self-evident or transcendent about difference, even if the fact of difference – sexual difference, for example—seems apparent to the naked eye. The questions always ought to be, What qualities or aspects are being compared? What is the nature of the comparison? How is the meaning of difference being constructed? (p. 43)

The either/or, both/and binaries were categorized in tables under broader themes like man vs. woman, male graduate student vs. female graduate student, and heterosexual vs. homosexual. I then looked for statements telling about the men’s relationship to these binaries. Were they natural, resistive, or troubled? Next I identified statements, arguments, or other binaries that contradicted or troubled the binaries (finding the exception, looking between the lines). For example the statement, “Heterosexuality is not just about who you are attracted to,” complicated the definition that a heterosexual is someone who is attracted to the opposite sex. Next I looked for how the participants did or did not attempt to reconstruct or resituate binaries in the face of these complications. If heterosexuality was not just about attraction then the original definition would either have to be augmented to be made broader or a new understanding of sexuality would have to be touted (one that did not require heterosexuality be defined in opposition to homosexuality). Finally, I wrote memos for each of the broader binaries, describing their elements, the men’s relationships to them, how they broke down, and how they were restored or reconceptualized (resituating the story).

These memos were woven into the final structure of the men’s write-ups that described their constructions of the hegemonic man, the ideal man, the gay man, and women, for example, and the relationships between these constructions.

Brushes: Discourse-Argument Analysis

The discourse-argument analysis begins a concern for the portrait's composition. This analysis attends to how subjectivities are constructed through the arguments and discourses of the "society or culture in which they [participants] live" (Josselson, Lieblich, & McAdams, 2003, p. 8). If the arguments and discourses are complex and detailed, a fine brush is needed. If they are broad and quick, a large brush will suffice. The discourse-argument analysis resulted in a collection of brushes that added composition and background to the participants' sketches.

The discourse-argument analysis is taken partly from Pamphilon's (1999) zoom model in which the macro-zoom level analyzes "the impact of dominant discourses" to examine the relationship between self and society (p. 395). Arguments can be thought of as the logic of discourse, showing how discourses are taken-up to construct subjectivities. The purpose of the discourse-argument analysis was to interrogate the meta-thought about the nature of the self and to highlight links between academic discourses and male subjectivities.

I used the following definition as a suitable frame for locating the participants' arguments about gender and sexuality: "An argument is a piece of reasoning in which one or more statements are offered as support for some other statement" (Engel, 2000, p. 9). This analysis follows Fairclough's (1989) advocacy of critical discourse analysis where "language connects with the social through being the primary domain of ideology, and through being both a site of, and a stake in, struggles for power" (p. 15). This analysis highlighted the academic discourses the men used to construct arguments about the nature of gender differences and the origins of sexual orientation, for example. I

analyzed how those arguments were constructed, what discourses they drew from, what metaphors they used, their underlying assumptions, and their contradictions. The purpose of this analysis was to create a deeper understanding of the meta-thought about gender, sexuality, and graduate school and to explicitly highlight the links between academic theories and constructions of masculinity. The result was an understanding of how academic disciplines make available, “‘ready-made’ textual interpretations for distribution and consumption” (Boje, 2001, p. 76).

The discourse-argument analysis began by looking for arguments related to gender, sexuality, and graduate school. After defining what was being argued and the supporting statements, I followed the argument to its conclusion or end. In many cases arguments ran through several interviews and several reached no solid conclusions. Next I searched the arguments for academic jargon, metaphors, theories, or philosophies. I noted how these academic references were used and looked for assumptions underlying the arguments and any contradictions. Finally I wrote integrative memos describing the arguments, their components, their assumptions, and their contradictions and uses. The final memos were woven into the men’s descriptions of the hegemonic, ideal, and gay men and women to situate those constructions within the academic discourses that made them possible.

Colors: Resistance Analysis

Still attending to the portraits’ compositions, the resistance analysis began the process of selecting a palate of colors. The resistance analysis examined the relationships within and between the participants’ constructions and in this way colors were chosen

that were harmonious or discordant. In some cases only a few colors were chosen when, for example, the ideal man was a mirror image of the hegemonic man, painted with the same brush and colors. In others, several colors were necessary as the ideal man emerged as the negative image of the hegemonic man. The resistance analysis asked to what extent the participants' constructions resisted hegemonic norms of masculinity and how invested the men were in their ideal man's ontological project (Whitehead, 2002). Overall, the resistance analysis chose colors that composed a portrait depicting the relationship between the participant's constructions.

First, to examine the relationships between the men's constructions, the resistance analysis adapted Connell's (1995) framework with "hegemony, dominance/submission and complicity on the one hand, marginalization/authorization on the other" (p. 81). Connell's framework allowed me to analyze the kinds of masculinities the men adopted and the relationships among those masculinities. He argues, "A focus on gender relations among men is necessary to keep the analysis dynamic, to prevent the acknowledgement of multiple-masculinities collapsing into a character typology" (p. 76). Using Connell's framework I examined how the participants' constructions of masculinity were marginalized, complicit, and/or resistive of hegemonic norms. In this way, the analysis certainly concerned the *kinds* of men the participant constructed, but it also sought to determine *how* they were taken-up or resisted. And here is where the analysis moved beyond Connell's "critical structuralist" framework that, although concerning itself with forces of resistance and submission, does so at a level abstracted from the individual man.

Therefore the second component of the resistance analysis examined the men's relationships to their constructions. When we view the individual man as a self-

producing entity, per Foucault and Butler, we open up the analysis to the various places where he resists, adopts, and complicates normative ideals. This is not to say the individual man can refuse to be a man, although some (pro)feminist authors argue just that (e.g., Stoltenberg, 2000). Rather it is to see that acts of resistance in identity formation can reconstitute at a macro-level the available thinking about what a man can be. But Hoy (2005) points out not all reformulations are critical. That masculinity has proliferated into multiple forms does not necessarily entail better lives for women. As Connell (1995) says:

A great many men who draw the patriarchal dividend also respect their wives and mothers, are never violent towards women, do their accustomed share of the housework, bring home the family wage, and can easily convince themselves that feminists are bra-burning extremists. (p. 80)

As discussed in the Literature Review chapter, Hoy's (2005) critical resistance is understood as a process of "desubjectification" where "critique functions not by providing an alternative account of who you are and what you ought to do, but by dissolving your sense of who you are and disrupting your sense of what the right thing to do is" (p. 89). Therefore, the resistance is "the practice of risking one's deformation as a subject by resistance not to the constraining principals per se, but to one's attachment to them insofar as they constitute one's identity" (Hoy, 2005, p. 100).

It is with these two frameworks, Connell's and Hoy's (2005) conceptualization of resistance allowed by Foucault and Butler, that I examined the participants' constructions of masculinity and questions of subordination, complicity and resistance. Using Connell I asked, what do these constructions tell us about the relationship among the hegemonic, ideal, and othered men and women? Using Foucault and Butler, as seen through Hoy

(2005), I asked, how did their constructions submit to, resist, and/or critically resist normative ideals of masculinity?

The Canvas: Stepping up to the Whole

So far I have described the analysis strategy as occurring in three passes that selected the pencils, brushes, and colors to paint the participants' portraits. The deconstruction analysis examined the kinds of men that were constructed, and their "Others." The discourse-argument analysis examined how arguments were built and linked them specifically to academic and other discourses. And the resistance analysis examined the extent to which the participants' constructions could be seen as compliant, submissive, or resistant.

But portraits require surfaces and not all surfaces are the same. Some are smooth and light, others dark and textured. They provide the background, the portrait's initial context. Similarly, the men brought their own contexts to the interviews in the form rich and vivid stories. Therefore, to begin the process of stepping up to the whole I read and reread all the interviews and analyses and only then began to compose the write-ups, the subjectivity portraits.

The participants' write-ups begin by describing their portraits. If I had any skill at painting, I would have included illustrations. Rather, I closed my eyes and imagined the portraits and then set about putting them to words. The remainder, and bulk, of the write-ups discussed the hegemonic and ideal masculinities (and their implied or explicit "Others"); the arguments and larger discourses used to construct them; and how they

were submissive, complicit and/or resistive. Taken together, these write-ups were the participant's subjectivity portraits, ready to be hung and compared.

Ground Down

I look up from my computer and around the coffee shop. Several hours have passed, my coffee cup was emptied long ago, and I can see the sun setting in the sky above the storefront window. I stand up, take a good stretch, and walk back to the counter. Chaz gives me a wink and asks, "How'd it go?"

Maybe he wasn't feigning interest after all. I keep my response brief, just in case, "I realized my struggle with analysis wasn't really about the analysis at all! My dilemma was less about the content -- What kind of analysis am I doing?-- or process -- How should I be analyzing the data?-- and more about where the analysis would lead."

"Well good," he responds, "You've been in here so much I'd hate to think all that work was for nothing. It's a shame though, you're doing all that work to become a doctor and you won't even be able to write prescriptions."

I laugh, "Yeah, if they'd told me that at the orientation I never would have started the program."

I have much work ahead of me and I know that even though I've completed the analyses I describe above, there is still more analysis to be done in the final writing of the results and the discussion; the final stages of analysis. But this is a project for another time. I pack my computer, books, journal, and writings into my backpack and green eco-friendly bag from Australia and head out the door. The fall air is crisp and cool,

officially marking the end of a summery analysis and the beginning of a long winter of writing. I smile thinking it is no coincidence I will defend in the spring⁵.

Suddenly I stop. Speaking of defense, I realize I've forgotten to discuss the validity of my study. I make an abrupt turn-around and return to the coffee shop. Chaz looks up at me, "Forget something?" Chaz asks?

"Yeah, to finish!" I respond as I order a green tea chai with soy milk, because I'm convinced it has less caffeine and won't keep me awake all night, and return to my corner table. Once more I return to my corner table, which thankfully is still free.

But this section is not an afterthought, I think as I retrieve my notes and Lather's (1993) article. I'll be asking my dissertation committee to evaluate my study based on a different set of criteria and that's something I need to carefully consider.

Validity Criteria

Lincoln & Guba (2005) distinguish between two types of validity: a validity associated with methods and a validity associated with interpretations. Evaluating the validity of a study's methods attends to questions of "rigor in the application of method" (Lincoln & Guba, 2005, p. 205). Lincoln and Guba (2005) have come to see their earliest set of validity criteria (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) as methodological. The "naturalistic inquiry" methodological criteria they proposed, "credibility," "transferability," "dependability," and "confirmability," were put forward to parallel quantitative research's "internal validity," "external validity," "reliability," and "objectivity" and establish the overall "trustworthiness" of a naturalist's study (p. 300). While postmodern

⁵ Like all good plans, this did not come to fruition. My spring defense date was pushed back to mid-summer. Then my mid-summer defense was pushed back to the fall.

discourses have informed and moved forward contemporary thinking about validity in qualitative research, Lincoln and Guba (2005) note their earlier “methodological criteria are still useful for a variety of reasons, not the least of which is that they ensure that such issues as prolonged engagement and persistent observation are attended to with some seriousness” (p. 205). I tend to agree with Lincoln and Guba (2005) and others (i.e., Creswell, 1998) who argue qualitative researchers should still be concerned with issues of methodological validity.

Methodological Validity

This study employed several methodological recommendations, if not necessarily their rationale, associated with Lincoln and Guba’s (1985) methodological criteria. For example, the criterion of “credibility” entails “prolonged engagement in the field” (p. 300). While I did not interview the participants seven times each in order to establish a kind of “internal validity,” I did so to ensure the number and duration of the interviews was sufficient to gather a “saturated” set of data germane to the topic (Creswell, 1998).

In the write-up I strove to provide “thick descriptions” (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 300) of the research process, the participants, the analysis, and the results. These rich and thick descriptions contributed to the study’s authenticity and “transparency.” As Rogers (2003) notes, transparency is especially important:

As with any research, good qualitative research is open to question and is therefore transparent with regard to the formulation of research questions, data collection, and analysis, revisions in process over time, and limitations of the research. (p. 58)

It is under the dual methodological criteria of authenticity and transparency that I chose to make explicit, especially in this chapter, my thoughts, feelings, and “selves” that played out in the research project.

Finally, I employed “member checks” as part of the research design (Creswell, 1998; Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Merriam, 1988; Miles & Huberman, 1994). Lincoln & Guba (1985) argue member checking is “the most critical technique for establishing credibility” (p. 314). The point is not to hone in or foreclose on a singular truth, but to solicit the participants’ feedback and open the research up to multiple interpretations. To this end I engaged in two practices. First, during analysis if something in the participant’s interview was unclear to me I contacted the participant via e-mail and requested clarification. On one occasion, for example, I met with Franklin to clarify a metaphor he employed to describe his ideal man. This clarification led to the “funnel-spiral” figure found in Franklin’s write-up. Secondly, when I’d completed the write-ups in late spring 2007, I sent them to the participants. While I’d hoped their comments would help me revise their chapters and think more deeply about my interpretations, most of the participants provided minimal and largely positive feedback. I did make one important change based on Jake’s review of his write-up. I’d originally put Jake in a purple sweatshirt, but he didn’t feel this object adequately represented how he challenges masculinity on a daily basis. Therefore we settled on a hat with an embroidered rainbow. The participant’s responses are included (with permission) in Appendix C.

The methodological criteria I attended to were “credibility,” “transparency,” and “authenticity.” To this end I strove to obtain a deep and meaningful set of data, write rich and thick descriptions, and engage in “member checking.” But, as Lincoln and Guba

(2005) point out, evaluating the validity of a qualitative study involves attending to both methods and interpretation.

Interpretive Validity

Interpretive validity concerns the question, “Can our cocreated constructions be trusted to provide some purchase on some important human phenomenon?” (Lincoln & Guba, 2005). In my study this question is simultaneously epistemological (concerned with truth) and ethical (concerned with the participants’ experiences and the study’s potential outcomes). Unlike the methodological criteria that can be said to align with less radical approaches to qualitative research (Lincoln & Guba, 2005), the validity criteria I used to ensure interpretive validity are “transgressive” (Lather, 1993; Lincoln & Guba, 2005). Transgressive forms of validity are postmodern in their challenge of (post)positivist validity criteria (i.e., generalizeability, objectivity, reliability, internal and external validity) and their multiplication of different approaches for evaluating research (Lincoln & Guba, 2005). Transgressive validities often occupy the space between epistemology and ethics, worrying simultaneously that the “truths” created by research are respectful and appreciative of research participants (Olesen, 2000). In my research, transgressive validity criteria mark the extent to which my research made “space for partiality, self-reflection, tension, and difference” (Richardson, 1993, p. 695).

Specifically, I employed Lather’s (1993) four poststructural feminist subtypes of transgressive validity: ironic validity, paralogical validity, rhizomatic validity, and voluptuous validity.

Ironic Validity

Ironic validity attends to the problems of representation. Language is always insufficient in representing “reality” and the interview texts, stories, and write-ups are always incomplete, partial, and tentative accounts. My aim here was not to gauge the degree to which my interpretation “represents” my participants’ accounts, but to highlight how our representations are incomplete, opening up the possibility for other depictions and interpretations. By including the participant’s responses to my write-ups, for example, I am suggesting that my interpretation is one of many.

Paralogical Validity

Paralogical validity seeks out differences, oppositions, and uncertainties. Evaluating the study under this criteria means asking, How does my research embody “a situated, partial, positioned, explicit tentativeness” (Lather, 1993, p. 685)? By this criterion, I sought to present my research tentatively and, in doing so, suggest the possibility of alternative performances of gender and sexual subjectivities. In every participant’s write-up I strove to represent the men as selves in process, rather than as fixed subjects. Doing so I hoped to convey a sense of tentativeness (and the certainty of change) in their constructions.

Rhizomatic validity

Rhizomatic validity undermines convention and creates new understandings. Evaluating my study by this criterion means asking the question, How do my participants’ stories and my methods counter hegemonic forms of masculinity and

conventional understandings of gender in higher education? An analysis of how their constructions of masculinity are linked to their academic disciplines opens up a new space for the understanding of the relationship between higher education and gender. Also an analysis of how the research fostered openness and the creation of new, local performances of masculinities evidences rhizomatic validity at the participant level.

Voluptuous Validity

Voluptuous validity deliberately seeks excess and authority through self-engagement and reflexivity. This is the criterion in which Lather (1993) conjoins epistemology and ethics into an ethical/political focus (Scheurich, 1997). Here the study is evaluated by the degree to which I engaged (ethically, deeply, authentically) with the participants and facilitated self-reflection. It is also a final criterion on which my choice to privilege my voice in this chapter rests. I hope this chapter made clear my struggles, selves, and beliefs that not only made this study possible, but certainly played out in its conduct, analysis, interpretations, and eventual defense. As Clandinin and Connelly (2000) say, narrative inquiry is “strongly autobiographical” (p. 121) and I hope bringing to light my “baggage” has contributed to the voluptuousness of this study.

Conclusion

This chapter presented a multi-vocal account of conducting and analyzing a study of masculinity in graduate school. While the other chapters are less autobiographical, this chapter privileged my thoughts, emotions, and experiences, ethically placing myself in a position of vulnerability and discomfort adding “voluptuousness” to its content.

In this chapter the reader learned about participant selection and interview methodology, met the participants for the first time, was presented with the interview questions and methodology, and was introduced to the three pass analysis strategy through a painting metaphor. I concluded with the validity criteria by which the study should be evaluated.

Overall, this study is concerned with the construction of masculinity in graduate school; the link between graduate school and the gendered self in process. The results of this study inform not only what it means to be a man (and “dominant”) in graduate school (*Theory*), but how graduate school is implicated in his construction (*Practice*), and how he can be resistive (*Process*). By attending to ambiguity and resistance, the instability of masculinity, I hope to paint subjectivity portraits that highlight the possibility for difference in higher education.

CHAPTER FOUR: RESULTS

...being a man is perhaps more complicated now; certainly there appear to be more ways of being (a man). Moreover, emergent discourses of gender increasingly pressure the masculine subject to negotiate, reflect and consider his position as a man, and to be more aware of how one's masculinist practices and assumptions might impact on others and self.

Whitehead, 2002, p. 220

The results chapter contains five write-ups, one for each participant, all following a similar pattern. First, the write-ups begin with a description of the participants' subjectivity portraits as I imagine I would paint them if I had any talent for painting. These portraits include key figures, objects, and symbols from their past, present, and anticipated future. The portrait descriptions are the result of a theoretical and ethical compromise. I had originally intended to begin each participant's write-up with a brief, but comprehensive, life history. I hoped these life histories would ethically remind me and the reader that this study had involved the "meanings of people's lives" (Bar-On, 1996, p. 20). But I became uncomfortable with how easily identifiable the participants were, situated within their life histories. Describing the participants' subjectivity portraits emerged as a way to include, albeit more abstractly, important elements the participants drew on to construct their masculinities yet still work to shield their identities.

Further, while the participants were certainly unique individuals, this study was concerned with the discourses, academic and otherwise, that are mobilized to construct masculinity. Therefore the unique participants were taken to be potentially typical of many men, and the identifying information associated with their life histories was therefore largely irrelevant to the dissertation's purpose. The decision to present the participants' write-ups in the more abstract form of painting threatens to lessen the reader's connection to the individual participants' life experiences. But given the dissertation's aims, I felt the ethical and theoretical tradeoff was significant. Presenting the participants abstractly better conceals their identities and invites the reader to become more connected to the dissertation's ideas and conclusions.

After the subjectivity portrait descriptions, the write-ups follow this general format and order:

1. Hegemonic man – Presents an analysis of the participant's hegemonic man and how he was constructed.
2. Ideal man – Presents and analysis of the participant's ideal man and how he was constructed.
3. Comparing the hegemonic and the ideal man – Compares the hegemonic and ideal man, asking how similar and different they are to one another.
4. The "Others" (i.e., the gay man, woman, and other marginalized subject positions) – Presents the "Others" either explicitly or implicitly constructed and how they compare to the ideal man.

5. Complicity, subordination, and marginalization – Examines the relationship between the ideal and the hegemonic man, asking whether the ideal man is the same, different, or both similar and dissimilar to the hegemonic man.
6. Critical resistance as desubjectification – Examines the participants' relationship with the ideal and hegemonic men, asking whether the participant resists being a man.

The Counselor: Graham

Graham's portrait is a black and white, with various shades of gray providing the outlines of shapes and figures. The portrait is almost neatly divided down the middle, blacks and dark grays on the left side transitioning to lighter grays and whites on the right. Graham stands mostly in the dark side, but he's peering into the white and part of his figure is carried over, a single arm composed entirely in light colors. Graham is depicted, to use his words, "caught between two worlds"—the traditional masculine and the feminist. Graham is mostly made up of and appears in the traditional world of solid dark colors. But his exposure to the feminist world, represented by the lighter side, exerts an influence. Using these colors is not meant to conjure up images of good and evil, but to reflect an important yin yang metaphor Graham took up, associating masculinity with darkness and femininity with light⁶.

The dark side of Graham's portrait is crowded with figures, objects, and symbols. Its darkness is not cold and dismal, but solid, warm and comfortable. Around Graham stand his mother and Graham's older sister and younger brother she raised largely alone. Standing in sequence behind his mom are the boyfriends who were Graham's early male role models. Slightly ahead of his brother and sister is Graham's grandmother, holding a cross and a Bible. Graham's grandfather stands next to her, arm wrapped protectively around his wife. Vaguer images appear between Graham and his early family: his high school and junior college football teammates and his four year college fraternity brothers toss footballs and catcall even vaguer shapes of curvaceous young women cheerleaders. Graham's college professors take center stage in large

⁶ In Chinese philosophy, the yin and yang associates masculinity with light and femininity with darkness. But during the interviews both Graham and I mistakenly talked about their associations in reverse.

lecture halls, teaching the latest theory from the assigned developmental psychology texts. Closest to Graham stand his wife and two sons. Graham's pose echoes his grandfather's, but he appears less comfortable, as if his arm has fallen asleep and the pose too has gone numb. His sons gaze up at him, questions about the world in their eyes, waiting for his answer. But Graham's attention is captured by the other side of the painting.

The white side at which Grahams gazes is comparatively blank. While the dark side was solid, warm, and welcoming, the white side is stark, sterile, unclear, and unknown. The only clear figures are professors and students from Graham's program. Some are inviting, beckoning Graham to join them. Others have their backs turned, rejecting the darker side, rejecting Graham. Graham's expression is simultaneously one of confusion and desire, of fear and yearning, and of uncertainty and confidence. He reaches out to the white as if just to test what it means without crossing over and has yet to note this act is one of change. The portrait captures one moment in Graham's continual shifting and negotiation between the traditional male and feminist worlds.

Constructing the Hegemonic Man

Graham's hegemonic man emerged from his discussion of the "pressures" he felt as a result of being a man and engaging feminist critique of those pressures. Most often he talked about these pressures as coming from a ubiquitous "society" and recognized that it is through social messages "we learn the ways of a given society or social group so that we can function within it" (Elkin & Handel, 1989, p. 2). Thus, Graham associated the hegemonic man predominately with external social forces: "It's [being a man] not

necessarily something that you just go and try to pursue from the minute you're a little boy. It's something society says, 'You should do this.' You don't seek that."

Graham was very clear about society's expectations for men. A man should provide for his wife and family, be in control, make sure things get done, make decisions, be strong, be responsible for the safety of others, be logical, fix things, and, most importantly, *not fail*. Graham was most concerned about "failure" and what that would mean for his family:

...you've got to take care of business or people are going to say, you didn't take care of your kids. Now your wife needs to live with her mom, if it's a really extreme situation, and it's looked at like you failed. So you want to make sure that you're stepping up to the plate. If my wife ends up on welfare, let's say something happens to me, not necessarily something negative on my part, but just a bad circumstance. I guess they'd be like, "Where is their father?" Now Uncle Sam is their dad, you know what I mean? And it's better, much better, to father so society doesn't have to pick up that bullet. I don't know... so I think about that as a man. Especially right now. I'm in school. I don't have a salary to talk about, tons of money coming in. But still, you've got to take care of your family.

While many fathers experience a social pressure to provide for their families, the discursive positions given by ethnicity, upbringing, and early fatherhood likely contributed to a Graham's heightened awareness of the discourses around "successful" fatherhood. Graham's girlfriend became pregnant during his junior year in college, earlier than what he had planned. It is therefore no surprise Graham was concerned about his ability to provide for his family. Marsiglio and Pleck (2005) note:

Many males who become fathers as teenagers or young adult men come face to face with their inability to live up to being a family breadwinner, a crucial component for most models of adult masculinity. This pattern is exacerbated for African American and Hispanic young males, whose educational credentials and employment opportunities tend to be less promising than those for whites in the U.S. context. (p. 259)

Pressure to be the Hegemonic Man Comes From...

Graham identified several sources for the social pressures to be a man. They come from families, women, and his work. For example, the pressure to be in control and fix things was something he experienced at his job and with his family:

...at work, with people in the office, there's a problem with the fax machine... I just act like a normal guy and try to like get involved more. So I submit to that and then if I don't know, we gotta get somebody to fix this. But in the general population, or family or whatever, I just go ahead and do it. And that's one thing that I like least because then if you can't do it, it's going to be like... once they see that you don't know what they don't know, then the outcome is the same, let's get someone who does know. But I feel like they're thinking, "Wow that would have been nice if he could, if he knew these things."

The pressure to be a man Graham feels from women comes from heterosexual dating relationships. Women's expectations of masculinity pressure men to physically protect women, what Graham describes as being the "strong man," and be emotionally available, what he calls being the "nice guy." Graham feels it is an advantage to be able to "do both:"

You have two parts of you and that's hard about being a man. You have to be the loving, compassionate, love story, gentleman type. Then you have to be able to be the, 'I'll stand up for you, I'll protect you' type... But I have no problem switching because I think it's just something that's expected and if you want to be in the dating game or be a man in this society, in terms of competing with other guys, if you're able to do both of those, you have more opportunities to engage in heterosexual relationships.

Here Graham constructed a both/and position between the strong guy and nice guy subject positions, avoiding positioning himself at either end of the binary. This position confers an advantage over other heterosexual men in competition for women. While Graham believed "society should stop pushing things on guys and holding things back from guys," the quote above also shows Graham's general attitude toward these

pressures. But almost invariably when Graham critiqued society's pressures, he ended with, "But that's cool." The "that's cool" signified and confirmed his ability to meet society's expectations:

I have others I'm responsible for. And as a man that's one of the things that often gets overlooked. Men feel that pressure; that they should be strong or they need to be able to offer some security to others. I think about that, but that's cool. And there's things in society that help me deal with it, I guess and accept it and live with it. So I feel like I need to be in control too. In control of my schooling, my family, and safe in terms of all these areas. Getting things done, taking care of business and not making too many mistakes that could affect others who are in my life...But I'm up to it and it guides me in everything I do.

Masculinity in a Feminist Program

While Graham was "up to the task" of meeting, albeit begrudgingly, society's expectations, he did have the opportunity to practice a different kind of masculinity in his graduate program. Among "feminists" Graham resisted the urge, what he described as "me putting pressure on myself," to do something. In this context Graham was most supported in performing a different kind of masculinity, one that didn't involve him taking control and having the answers:

Graham: ...if there's a problem with the VCR or something, I'm the only guy in my classes, six other girls, and the instructor's female, it feels like I should do something about that... And I think that's just because I'm a man that I'm feeling that way. And, I mean I think it's, in the situation I'm in, given the context, it's just me that's putting that pressure on myself. So in my graduate program it's, everyone is cool, "Well he doesn't know any more than us or he doesn't know how to fix this."

Jenni: Do you find that, in your graduate program, even though it's understood that you know as much as they do about the VCR malfunctioning, do find that you end up helping out and fixing it, anyway?

Graham. No. What I find is that I just usually wait for somebody who knows how. Because I'm trying to hold them to a higher standard too; to not put that pressure on me if they're thinking about it. So, what happens is I just wait a little bit longer in my graduate program and then, they usually go get someone else

who can do it for real. So that's what I do...I just hold off and don't try to act like I know something.

It was also only in the context of a “feminist program,” that Graham spoke of an “internalization” of social pressures. Elsewhere the pressures to be a man came from external structures and sources, like family, women, and work discussed above. The feminist program was a context where the expectations for men and women are “equal” and Graham could therefore talk about the pressures to be a man as coming from himself.

A feminist oriented graduate program was somewhat of a relief from social pressures and allowed Graham to practice a masculinity that didn't involve taking control and having the answers. Regardless, Graham voiced skepticism about feminist critiques of the hegemonic pressures. It is important to note that, just as Graham talked about a ubiquitous “society,” he also referred to feminism monolithically. But from Graham's descriptions it can be discerned the feminism of which he spoke was largely composed of ideologies from feminism's radical second wave: liberating women from men's oppression (Nicholson, 1997; Roth, 2004), radically altering the gender status-quo (Nicholson, 1997), valuing of social and psychological differences between men and women (Nicholson, 1997) and differentiating between a biological sex and a social gender (Tarrant, 2006), for example.

Feminism and the Hegemonic Man: Navigating Two Worlds

Graham drew a rather sharp distinction between feminist and traditional worldviews, referring to these as the “real” and the “ideal feminist” worlds. Navigating these two conflicting worlds made Graham more sensitive to when their discourses

appeared within one another. Thus he easily recognized how feminism has opened up what it means to be a man to allow emotional expression with children. He also heard feminism's "mixed-messages," times when traditional gender stereotypes were consciously or unconsciously advocated in seemingly feminist spaces. While these leakages are seen as natural markers of "complexity and contradiction" that positively suggest a potential for change (Connell, 2000, p. 219), Graham viewed them negatively, privileging modernist discourses that would hold feminists accountable to the criteria of consistency and coherence.

Consistency and coherence. Graham agreed women, relative to men, have "less power," "lower social status," and wealth, but he also pointed out where he saw feminist critiques as inconsistent, hypocritical, ineffectual, and illogical. Throughout the interview Graham brought up examples of how women say they want "equality," but don't live up to their end of the bargain: "I find that women who have this orientation [feminist], they want to be equal, but sometimes they're not willing to take the hit for you. Sometimes they'll say, 'Well I can step back from this...'" In his program he was surprised to hear one of his feminist professors talk stereotypically about gender:

...Leading feminists, when you read their material, it sounds like one thing, but since I know them personally, they say things, for instance... a feminist that I know, she said that there was a bird that flew in their house and she was on the phone with her friend and said, "You know, I don't think that women should have to deal with this stuff." Because there was something in their house and she was scared to get it out. So she said to her class there's a part of her that thinks women shouldn't have to deal with that. But she would never write that down, like in a journal article.

Graham felt “young feminists” are done a disservice when they aren’t told about the “incongruencies” between what feminists write and what they sometimes do.

However he did not say feminists should come clean yet “because there’s a hierarchy imbalance” between men and women and presumably discussing how (some) feminists (can) continue to hold stereotypical expectations of men would undermine the feminist position. However he believed honesty is important and feminists should:

... to try to put that [inconsistencies] into your writings too, because when a new young feminist reads that stuff, they’re going to be ready to fight and that may not be how the author meant it. They probably didn’t mean it to be as aggressive.... I know when you meet someone that is effective in their writing they make it sound like really, really fierce and everything, but when you meet them like they’re either not that fierce or they would even have incongruencies in their own life.

For Graham these inconsistencies weakened or perhaps more accurately, dampened, the ferocity of feminist’s arguments. For Graham this was a “relief” because often in his graduate program he felt relegated to a male-as-aggressor subject position; “like I might be a perpetrator.” Knowing feminists can inattentively hold some traditional beliefs about gender helped Graham navigate a program where, as a man, he sometimes felt conscripted to embody the negative stereotypes of his gender. The radical feminist conflation of individual men with concepts like hegemonic masculinity and the patriarchy is problematic because, as Kilmartin (2007) points out, “The stereotype of men as socially and economically powerful does not fit the experience of most men” (p. 184). Further, collapsing individual men and socially constructed masculine subjectivities is troublesome (Whitehead, 2002). This is not to say individual men and women do not have an active role in the perpetuation of the gender order, they do. It is also not to say that men are not responsible for acts of violence against women, they are. However, it is

to say that radical perspectives reduce “complex gender power relations... to an ‘oppressor-victim’ dualism, in which multiple subjectivity and self-identity processes are made invisible by the power of political categories of gender” (Whitehead, 2002, p. 99). Graham’s feelings suggest that, in his program, he experiences what some masculinity theorists describe as “a more sinister element of feminism,” a way of presenting feminist beliefs that denigrates men in general and leaves no option for the individual man to form a positive identity (Macnamara, 2006, p. 37).

Failings of feminism. Graham also pointed to the ineffectuality of the feminist critique in the face of the stronger traditional expectations for men. Certainly Graham attributed men’s ability to be emotionally nurturing to feminism. Kilmartin (2007) explains, “Fathering is an important area affected by male inexpressiveness. In order to be a good father, a man must sometimes go against gender demands that require him to be unemotional, unconnected, and task oriented” (p. 158). As a counselor and a father, Graham appreciated the feminist critique has opened up discursive spaces for men to be “good fathers.” But being emotional has its limits and the feminist critique is not strong or effective enough to change the society’s expectation that men be in control of their emotions:

...And that goes with the logical thinking and being careful. But you have emotions there, I appreciate the feminist perspective. I spend time with my kids, just human development and parenting in general. But you can’t break down. You know what I mean? You can’t, in terms of stereotypical, get really emotional about something...

Finally, Graham saw feminists as, illogically, “waiting for men to change.”

I told my class I wouldn't have my daughter believing she needs to rely on the other boys not to raise their hands and ask questions and get involved. I would just train her to get involved... Don't have them waiting for the guys to stop what they're doing. So I think guys are not going to stop the power they have, you know? There's nothing that's going to motivate guys to change.

Graham argued that, because of their social power, individual men would have no investment in constructing and performing alternative masculinities. In some ways Graham's critiques of feminism functioned in this capacity, allowing him to dismiss the alternative masculinity he practices in graduate school. As Connell (1995) says, “A gender order where men dominate women cannot avoid constituting men as an interest group concerned with defence, and women as an interest group concerned with change” (p. 82). For very understandable reasons, Graham continued to take up discourses of traditional masculinity. Extrapolating on the man he can be in his feminist program, performing him in non-school settings, would, by the standards of the hegemonic man, result in failing his wife and sons, incurring his family's wrath, and subjecting himself to social disgrace. But, for Graham, privileging a hegemonic masculinity was associated with societal pressures and was not perceived as simultaneously an act of power. The pressure to embody the hegemonic man is the “two-edge sword” of masculinity, representing the price of power and the toll exacted for being a man (Kilmartin, 2007, p. 186). Graham said he would prefer not to have the pressure to provide for his family. He would, for example, be quite happy if his wife went back to school or got a job. He also appreciated not having to take control and fix things in his graduate program. In terms of these penalties, it is perhaps difficult to understand how Graham could benefit from the current gender order.

It is through an analysis of Graham's masculine ontological project, the construction of his ideal man, that we more clearly see how Graham's ideal man negotiates the hegemonic man by submission, entailing skepticism of feminist critiques. This is not to say that skepticism was a reaction born out of defensiveness. In many ways Graham constructed an ideal masculinity that allowed him to engage, adopt, and struggle with and against feminist critiques. But, Graham clearly maintained what he viewed as two conflicting worldviews, the traditional male and the feminist, and, by his own admission, wasn't sure how or if they could "fit together." By asking Graham what he saw as the ideal man, the man who negotiates the hegemonic man, it is better understood how he could resist the changes fully adopting the "feminist" worldview would entail.

The Ideal Man

This section concerns Graham's masculine ontological project, his pursuit of masculinity (Whitehead, 2002). To negotiate what he perceived as the external social pressures to be a man, Graham constructed his ideal man.

Graham's ideal man is a leader. His leadership could be extensive, he might be a CEO or a mayor, or it could be localized, as when he was "taking care of his family." As a leader, the ideal man is a good decision-maker:

An ideal man thinks about all the factors and makes a good decision for himself and those people who are going to be influenced by that decision. It doesn't matter if you're a plumber, you have a poor job and you're taking care of your family, or you're the president of the United States, you have to look at what's there and make a good decision. And that's an ideal man.

Because being a good decision-maker involves thinking about "all the factors" and considering all sides, the ideal man needs to be a good listener to make informed

decisions. A “strong man can listen to others. I think that’s being strong too, the ability to process what others are saying.” But to be able to listen to others requires the ideal man not have a “weak ego.” For Graham, strength came from “knowing himself.” When he knows himself and his values, a strong man “stands on his own two feet” and is not easily pushed around, bullied or coerced. However the strong man is open to and can be influenced by compelling arguments.

A strong person can relax, listen, deal with it, and hear what people are saying. Not get too scared about it, processes it and make a good decision and can be persuaded. That’s a strong man to me. A strong man listens to his wife, see. I think some people got it twisted, whether or not it’s from their religious... a strong man and a strong woman, a strong parent listen to their kids. They don’t just say, “Screw you, I’m the boss here.”

Finally, the ideal man is independent, “makes his own decisions,” and keeps separate the different areas of his life: work, family, and school. When he is home he’s not “stressing under a lot of pressure” from school or work,” he’s able to be “cool and relaxed.” When the ideal man gives his all and keeps different areas of his life separate, he is an “‘A’ father, an ‘A’ student and an ‘A’ worker.” In order to maintain the separateness of school, work, and family, the ideal man must be “orderly and logical, all those stereotypical male things.” He must draw on his decision-making ability to determine where his responsibilities lie:

Because a strong man would be able to know what they need to do, know their responsibilities, and can do all of them and knows what has to be cut, has to be cut. What has to be done has to be done. If something at school has to be cut, hey, it has to be cut, I’m going home with my family. Colleagues are going out, having some time together, “Hey, you guys, like to join you, but I’m going home.”

While the ideal man must keep aspects of his professional and personal life clearly separated, his internal life is characterized by sameness. When a man knows himself he can be consistent:

I think you should be the same person.... I think that congruency is important.... I'm the same man in my graduate program, with my wife, with my family, at work, I'm the same man. And I have certain values that cross gender, cross race and if it's not right, it's not right. Or if it's inappropriate, it's inappropriate.

Graham was clear he was not yet or always the ideal man. Because of the stress of school, work, and family, he said, "It's like I'm being a 'B' dad a 'B' husband and a 'B' student because I'm balancing all this, I can't really excel to the level that I really want." With these set of characteristics, the ideal man navigates the hegemonic man.

The Ideal Man: Navigating the Hegemonic Man

While Graham's ideal man was, in some ways, constructed in opposition to his hegemonic man, the ideal and hegemonic men were more often similar, showing Graham's ideal man's alignment with many social pressures he'd spoken of critically. As discussed above, Graham struggled with some of the social expectations that pressure him to be a man. For example, he wished there weren't so much pressure to take care of his family and "things that go wrong." Simultaneously, he couldn't imagine what would happen if he "didn't do those things. It would be scary." In part, his fear is understood by the similarity between his construction of the ideal man and the hegemonic man. To resist the social pressures of the hegemonic man would entail he reexamine and reconstruct what it means to be the ideal man. The hegemonic man's norms define who

Graham is and, because he is attached *to being* in the social world, resisting the hegemonic would put Graham's sense-of-self at risk (Hoy, 2005).

Consider the following definition of the ideal, Western capitalist man. He is:

...independent, unemotional, or hides his emotions; is objective, not easily influenced, dominant, likes maths and science; is not excitable in a minor crisis; is active, competitive, logical, worldly, skilled in business, direct... makes decisions easily, never cries, acts as a leader; is self-confident... not conceited about his appearance; thinks men are superior to women.... (Fransell and Frost (1977), cited in Morgan, 1992, p. 57, emphasis added)

The words Graham used to describe the ideal man are emphasized above to demonstrate just how well Graham's ideal aligns with traditional norms of masculinity. This is not surprising as Adams and Coltrane (2005) remind us, "While social, economic, demographic, and cultural contexts have changed since the 19th century, idealized perceptions of masculinity and femininity have remained remarkably consistent" (p. 233). Graham's hegemonic man aligned well with historical ideals and his ideal man emerged as very similar to his hegemonic man.

Graham's hegemonic man is pressured to take care of his family and his ideal man *is ideal* because he can take care of his family and make good choices for those influenced by his decisions. The hegemonic man is pressured to take care of problems when they arise and the ideal man is a leader who takes care of problems: "So when I think of male leaders, I think of people who can... look at everybody's needs and put it all together and says, "Here's what we'll do." So while Graham sought relief from the social pressures of masculinity, his definition of an ideal man allowed no relief as it relied on and employed them.

However, in one area, Graham's ideal man was constructed in opposition to the hegemonic man. The hegemonic man, caught up in the heterosexual matrix, is forced to navigate two identities when dating: the nice guy and the tough guy. As described earlier, the best the hegemonic man can do is learn to be both and this gives him an advantage with women, a competitive edge over other men who can only be tough or nice. However, Graham's ideal man doesn't "play that game."

...That's one tough thing, playing that role, it's okay, guys accept it. Some guys can't do it very well, they're stuck in one or the other, but a good man, an ideal man doesn't play that game and when they make decisions, I think the right decision doesn't have a tough guy, nice guy, good guy, bad guy thing to it. Good decisions are the right decision, not the tough decision or the nice decision. They're the right decision.

While Graham leaves room for the ideal man to acquiesce to hegemonic social pressures, his superior logic and decision-making power provide an escape from having to determine what kind of guy to be in what situation. However, resisting these pressures is not tantamount to rejecting hegemonic masculinity. For Graham, these pressures come from heterosexuality; they are perceived as coming from women. To refuse to play the game means the ideal man resists the pressures women put on him. It is the "weak man" who consistently gives into women's expectations.

The Ideal and the Weak Man

Graham's construction of the ideal man yielded an antagonist, what Graham referred to as the "weak man." While the ideal man does what is right, the weak man is easily influenced, he will "do the wrong thing for pressure reasons." The ideal man listens to others when making decisions. The weak man is bull-headed and domineering.

He says, “Screw you. I’m strong. I’m the boss here!” An ideal man knows that being a good man is “internal” and has nothing to do with how he looks, his education level, or his socio-economic status. The weak man is overly concerned with “externalities.” He believes that how he looks to others is what makes him a man. In this way he shows his dependence on the opinions of others while the ideal man considers the opinions of others, but ultimately makes his own decision.

As discussed above, the weak man gives into women’s expectations that he be a nice or a tough guy. The strong man can do both, but is most strong when he makes decisions independent of those expectations. The strong man is consistent in how he acts and presents himself across all social settings. In contrast, the weak man is more of a chameleon, changing who he is depending on who he’s around. Graham critiqued people of different races and education levels for sometimes doing this:

...and a lot of time African American people behave differently around anybody they... especially going from folks who are pretty well educated to folks who are not, despite your race. But in my experience I know some African American people who act differently around family... I don’t think that’s good. I think that you should be the same.

While people occupying marginalized positions in society must often augment their performances to fit-in with the dominant culture, what Harding (2004) would call operating within and between different epistemological standpoints, Graham’s definition of an ideal man denied him this strategy. He must always be the same man.

Edley and Wetherell (1995) point out the combined forces of masculinity and capitalism “interact in complex ways with racism and the established cultural practices of different groups, with differing consequences for the construction of black masculinity” (p. 114). Edley and Wetherell’s observation is important because it highlights some of

the social forces (racism and capitalism) and locations (low SES, African American) that are important for constructing an identity. Because Graham is an African American who constructs his ideal man based on traditional societal definitions of masculinity associated with Whiteness and economic privilege (Price, 2000), it makes sense he contrasts the ideal man to less privileged African Americans. Yet it is important Graham views his adoption of a traditional masculinity as a challenge to racism, albeit different from a critical challenge that attempts to change society:

I look at myself as an animal who is not exactly in their natural habitat, the best situation for them. But nonetheless, are you just going to just cry about it and not go get your food that you can eat or try to find out where's the water. Like that's me. As an African American, as a minority I don't necessarily think, "Oh well, I'm just going along for the free ride while they [the activists] do all this work." I feel like I'm doing some work too because sometimes people expect you to cry about it and, when you don't, that in of itself can move things. I've seen that happen in work, at places I've worked where, can't no one touch you. Can't no one bring you down. If you're taking care of business then things become better.

Graham's "weak man" was clearly defined and his construction suggested a form of masculinity othered to Graham's ideal man; a masculinity associated with lower-SES African Americans.

"Others"

As Whitehead (2002) says, "Woman is the Other that necessarily exists in order to allow man to assume his central role" (p. 119). Similarly, the "gay man" emerged as an "Other" to Graham's construction of the ideal man that always assumed his heterosexuality, what Butler (1990, 1993) refers to as the "heterosexual matrix." So, from Graham's construction of the ideal man, "woman" and the "gay man" can be inferred as his inferior opposites (Connolly, 1991). However, in some instances, Graham

attempted to interrogate and understand this implication. He drew on several academic discourses in an attempt to theorize the nature of the sexed and gendered self and explain the difference between men and women. From this examination he constructed a theory of power and difference between men and women. This theory can be seen to serve as the foundational assumption of the difference between men and women that permitted many of the statements Graham made about what it means to be a man. The following sections focus on gay men and women as two additional “Others” and the discourses Graham drew on to describe their relationship to men.

The Ideal and Gay Men

When asked what it meant to be a heterosexual, Graham began, “It’s not something that I think about that much.” Graham’s hegemonic and ideal man had relied on the assumption of heterosexuality; being a man meant taking care of and listening to his wife and children and playing (or not playing) the heterosexual dating game. Therefore, when asked about heterosexuality, there remained little left for Graham to examine that wouldn’t constitute a reiteration of his definition of “man.” The heterosexual matrix is particularly effective because of its normative power. This is something Graham immediately recognized:

...What does it [being a heterosexual] mean? I guess is that I’m right or like I’m normal in some way. Like that’s the way it should be and so go with it... I don’t feel out of place. There’s other places sometimes where I would feel out of place, as a racial minority, but in terms of being a heterosexual, it’s not something that I really feel that much...

Graham didn’t have to think about being a heterosexual because it is presumed normal and intertwines with his understanding of what it means to be a man. It is in the

interstices of masculinity that heterosexuality hides itself from acknowledgement and examination. When we begin to ask questions about heterosexuality, the discourses that maintain heterosexuality as normal and intertwined with gender are brought to light.

Describing heterosexuality Graham said:

...heterosexuality means that you're incomplete. As a species, we're sexually incomplete and that's why we have sexual reproduction, it's not asexual reproduction. So I just feel like I'm the masculine half of that for our species. I'm incomplete without female, you know what I mean? And so you have your part in the play... you could fit your criteria of being masculine or feminine, but unless you had some kind of, at least emotional attachment, maybe sexual, some would say, you're not exactly heterosexual yet. So you can keep your part [masculine or feminine], but you're not going to reach that unless you connect in some way with the opposite part.

Graham argued masculinity and femininity constitute two opposite halves of a whole and heterosexuality is the system that brings them together. It is not until you "connect in some way with the opposite part" that you fully become masculine or feminine. Similar to the "weak man," Graham's homosexual man is depicted as a lesser form of masculinity, what Connell (1995) refers to as a "subordinated" masculinity.

Graham's reasoning drew on sociobiology (Wilson, 1975) and evolutionary psychology discourses (Barkow, Cosmides, & Tooby, 1992; Vandermassen, 2005). Therefore Graham succeeded in normalizing gender difference and heterosexuality by naturalizing their origins in a discourse of species survival. If made painfully explicit and simple, Graham's argument would go something like this: Human beings are biological entities. Biological entities seek their own survival and reproduction. Human beings reproduce sexually. Sexual reproduction requires a male and a female. Heterosexuality is natural because it is a relationship between males and females that ensures the survival of our species.

But heterosexuality is not just understood as a set of biological drives, it is also social and implicated in human emotions. Graham argued being a heterosexual does not necessarily involve a sexual relationship; it can include an “emotional attachment.” Therefore the biological forces that drive species survival imbue the social and determine social relationships between men and women. As Petersen (1998) notes, “competition and ‘survival of the fittest’” have become “dominant metaphors for thinking about categories of difference and how they develop” (p. 46).

Graham also described the process of becoming a heterosexual as one of identification with role models:

I really only first knew [I was a heterosexual] once I got into school and was exposed to the word and the definition....But I think even before that as a kid seeing adults and thinking that that's the way it's supposed to be... So probably even as a smaller kid seeing my dad, who wasn't there, but seeing other males and what they were doing and accepting what they're doing. And saying, I want to do that too. That's probably the moment I knew. But I don't know if that's knowing. My son, he's 2 years old. And he already calls different men on TV; he calls them 'Dad.' And women, 'Mom,' like in a magazine. But does he know he's heterosexual? No. Because he doesn't know the word, but... I guess by him acknowledging I want to identify with Dad, what Dad does is cool and I dress like Dad... that's the point in time that I knew that I was heterosexual, by observation and acceptance.

Overall Graham's definition of what it means to be a heterosexual included both sociobiological and social cognitive (Bandura, 1989) theories, a combination of “nature and nurture.” Given Graham's background in psychology, it is no surprise he draws on two prevailing theories of gender and sexuality development, commonly presented in human development texts (e.g., Dacey & Travers, 2006; Sigelman & Rider, 2006), to frame what it means to be a heterosexual. Appropriation of these discourses to frame his thinking about heterosexuality allows Graham to maintain gender and sexuality in their

binary and oppositional forms. However, when Graham begins to consider homosexuality, his thinking changes and, in some ways, becomes more complex.

Graham believed “being a homosexual is a choice.” The language he used maintained homosexuality as a kind of deviance from the heterosexual norm, even as he recognized, “people probably have more of a sexual repertoire than they choose to use.” However, people “choose certain parts of it to deploy,” and “this is the same with any fetish. If there’s a culture of acceptance, you will do what is natural. You will choose to do it. Whereas if you can’t, you will choose not to.” In this way Graham’s construction of homosexuality is understood as part of a natural and broad human sexuality that appears when society, even begrudgingly, allows for its emersion. However if society doesn’t permit certain acts of sexuality and aggression, as in the case of sexual assault, then people can fight their natural tendencies. Graham said:

...let’s say a guy’s out of his mind and he’s with his boys and under normal circumstances he wouldn’t rape a girl. But when he’s with his boys he does that. When that happens, my interpretation of that is, he has let go. He has embraced or accepted a natural aggression to do that. So in terms of homosexuals, I think that they’re just accepting; they’re just letting it be. They’re accepting it. So I guess you could say they’re born that way, but also I think it’s still a choice. You can fight the way you’re born.

Graham’s ideal man is heterosexual for biological and social reasons.

Evolutionary psychology and social cognitive discourses confer his normalcy and position the homosexual as a deviant (even if embodying one of a many sexual behaviors from a natural array) form. While Graham claimed not to be “against homosexuality,” his theorizing of heterosexuality and construction of the ideal man certainly positioned gays as abnormal, leaving them only with the choice of accepting or rejecting their

deviance. The next section examines the construction of Graham's ideal man and its implications for the category "woman."

The Ideal Man and (His) Women

Graham's construction of the ideal man required and implied a "woman" as his opposite. If the ideal man is a leader and decision-maker, then woman is a follower who appreciates having decisions made for her. Thus, despite feminist challenges to traditional, masculine, hierarchical modes of leadership that have changed the definition of good leadership and paved the way for women to enter leadership positions, the person occupying the leadership position remains presumptively male (Whitehead, 2002).

Graham was aware of this problematic as he struggled to understand and explain why men tend to occupy leadership positions. To address this question, Graham first created a theory about the relationship between men and women. He began with the assumption that men and women are essentially different:

It doesn't matter if you believe we evolved this way, we were created this way, or something astronomical came and put us here this way, whatever. It doesn't matter. It just seems like there's some differences [between men and women] here.

But, Graham was not sure what to make of these differences when he constructed his ideal man as a leader:

I think guys, they're raised like, you're the chief, you gotta think about what's good for the whole village. That does everyone good.... And sometimes I don't think women are... it sucks because maybe you could talk about this in any way. You could say they've been put in a position of following or deferring to the male so they don't learn that... But there are women in leadership positions too so I don't know. Maybe they're able to think about everybody's needs. Maybe women are becoming empowered and developing skills.

To resolve the apparent contradiction that men and women can both be leaders, yet maintain the ideal man's construction as that of a "natural leader," Graham once again turns to the discipline of psychology. He discussed the differences between men and women's decision-making (an essential quality of the leader) in terms of the "bell curve:"

So I think if you had to look at it in terms of a bell curve, I think you would see men and women on the continuum of wanting to make decisions or not, that's the continuum. I think you'd see more women over here [leave that alone side], more men over here [I'll do it side], lots in between. The means may be different, but there's a huge overlap. Given the situation you may be in a different spot.

While the bell curve allowed Graham to think about both men and women as potentially good decision-makers, it still permitted him to conceptualize gender in its binary form and maintain his belief in essential differences between men and women. Certainly the incendiary *The Bell Curve* (Herrnstein & Murray, 1996) sparked much criticism and outrage around using the bell curve to compare racial groupings on intelligence measures (Fraser, 1995). The book assumed a genetic link between race and intelligence that is now largely regarded as nonsense (Nisbett, 1995). Despite this, Graham employed the bell curve metaphor to explain differences between men and women, which he says "is different from African Americans." To be fair, Graham did not attribute gender differences solely to genetics, but to some combination of "nature and nurture."

But Graham's feminist program was problematizing men's dominant position relative to women. Graham's interview was largely characterized by a struggle to make sense of his traditional beliefs about masculinity in light of his exposure to feminism. Caught between these "two worlds," Graham created a theory of gender difference and power that allowed him to think of both men and women as holding power:

I think that males and females are like the yin and yang. The money part is the chunk of the male yin... the money part is the small tail part. But there's a whole big chunk that guys have, the tail of the yin... So I think that sure, maybe it [relationship between men and women] should be equal, like straight, fine either way, but I think there's this, maybe there's evolutionary forces, certainly social forces, no one would argue against that, maybe evolutionary, I don't know... but that keeps it like that. You know and I think the main thing that's driven right now is materialism, consumerism, and power. And so women are concentrating on that part that men have and wanting some of that. They're not saying look at all this that we have.

Graham acknowledged that "sure there's an imbalance" between men and women in terms of material power and that women probably should have more economic and social power, but he was critical women don't appreciate the power they do have. He said:

But if you look at everything in the human experience, I don't think women actually look at the things they have over guys. Not like a guy would say this, but when my wife had her kids, that's nothing I can ever do. That's an advantage she has that I don't. Another that's purely fact is that baby boys die more than baby girls in the womb and also earlier. We die younger, women live longer. There's some benefits that men don't have... but we just look at this power and money type stuff.

While Graham's critique suggests there is more to the "human experience" to be valued than money and power, it only surfaced when he discussed power as something women want. Even recognizing what women have isn't what men would want, Graham continued to hold women should value their power.

For Graham, the power relegated to woman is conferred through her biology and heterosexuality. She can have babies and lives longer (biology). However, it is through sexual selection women have the power to determine men's behavior (heterosexuality). This was already evidenced by the way men switch back and forth from the "nice guy" to the "tough guy" based on women's needs. Graham argued:

...women are part of society, so how can society help men? I think women have to be educated as well about their role in what they're asking of guys and that if they're asking for a certain thing, he will comply. Like that's one thing in terms of power. I think women don't know the power they have in terms of men's behavior. Like I've seen guys do things for women. Because they want to please her or they want her to like them. So I think women can really be taught that you guys have some power too... you guys help men, you know?

However, this power is trumped by Graham's ideal man. As described earlier, the ideal man can stand above women's expectations and make "right decisions" outside of being a "nice" or "tough guy."

Conceptualizing women as having power to change men's behavior in heterosexual relationships has troubling implications. From wanting "a gentleman" to treat her right to thwarting off sexual assault, women become, in part, responsible for the things men do to them. While Graham certainly criticized his teammates who were "disrespectful to women," he wondered of women: "Why are you accepting this? Why are you letting this happen? Is it that you're scared that it's happening and you can't do anything? Or it's just the pressure or what?" A salient story from Graham's childhood, a "sexual abuse" incident he witnessed in kindergarten, also had Graham asking these questions:

I was in kindergarten and there was this kid, he wasn't a bully type kid, just a regular kid. We were in the library, getting read a book or something like that, everyone was sitting on the floor. And he was sitting next to this girl and he put his hand or I guess his finger in her back and I was just watching it. And for some reason I didn't think what he was doing was wrong. I mean, it seemed like it was wrong, but for some reason, I guess a way to put it is, it was exciting for me. I didn't want to stop him. It may have been wrong, but I didn't say, "Don't do that." We were like just sitting there like listening to the story. And so the negative from that experience was that... on the way back from the library I started talking to that kid, I was like, "Hey man, why were you doing that?" And I can't remember our conversation but I know that I was in favor of him doing it again.... And we got back into class and he did it again. And I kept looking at the girl's face, because it was like me, him, and her. And I could see, I was sitting

like this and I could see his hand, it seemed like two fingers just going like that like at the top of her butt, right? In her pants. And I would look, I would just try not to cause any attention. And I would look at her. A couple times she made eye contact with me, but I just kept wondering, "Why isn't she... why is she not doing anything? Like why... like is that okay? But it didn't look like she was scared, didn't look like she was mad, it didn't look like she was sad or afraid of what he was doing, or intimidated. It just looked like, "Oh well." you know. I know she's got to feel like what he's doing. So it's not like she doesn't know. And I just couldn't understand.... And that's probably why I have some of the interests I have now.... And I was looking at her and she wasn't stopping him or anything and I just couldn't.... I just couldn't... like I knew that somehow maybe she should stop that.... But that's sad what happened, you know? Like... that's sexual abuse. I mean that is. Because what effect does that have on her? Was it nothing? Or was it something?

And my whole life I've always wondered why. Especially playing sports, guys would just really say bad things to girls and it seemed like they were accepting them and I just never understood why. Like I never understood the crap that some of the guys I knew, just complete jerks always would say, why is she accepting that? Like why? Why doesn't she say get out of here or something? And so I don't know. That was probably the start of it. I was really confused. I was like, it seems wrong. I'm excited about it. I'm sure he is. I'm kind of okay with it at the least, maybe aroused at the max, but I don't think I was aroused in the sense I am now. But it wasn't something that was aversive, that's for sure. And I wasn't doing anything about it and I was just like why isn't she? Shouldn't she? Shouldn't she do something? I didn't see a sign that she liked it either. Or that she was against it. Or she was scared, I just didn't know. I didn't know.... In my work I want to get at the core of why. Why she didn't do anything.

Graham's research and work interests centered on adolescent sexuality generated historically from what he viewed as dangerous and immoral ("maybe it's because of my religious upbringing") sexual behavior among his childhood and adolescent peers. He struggled to understand why women would put up with being degraded by men and this question guided his work and research interest in adolescent sexuality. He was genuinely puzzled. Yet it is through Graham's construction of women as possessing heterosexual power that he could articulate questions that *hold women responsible* for men's behavior. A different understanding of the relationship between "men" and "women" and their

power would, in all likelihood, lead Graham to ask different questions about this incident: What is my responsibility? What would empower a woman to act? What does the construction of masculinity have to do with violence against women?

The masculinity studies literature is replete with calls for men to change (e.g., hooks, 2004b; Kimmel, 1995; MacInnes, 2001; Pease, 2000; Seidler, 1997; Whitehead, 2001). And Graham agrees, but wishes society would be more supportive:

...society [needs] to help educate guys on the benefits of other functions of the human experience. Like compassion. Educate men that there's some benefits to being compassionate. There's some benefits in being social. There are some benefits in not trying to hold onto your power. Guys need to be educated about the benefits. Because right now they don't know... aint no one going to do anything if they don't see the benefits.

While Graham agreed men should change, this belief did not alter the construction of his hegemonic and ideal man, nor their "Others," in critical ways. Graham constructed an ideal masculinity very similar to his hegemonic ideal and, when he resisted the normative ideals of the hegemonic man, they were those given by women. Yet it would be inaccurate to label Graham's masculinity as fully complicit. His current struggle and resulting uncertainty belied the very man he idealizes. To understand more fully Graham's ideal man as both compliant and resistive, I conclude by examining the complicit, submissive, and marginalizing forces in and of Graham's constructions.

Complicity, Subordination and Marginalization

As shown earlier, Graham's ideal man was very similar to his hegemonic man. In Connell's (1995) terms, this similarity would signal complicity; that Graham's ideal man was "constructed in ways that realize the patriarchal dividend" (p. 79). Graham's ideal

man was heterosexual and sought leadership, decision-making ability, to support his family, and independence. He differed from the hegemonic man in one respect: he resisted giving into women's desires for him to be the "nice" and the "tough" guy.

This resistance set up Graham's construction of the "weak man;" the focus of the following discussion on complicity and marginalization. If Graham's ideal man can be understood as complicit with the hegemonic man and normative ideals of masculinity, then the weak man appears as a marginalized form of masculinity. The term "marginalized" refers to masculinities subordinated by their membership in social categories *external to* the gender order: low SES, African American, disabled, etc... (Connell, 1995). Graham's "weak man" is marginalized because, as we've seen, he most closely resembles a masculinity associated with lower class, African American men. The weak man is all the things the ideal man is not. He is a bully and doesn't listen to others, he puts on appearances, he is easily influenced, and he plays into women's expectations of being the tough and nice guy. This portrait of the weak man is very similar to Nonn's (1998) heterosexual Black and Latino "failed men" living in poverty who adopt a "cool pose" hypermasculinity "to obtain respect and to fend off predators" (p. 322). Their masculinity is overt and external, relying on bullying and maintaining an appearance of strength, while Graham's ideal man's masculinity is internal, relying on careful consideration and self-knowledge as strength.

Graham's ideal man marginalizes the masculinity associated with lower class Black men and complies with the proscriptions of the hegemonic man. Per Connell's (1995) framework this double-move can be interpreted as a bid for authorization. Above, Graham said he believes that being a successful African American man *is* a challenge to

the social order in that “people expect you to cry about it and, when you don’t, that in of itself can move things.” That one African American man’s success, or many African American men’s successes, can remake the hegemonic is doubtful given Connell’s framework. However, this strategy has undoubtedly improved the lives of many marginalized individuals, allowing access to cultural, social, and/or economic resources generally denied their social group. Yet the criticality of this resistance is called into question in that it simultaneously challenges and assumes the terms of its oppression and seeks a power located within individuals and institutions. The final section examines Graham’s ideal man in terms of Hoy’s (2005) critical resistance as desubjectification.

Critical Resistance as Desubjectification

Turning away from the relationship *among* Graham’s masculinity constructions, this section concerns Graham’s relationship *with* his masculinity constructions and how he goes about fulfilling his masculine ontological project. As shown earlier, Graham states quite clearly he is invested not just in being a certain kind of (ideal) man, but in his desire to be a man:

I have others I’m responsible for. And as a man that’s one of the things that often gets overlooked. Men feel that pressure; that they should be strong or they need to be able to offer some security to others. I think about that, but that’s cool. And there’s things in society that help me deal with it, I guess and accept it and live with it. So I feel like I need to be in control too. In control of my schooling, my family, and safe in terms all these areas. Getting things done, taking care of business and not making too many mistakes that could affect others who are in my life. So I need to be careful. And I would feel, I don’t know what would happen if I didn’t do that. Like it would be scary.

It would be scary if Graham didn't seek to be an ideal man because "norms define who one is, and because one is attached to oneself, resisting these norms through insubordination puts one's own sense of who one is at risk" (Hoy, 2005, p. 96). Because Graham has come to value self-knowledge, "a good leader already knows themselves," he holds dear the processes that ensure he will desire subjectification.

However invested Graham would seem in the masculine ontological project, I cannot simply label him "subjectified" and get on with it. While he did not place value on his current struggle of being caught between two worlds, the uncertainty, ambiguity, and tension this position generates is, ironically, the very essence of the postmodern subject (Best & Kellner, 1991). It is a position that permits Graham to stray "afield from himself" (Foucault, 1985, p. 8) and, subsequently, from the processes and characteristics that would make him a man. Graham neither neatly embodied the traditional male nor the pro-feminist man. He came to the interviews trying to figure out where he stood after feminism and had solid ideas about the man he wanted to become. But Graham was clear he was not yet this man:

I think I'm not that ideal man yet because I haven't exactly meshed everything together that I've learned. Especially all the feminism stuff, you know? And so I, once I can... I kinda stutter in making some decisions, you know? And, and I think uhm... and it's not because I'm processing it, it's because... it's because uhm... it's because I'm not exactly sure where I'm at first... So that's what I'm saying, I don't actually have myself together yet.

Graham's inability to imagine otherwise in the form of constructing an ideal self born out of critical resistance is mocked by the man he is now, the very man he cannot imagine (Butler, 2004). Graham currently embodies a self-in-process, made obvious by his position between two worlds. Denied a foundational sense of self, Graham can be seen

as a force not of, but for critical resistance. Graham's value as a force of critical resistance is not in the man he wishes to become, but in the man-who-*now*-must-struggle to become. Graham's uncertainty belies masculinity's illusion as foundational and uncovers that masculinity "can only be made real through discursive expression and through engaging cultural practices that suggest manhood" (Whitehead, 2002, p. 215). Just as Graham will never be his ideal man, his ideal man will continue to evolve as he encounters new challenges to the gender order. Whether Graham takes these challenges up as his own as critical resistance will depend on his coming to recognize and value the flexibility, openness, and freedom his "now-man" affords.

The Social Economist: Hunter

Hunter's portrait is painted in vivid true to life colors. Taking up the top half of the portrait, Hunter immediately draws the viewer's eye. He is a bemused lone figure sitting casually atop a recently summited mountain, wind blowing through his dusty hair, enjoying a slice of pie whose juices drip down to join other stains on a tattered button-up shirt. Hunter gazes down at the scene below with an expression that is mostly amused, somewhat pitying and vaguely relieved. Hunter sees graduate students hard at work to complete their assignments, worried their professors won't like their essays. He sees family men, wearing ties and leaving work with worn-out expressions as they drag themselves home to wives, children, and the responsibilities of fatherhood. And he sees professors and graduate students, boyfriends and girlfriends, and girlfriends and their friends with bored expressions having drawn out conversations about the status of their relationships. On the jagged summit, Hunter is far removed from the scene below.

Stretching out behind Hunter and down the side of the mountain appears the path Hunter took to reach the top. On it are increasingly younger versions of Hunter. His parents can be made out at the beginning of the path. They are painted together, but not in the same scene. Hunter's father is shown in his large window office at work, sitting in a leather chair with feet kicked up on a mahogany desk. Hunter's mother carries a book on invertebrates and a microscope, carefully examining the undergrowth for insects. A younger version of Hunter appears at her side, crouched down, hand reaching toward a pile of leaves. Further up, Hunter and his father slide down a steep, icy slope on a homemade sled with other children who all wear frightened expressions. Hunter and his father are the only ones smiling. Further up the path are blurred images of Hunter,

playing tennis at a country club, winning a soccer tournament, coming home to a very large and empty house, drinking and smoking marijuana with his friends, growing his hair long and wearing patchwork pants.

Even further up the mountain, perhaps about tree line, the scenery begins to change and so do the images of Hunter. The first depicts Hunter in a private liberal arts school, intensely studying in the library. Next, he is accompanied by a woman; holding hands on hikes and gardening together. But, just as suddenly, she disappears and Hunter is once again alone. It is at this point, when the tundra fields turn to scree, the first signs of Hunter's eventual bemused expression become visible. The expression becomes clearer, more defined in the successive images of Hunter working at his computer, teaching pottery classes, sleeping outside, and riding an old bike with a six pack of beer in the basket. The penultimate Hunter is shown leading a group of androgynous kids on a backpacking trip. And at the top sits the final Hunter, expression fully realized, enjoying his post hike treat.

Stretching out behind Hunter, into the sunny day clouds is a vague extension of the path he's already traveled. On it are ephemeral images of Hunter and a woman holding hands; Hunter throwing pots; Hunter summiting other mountains; Hunter graduating college, but the degree reads M.F.A., rather than Ph.D.. They are images of what Hunter might yet become, but Hunter does not look to them at all. They are in the realm of possibility and, above all, the portrait reveals Hunter is contented with his current position.

Constructing the Hegemonic Man

Hunter's hegemonic man was constructed as an antagonist to his ideal man. This construction was explicit and emerged in response to my question, "...think about society's definition of what it means to be a man. The hegemonic man. How does your guy [ideal man] differ from that guy?" While most participants felt burdened by the pressures of the hegemonic man, Hunter largely pitied him: "I think the hegemonic man's kind of a pussy," he responded.

Hunter's hegemonic man was a "pussy" because he's trapped:

I think the hegemonic man has that stable, roped in 9 to 5 job, somehow ended up getting unlucky and has a couple kids. He didn't want to have kids yet and then, so he's got the mortgage and the kids and the wife...

Hunter's hegemonic man defines himself by his "professionalism," aligning with Whitehead (2001) who observes that professional practice serves as "a form of 'ontological validation of the 'masculine/managerial subject'" (p. 136). While professionalism "strengthens rather than weakens men's ability to exercise power" (Whitehead, 2001, p. 136), Hunter belittled the masculinity of the working professional. The professional hegemonic man is weak because he has given up and given in to society's conflation of monetary wealth and masculine success. While Hunter acknowledged his privilege growing up, he did so with an element of criticism:

I have certain ideas of what I want my eventual family to look like. And being latchkey kid, the kid that just lives alone in his house, I didn't want to do that at all. And I was like well, that's what I was and like my parents made a lot of money but, it wasn't that cool, you know?

Hunter's negative construction of the professional hegemonic man can, in part, be understood as a critical rejection of upper/middle class values.

As a “family guy,” Hunter’s hegemonic man has many responsibilities and very little freedom. Dominant discourses that define men as professionals and providers of their families leave the hegemonic man increasingly less time for leisure (Whitehead, 2001). Hunter’s hegemonic man “probably wishes he has a 6-pack in the basket of his bike right now, but he probably doesn’t. He probably has to go home and hang out with his wife and fix something.”

The hegemonic man is also overly concerned with his appearance. He is fastidious, “clean and manicured.” “If you think about the stereotypical guy, you think dark, handsome, he’s got a good job, right? Clothes make the man. So the guy’s got his fancy clothes on, washing them regularly.” Alongside his concern for appearance, the hegemonic man is a capitalist, ridiculed by Hunter for his materialism. Hunter’s critique of the hegemonic can be seen to align with socialist feminists, such as Hartmann (1981), who argue contemporary masculinity has been conflated with material greed. Of the hegemonic man Hunter says, “He probably has an entertainment center, video games, and a big TV.” The hegemonic man’s need for possessions transfers over into his personal life, and the hegemonic man is “pathologically possessive” in his relationships. The hegemonic man “mates for life,” and has to work hard to “get laid.” He feels a pressure to perform sexually that Segal (2001) argues “serves to consolidate and confirm his masculinity.” Because sex becomes about affirming his status as a man, rather than just “having fun,” the Hunter’s hegemonic man’s preoccupation with sexual performance makes him a “bad lover.”

Hunter did not draw on theories to support his claims about gender and sexuality differences, but rather in an attempt to situate our conversation. If we were going to talk

about masculinity, he wanted first to understand what it was he would be talking about. It is through an analysis of Hunter's theorization of masculinity, and emergent contradictions, that a more covert form of the hegemonic man is made obvious.

Theorizing Masculinity

Hunter believed masculinity in general "doesn't have a clear definition. If you were to explore it, you'd have to explore it almost on a case-by-case basis... the masculinity between the women I work with is something different than the masculinity of the guys I work with." For Hunter, not only is masculinity multiple and contextual, it is also not necessarily coterminous with biological men. But, curiously, masculinity is also something that is "quickly grouped" and identifiable by your "gut." Throughout the interviews the competition between these discourses (essential vs. non-essential) resonated in Hunter's constructions.

Second, from a critical perspective, Hunter wondered if masculinity functions "more to uphold this gender division, which is dissolving in a sense." Masculinity, when opposed to femininity, categorizes, privileges, and relegates certain traits to men and denies them to women. Yet Hunter remained uncritical of the ways his constructions, especially of the ideal man, othered and devalued femininity and homosexuality, for example. He said, "I mean I understand heterosexuality as an oppressing form, but I don't really feel like I'm oppressing homosexuals by being a heterosexual."

Third, on a social level, masculinity has multiple forms. Hunter described characteristics of the "metrosexual," the "nerdy academic," and the "hegemonic man," all

in necessary opposition to his ideal man, the “rugged individual.” Yet Hunter also made broad statements about masculinity that were not specific to their forms: “Masculinity... may be dichotomous like feminism... but it hasn’t been developed that much because it’s *not masculine to challenge those ideas*” (emphasis added). While Hunter’s constructions assumed masculinity’s multiplicity (Connell, 1995, 2000), their construction relied very heavily on a gender order that privileges masculine over feminine. As Brittan (2001) says even if, “‘being and man’ appears to be flexible and varied, it is then wrong to assume that this variation undermines male domination” (p. 54).

Hunter’s theorizing of masculinity allowed him to think about some constructions as temporal and situational, in addition to being relative. He noted devaluing the hegemonic man is part of a stage in his life.

...when I was growing up I kind of modeled it [masculinity] after my family and now I’m kind of modeling in my own experience. And I think I used to have an idea of masculinity as, supporting factor of a family, very close to the father, wife ideal. And I’ve gotten over that, I think...

Nevertheless, while Hunter rejected his hegemonic man, this rejection is not necessarily critical, if “critical” is understood as desubjectification (Hoy, 2005).

Throughout the interview, Hunter often bracketed the theorizing that allowed him to think of masculinities as being contextual and temporal. These times of bracketing, when Hunter made sweeping statements about masculinity and differences between men and women, can be seen to construct a parallel kind of hegemonic masculinity based on Hunter’s assumptions about “men in general.”

The Hegemonic Man as Men in General

Hunter's "men in general" hegemonic man emerged *in statements about differences between men and women*. This hegemonic man is not adept at talking and prefers not to discuss personal issues. He is unemotional and apathetic and his sexuality is physical, rather than emotional. For the purposes of this section I will use Hunter's language and refer to the "men in general" hegemonic man more simply as "men."

Relative to women, men are not good at talking about their masculinity or their feelings. Hunter described this difference as both innate and assumed by society:

...I also think men have a deficiency when it comes to even wanting to talk about that stuff [masculinity]. It's not inviting. I mean there's nothing... and you're not really good at it. I found....I think you don't develop the skills necessary to talk about that stuff. I think my skills about talking about masculinity are horribly deficient in terms of how women would talk about their roles....Because I think, at one point it's just kind of assumed that men kind of have it together and don't really need to explore those things.

Rather, men are more interested in hanging out and "not talking:"

Why would I have an affinity towards drinking beers and climbing on a picnic table more than discussing [my] emotional stability? But I'm pretty sure I would like to do that more than talk about [my] emotional stability. I think that's kind of an innate difference between men and women, to generalize.

Men aren't interested in talking because they "don't really care."

I got off work, my buddy got off work and the other guy who lives there got off work and we all just kind of sat down and took a breather. And we're sitting there and my buddy [Bob]⁷ turned to my buddy [Sam] and he asked, "Where were you? What were you doing?" And my buddy Sam looked at him and he said, "I was working. I have job." And my buddy Bob was like, "Wow. When'd you get that? Like when'd you? I don't understand..." And my buddy Sam's like "I've been working at this [book store] for like 3 months, man." And my buddy Bob's like, "Oh, all right. I gotcha." And then we're like, this is a great place to live because we don't know what any of us do. And I had to agree fully.... And the cool thing was, not only don't we have any idea what we do and what goes on in

⁷ Names and places in the following quotes are fictitious.

our daily life, we don't really care. And if it was a bunch of women that were living together, they would know every detail about the job and what they do and where they are and what's going on and who's sleeping with who and why this matters and why this is important. We don't care. Like my buddy Sam, he broke up with his girlfriend this week and he was lying on the couch and I came in. I looked at him and I said, "Rob what are you doing?" He's like, "Oh, I broke up with [Sara]." And that was it. That was good. I think my response was, "Oh, all right." And then we watched Olympics and it was cool.

I think guys just assume that's good. And they don't really need to pry. Need to, it's not, I don't think it's even prying, I think we don't even need to talk about it too much. So there's a level of interaction that happens that works pretty well. And you don't really need all the details. I don't know if guys necessarily dwell on the details. So it's not very important to know who's riding you at work or all the little things that are happening in your day and what made you feel inadequate that day. Or what made you feel super stoked about something. It's cool, you know if you mention it, but it's more of a quantitative inquiry than a qualitative inquiry. You know? So you're asking... like "When did that happen?" "This morning." "Okay, all right." It's not, "How did that shape you as a person?"

The expectation that men demonstrate a level of "not caring" plays out in their (assumed heterosexual) relationships with women. Talking about his grandfather who "slept around," Hunter said:

Hunter: But at the end of the day he came home and he knew where his heart was....So, I mean, in that sense, he was totally in love with this woman, but knew that he had a physical necessity to look at and sleep with other women.

Jenni: Physical necessity?

Hunter: That's what he said.

Jenni: And what do you say?

Hunter: I kind of concur.

Jenni: Yeah, that's what it sounds like.

Hunter: I mean, I, I feel that as a man... I mean, I've been super, super, super into my girlfriend, but...I still look at other girls. You still think about it right? So I don't think it's wrong.

As Plummer (2005) notes, “Hegemonic male sexuality works to essentialize the male sexualities of some men into the sexualities of all, as well as reinforcing assumptions about a bipolar feminine essential sexuality” (p. 180.) He goes on to argue, “the implication here is that sexuality for men must not involve anything remotely feminine (emotional, passive, etc.)” (p. 182). In Hunter’s construction, women see sex as “emotional,” men view it as a “physical necessity.”

The “man in general hegemonic man” emerged when Hunter made broad statements about men in comparison to women. This hegemonic man doesn’t enjoy talking about “personal issues,” he is unemotional and generally “doesn’t care,” and he views sex as a physical necessity, and is therefore more likely to “sleep around.”

In the construction of his ideal man, Hunter drew on many norms of masculinity that had not been included in the definition of his hegemonic man. Some of these norms appeared in the man in general as hegemonic man. While Hunter’s ideal man clearly rejected the norms of the hegemonic man, his ideal man and the man in general hegemonic man neatly aligned. Turning to Hunter’s ontological project, the construction of his ideal man, it becomes clearer how his construction simultaneously rejected the middle class materialism of the hegemonic man and yet reflected several of masculinity’s ideal norms.

The Ideal Man

Hunter’s ideal man, referred to as the “rugged individual,” espouses a “traditional,” “experiential masculinity.” He is the place holder for the “physical side” of masculinity and he’s not afraid to “get dirty.” He is outdoorsy and adventurous, “wind-

burned and hairy,” always on the look-out for new physical challenges. He prefers to sleep outdoors in the cold.

The rugged individual hangs out with his buddies “in the woods” and drinks “tall boys.” He’s not necessarily a loner, but he’s definitely on his own. “Going by his own deal,” the rugged individual is independent and carefree. He doesn’t take things too seriously, he’d rather “play ping pong” than have a long conversation, but he “works hard and plays hard.” His work is physically demanding as opposed to professional. He lives simply with few possessions and doesn’t aspire to own many things:

[The ideal man would] go hang out in the woods. So included in that would be, kind of a ruggedness and an allure towards ruggedness. A type of individualism, I think....And the way that I see that now is more of a traditional role of masculinity. So there’s this idea where I can kind of operate and do my own thing and that would fall underneath the category of masculinity, an ideal man, would be someone who works very hard, at a very physical occupation. Someone who works hard, plays hard. Gets dirty. Likes to push themselves. Looks for challenges, whether it’s little house challenges or physical challenges, running, hiking, climbing. I think those are the things that I think fall into that category.

Kung Fu Mode

The rugged individual is not a static identity, but represents a stage in men’s development. The definition of rugged individual is “bound to” what Hunter referred to as being in “Kung Fu mode.” Hunter told the following story, developing his theory of men’s progression from “girl mode” to “Kung Fu mode” and back to “girl mode:”

...when we were guiding one time there was this kid and it was a school group so they’re forced to go, whether they want to or not. And we take them up some pretty burly trails, up to these huts. And there was a wheezer, you know, one who wheezes? And, he had this very negative outlook on life. And, so he’d walk 5 steps and fall over and say, “I can’t do it. I can’t do it. I’m stuck.” And we were just kind of sitting there, my buddy and I were waiting for him to get his shit together. And he was kind of zoning off a little bit. And he said this quote which I firmly believe, almost dogmatically. My buddy looks over at him and he says,

“Well, what are you thinking about man? How’s it going?” And the guy, out of nowhere, looks up at both of us, and the kid’s 12, 13 years old, right? And he said, “You know what? When you’re 12 and 13, you think about Kung Fu. But, when you turn 14, you have to think about girls.” And then he paused for a second. And then he said, “When you’re 25 you get to think about Kung Fu again.” And that was it, right? And we all kind of sat there, nodded our heads. Thought about it for awhile. And, at the time I was 24, I was like, all right. And my buddy totally said, “You know, you’re right. You’re totally right.”

And I think he’s pretty much dead on. So that’s how I’ve operated fairly accurately. So, to kind of further explain that, I think when I was 24, I was thinking about girls. All this important stuff that you’re supposed to think about. And then, hanging out with a bunch of transient mountain guides, doing a bunch of cool stuff, I realized that was a lot more fulfilling than being stuck, tied down to a house and a wife and all this other stuff. And now I think that would be the worse thing to have happen ever. And I was pretty strongly into that, pretty adamant that was the course. And then I kind of got over it. And now I don’t really see that happening anytime soon.

So now I’m kind of in the Kung Fu stage and I think the kid, if he thought about it a little bit more, I think there’s a next stage that he hadn’t quite gotten to yet. So he was thinking about the Kung Fu, and the girls, and then the Kung Fu. And I think it goes back to girls eventually. But I don’t think he, I mean he was still working out that first theory. And I’m a big fan of the Kung Fu stage. Right the mid-20’s Kung Fu stage and I’m pretty sold into it. So then I think with that theory, the template is bound to the ideal masculinity, the ideal masculinity is that you become one who is very rugged and individual.

Being in Kung Fu mode as opposed to girl mode means the rugged individual isn’t thinking about “girls in a pick one go with it kind of way.” In fact, “being in the Kung Fu stage actually repels women:”

I live in this tent and I throw pots and ride my bike around. And my life is completely free. No responsibilities. No money. I can’t really buy anything. So things are pretty good. I’m living very simple. And in a sense I think that’s very masculine. I don’t really know too many women that are really that into that.

But the kinds of women the rugged individual repels are the “very clean, manicured, smell funny types;” women he wouldn’t be attracted to anyway. And the rugged individual has no problem attracting other kinds of women because the “the transient guy

population is a bunch of sluts.” Similar to the James Bond motif, the rugged individual has a girl in every port. But “there’s a lot of tape that goes along with that:”

...you’re trying to straighten them out and you don’t know who’s going where. Or if one’s coming to visit, hanging out. Makes you kind of nervous sometimes and then you need to downsize, I’ve found out. Downsizing was good. So at the beginning of the summer I had, 4 or 5. And then over the summer, I’m down to 3 kind of. Not really, I mean, I’m not really, it’s hard to translate, ‘cause James Bond, he’s not dating any of those girls. He’s got stuff to blow up and things to do. So I can’t say I was really seriously dating them.

Women occupy a “subordinate role” in the rugged individual’s life, “they’re just not a priority.”

I’m in Kung Fu mode and I’m actually incapable of sustaining any type of actual relationship. I have a girlfriend now and I’m not really screwing around with anybody else but I can’t say that she’s like the number one priority. So we hang out a lot and have a good time, but I don’t think it’s really going anywhere.

Despite not being a priority, women are necessary for the construction of the rugged individual. For example, part of his construction depends on being a “slut,” and having an “insatiable sexual appetite.” Because he emerges within the heterosexual matrix (Butler, 1993), women are the objects of his desire. But they are also the objects of his rejection and, as discussed further in the section on women, they are the necessary opposites to construct many characteristics of the rugged individual. Therefore women may not be priorities for the rugged individual, but they are implicated in the process of creating the ideal man; essential for his construction.

While most participants didn’t feel they lived up the ideals of their ideal men, Hunter believed he and the rugged individual are “pretty much the same.” He attributes his ability to live out his ideals to something he’s learned in graduate school:

I think if you have a theory you might as well go for it or you're going to muddle your theories together. I was taught that in graduate school. You can't explain anything if you muddle your theories. So it's like your critical view and your bureaucratic view can't work at the same time. Nor can your symbolic interactionist view, which I never really understood, but I know that there is a view like that... I think that if you're going to do something, try to do it as fast as you can. And go for it...

Hunter's construction of the ideal man was less of an exercise in imagination and more of an effort of "self-description." An academic discourse that holds theoretical stances as necessarily distinct, and only useful if applied singularly, combined with Hunter's construction of the rugged individual as "simple," "not dwelling on the details," came together to create the rugged individual as a fixed identity. To be a rugged individual means not to critique what it means to be a man. Given the rugged individual was bound to the theory of Kung Fu masculinity, critical theories that might shine a different light on his construction, are easily ignored because doing so would "muddle your theories." Therefore Hunter forecloses on the possibility of being challenged to think differently.

However Hunter does "admit" he sometimes engages in behaviors that might not fit in the "ideal man" category. However each instance of these transgressions is readily dismissed by emphasizing his preference for masculine activities and masculinizing the perceived non-ideal behavior so that it fits the rugged individual definition. In the example below, Hunter first suspects a desire to snuggle may not be very masculine. But he eventually decides snuggling is a human necessity (and therefore must be included in a definition of masculinity). Using sexualized language, i.e., "get down and snuggle with cute girls," also assures snuggling is a physical (masculine) activity; it is not about needing intimacy:

...the ideal guy probably doesn't like to snuggle that much. I do like to snuggle. But I do like to sleep outside in the cold. And actually... outside in the cold, I sleep better. Uhm... in the cold. Like last night was the best sleep ever. Ever. Right? And then when I sleep with my girlfriend, there's all sorts of squirming and it's hot and it's too soft in the bed. Sometimes I think about being outside in the cold. Or I have to open up the window and take all the covers off. The covers are fluffy, and sometimes I can't deal with that. In my Kung Fu mode, sometimes I'd rather sleep outside. But I think there's a balance there. I don't know if that's necessarily not masculine, to want to be able to snuggle. I don't know. It seems like a very necessary thing. Just to want to get down, snuggle around with cute girls.

All this is not to imply Hunter has a form of agency to pick and choose definitions and enact (or not) his ideal man. Rather it is to point out where the discourses around what it means to be a man (unemotional and sexually driven, in the above example) emerge to resituate perceived feminine behaviors back in the realm of the masculine. And here we begin to see how constructions of masculinity are not just repositories for character traits, as Hunter sometimes speaks of them, but are also functional. Hunter's ideal man emerges as a normative force, undermining any potential challenges to the stability his construction.

Therefore, despite being a contextual and temporal construction, the rugged individual is characterized by a stable identity. Hunter's "rugged individual" is emblematic of the Enlightenment's free and autonomous subject with a "high-minded sense of individuality" who can "shrug off the power of social institutions and inherited prejudices and superstitions" (Mansfield, 2000, p. 22). Hunter's ideal man took the hegemonic man as his opposite, rejecting many of the hegemonic man's social norms, especially those associated with a middle/upper class materialism. But Hunter's statements about men in general facilitated the construction of a subverted hegemonic man, one with whom the rugged individual was well aligned.

The Rugged Individual and the Hegemonic Men

Hunter's ideal man, the rugged individual, took the hegemonic man to be one of his opposites. While the hegemonic man is a family man, a victim of the family's social trappings, the rugged individual is single and free. The hegemonic man is materialistic, the rugged individual lives simply. The hegemonic man works for his family, the rugged individual works so he can play. And so on. While Connell's (1995) framework would position Hunter's rugged individual as a form of masculinity, marginalized to the hegemonic man, Hunter rejects this marginalization even as he acknowledges his friends "shake their heads" at him. Hunter deliberately reverses the hierarchy, privileging the "marginalized" form of masculinity over the hegemonic. As Whitehead (2002) says, "It is the fact of masculinity's illusory and fluid character that leaves it amenable to being manipulated.... Indeed, masculinity (as discourse) has the capacity to be employed in any cultural validation that involves males" (p. 121). This feature of masculinity explains why it was relatively easy for Hunter to convert the rugged individual's snuggling into a masculine activity.

Yet the criteria and justification for this reversal appear to remain well within masculinity's normative ideals. For example, the division of labor that classifies tasks as either "women's work" or "men's work," defines some work as more masculine than others. As we've seen, the rugged individual is born out of the "important tension between the gender order and the class order, as heavy manual labor is generally felt to be more masculine than white-collar and professional work" (Carrigan, Connell, & Lee, 2002, p. 114). Further, the rugged individual is more masculine than the hegemonic man because he rejects definitions of masculinity that tie him down to the personal, emotional,

family-oriented, and communicative (private) world of women. It is through this rejection of women that the rugged individual is conferred his freedom *and* his superior masculinity. It is important Hunter uses the word “pussy” to describe the hegemonic man.

The hegemonic man is made less masculine than the rugged individual through the process of feminization. Because female is the devalued “Other” to male, feminization serves to marginalize undesirable forms of masculinity. For example, Luhrmann (1994) asserts the feminization of young post-colonial Parsi men in Bombay who are seen as “effeminate,” occurred as a result of their perceived loss of status (p. 333). For Hunter, the hegemonic man is a “pussy” because he caters to women and buys into a system that says, in order for him to be a man, he must accrue wealth and be a family provider.

But as noted earlier, another hegemonic man emerged in Hunter’s statements about “men in general,” as opposed to women in general. This hegemonic man’s construction directly relied on a female antagonist. Where men are unemotional and generally apathetic, women are emotional and need to know things about their friends. Whereas men are “terrible” at talking about themselves, women enjoy and are good at discussing personal issues. And where men have sex to satisfy physical needs, women have sex for intimacy.

In Connell’s (1995) terms, Hunter’s rugged individual is complicit with this characterization of the hegemonic man. The rugged individual doesn’t “want to talk about gushy things,” he’d rather “hang out with the dudes and climb some big hills.” And the rugged individual “doesn’t like to snuggle that much.” So while Hunter

constructs an ideal masculinity opposed to a feminized form of the hegemonic man, the ideal man can be seen to align with other normative ideals, particularly those that differentiate men from women.

Hunter's rugged individual was constructed *in part* in opposition to and in alignment with two forms of hegemonic masculinity. Therefore it would be more accurate to speak of the rugged individual as constructed within a web of subject positions, each contributing a position with and/or against which the ideal man could be defined. Indeed, Hunter's overall ontological project's construction of the ideal man relied heavily on another important antagonist, the "boring academic." The rugged individual contrasted the boring academic in almost every way. Beginning with the boring academic, I turn to the web of "Others" that were necessary for the construction of the rugged individual: the "boring academic," the "gay man," and the "woman."

The Rugged Individual and the Boring Academic (Graduate Student and Professor)

When Hunter talked about the boring academic, he most often referred to him as a male. For example, the boring academic was embodied by male professors in Hunter's department. However the boring academic was also a graduate student and, in this case, was either male or female. Regardless of the boring academic's sex in Hunter's examples, the boring academic was devalued by being feminized. I'll refer to the boring academic as a "he" for that very reason. Were the boring academic assumed female, she wouldn't have to be feminized in order to contrast the rugged individual. Being a female would be enough to cast her as "Other."

Graduate Student. As a graduate student, the boring academic is “solely graduate student.” He doesn’t have interests outside of school and talks about school when he’s socializing:

I always thought that people who were in our department were, for the most part, very boring people to hang out with. Because they didn’t do anything because they were in grad school. And I was kind of in the same department, but while I was in grad school I did a lot of other things, just to try to keep myself sane so I wasn’t that person who could only talk about social research.

The boring academic graduate student is “nervous,” “insecure,” and worried about his performance. This characterization of the graduate student aligns with the current texts on how to be a successful graduate student (e.g., Leonard, 2001; Phillips & Pugh, 2005). Indeed, Phillips and Pugh (2005) state that to be a successful academic is to successfully obtain a “professional identity:”

...successful postgraduates emerge with a new identity as competent professionals, able to argue their viewpoint with anybody regardless of status, confident of their knowledge but also aware of its boundaries. This new identity permits them to ask for information when they are aware that they don’t know something and to express a lack of understanding when this is necessary, instead of pretending that there is no difficulty for *fear* of being thought stupid. To arrive at this point is what being a postgraduate research student is really all about. (Phillips & Pugh, 2005, p. 5, emphasis added)

The presumption is that, prior to successfully obtaining a professional identity, graduate students necessarily live in fear. Hunter’s boring academics have a:

...nagging feeling that I’m not good enough, I need to work more. But then it kind of manifests itself as that instead of a very productive get it done mentality. So you spend a lot of time nervously worrying about it, but not getting it done because you’re too busy worrying about it.

In contrast, the rugged individual refuses to be fearful, touting a “Fuck it, let’s eat pie” mentality that allows him to “just get it done and not worry about it.”

Professor. The boring academic touts a very professional masculinity, whereas the rugged individual doesn't aspire to professionalism:

Because I think their [the department's] masculinity was very professional. I will come and I will sit and I will read and I will write my papers and I will be very neat and orderly. And then I will go home to my house and I will hang out with my boring wife. And this is my life. It's very orderly and compact. My life is never really compact.

The boring academic professor is "serious," "dorky," "passive," and sometimes "socially retarded."

The other men in my department, they're not very assertive. In the sense that, I don't feel that I can talk to them in a very manly way. They wouldn't understand. If I went in and just tried to shoot the shit with a couple of them, it'd feel like really awkward and like they were pressed... There's not really a manly camaraderie I would say in the discipline. And I don't know maybe other people have had better luck with this, but I don't have really much camaraderie with any professors.

The boring academic professor is "physically awkward," "squishy," and does qualitative research. As an advisor he is "relationship oriented" and "touchy feely." His style is similarly supported by texts on how to be a good graduate advisor (i.e., Phillips & Pugh, 2005). Advisors should, for example, maintain a balance between appreciation and criticism. However, Hunter's boring academic errs too much on the side of appreciation. The boring academic professor coddles his graduate students, making the mistake of holding back on criticism for fear of making them cry. The boring academic professor's masculinity is further devalued because he is constructed in opposition to another type of academic, the "down-to-business woman."

I think the very down to business, get it done mentality of [my advisor]... versus [male professor] who's very squishy and qualitative. He's like well, "What do you really want to get out of doing this thesis? I want to really understand where we are in our relationship on this thesis." And [my advisor] would be like, "This sucks. Write it again. And have it to me tomorrow by 12." And I'd be like,

“Way to go, Captain. I’m in.” And I would get it done and things were sealed and delivered by 12 and they got done that way. Versus this, “No, maybe this isn’t really going to work out. Let’s really re-develop our relationship again and figure out how we’re going to move on. Maybe you don’t like this topic. Let’s reinvestigate this topic.” And these people are still working on their theses. Right? [My advisor] says, “This is a terrible idea. Let’s do this.” And it was frustrating at the beginning, but then I realized her job was initially to get the thesis done, not to work on our relationship as a thesis writer and a thesis advisor. So let’s just get it done and move on. So I began to really respect that business mindset.

The rugged individual can respect the “down-to-business” woman because she rejects the emotionality associated with femininity. In contrast, feminizing the boring academic makes him less a man.

Active vs. Passive: The Rugged Individual in Graduate School

As Hunter talked about masculinity in graduate school, the rugged individual emerged as the protagonist to the boring academic. The rugged individual is action-oriented as opposed to passive in his engagements. In addition to attributing lack of action solely to a subject position (the boring academic) Hunter described his *discipline* as not getting involved:

I’m discouraged about the whole academic scene as a means to further a career than it was to really get involved. So the more that the professors got into it and picked it apart, the more abstract it became and the less action oriented it became.... I felt there might be more of a masculinity in the sense that you learn about something and you go get involved in it versus you learn about it and you just sit in an office all day and pick it apart to the point where you can’t talk about anything with real people anymore. And if you can’t talk about things to real people then what are you really doing? You’re just kind of in the academic world. So there’s no real justice in the whole thing. I mean why are they really there? After awhile it’d just be a complete waste, they screw themselves to the point that they don’t really know what’s going on. I mean there’s direction, but I don’t think the direction is really what they want it to be going in.

A gender order that privileges masculinity as active and femininity as passive appears here to devalue, not another subject position, but the entire discipline of social economy. Through a process of feminization Hunter devalued his program and constructed an argument for why he (as the embodiment of the rugged individual) did not “fit” in his program. The totality of this rejection is evidenced in the paucity of academic discourses in Hunter’s interviews. Hunter’s rugged individual and his “Others” were not justified, explained, or positioned via academic theories. In what can be construed as a final “screw you” to the academy, the developmental theory, Kung Fu Mode, that undergirds the rugged individual came not from a well-regarded academician, but from a 13-year-old boy.

The rugged individual and the boring academic were positioned on opposite ends of an active (masculine) vs. passive (feminine) binary, allowing Hunter to devalue and reject the norms of his graduate program. The effects of feminization for rejection have implications for Hunter’s construction of gay men and women. These two positions othered by the rugged individual are devalued for their associated femininity, but, interestingly, they can be elevated by an opposite process of masculinization. The following section turns to a discussion of the ideal man’s “Others;” how gay men and women were constructed in opposition to Hunter’s rugged individual.

“Others”

Hunter’s rugged individual simultaneously othered and recouped women and gay men from their marginalization. The rugged individual did not claim his ruggedness for himself, but argued it could be taken up by women and gay men. Therefore Hunter

constructed the “rugged” gay man and the “rugged” woman. What is important to note about these two constructions is that, imbued with normative ideals of masculinity, they emerged as *better* than the ordinary, typical, othered woman and gay man.

The Rugged Individual and the Gay Man

When asked what it meant to him to be a heterosexual, Hunter responded:

...there's a simplicity where you don't really need to think about the pressures associated with being a heterosexual male. Because I mean it's a very mundane, ordinary thing. Very few people are oppressing the heterosexual male. We have a lot of rights and people just assume that heterosexual males have things together. And they're very simple and I like that.... Kind of like white bread.

Hunter's definition of both hegemonic men and the rugged individual had relied on the assumption of heterosexuality. For example, to be the rugged individual meant physically desiring, but rejecting any potential emotional attachment to women.

Heterosexuality was like “white bread” because it is considered normal and assumed.

Yet it must also be proven. As Messner (1998) notes, “While talk of sex with females, then, bonds the males together, the specific forms of sexual talk... helps them deal with their terror of intimacy with women” (p. 259). Hunter made the point:

So you don't really talk about. I mean you can talk, like if you're talking with your buddies, you just talk about it in a different way. Instead of like what it means to be heterosexual, you talk to your buddies about hooking up with some girl and you talk to your buddies, you're like, is she cute? But it's not like, “How do you feel about your heterosexuality right now?”...So I think you have this thought of masculinity, in most of the circles that I hang out with, most of my buddies, there's just kind of this, it is what it is. And we don't really need to explain it because we all know what it is.

In fact Hunter's construction of the rugged individual makes clear that to talk about heterosexuality (or masculinity, for that matter) is inherently "effeminating," associated with the world of women who need to talk about their personal lives. Berlant and Warner (2003) argue heterosexual culture functions to relegate non-normative sexuality to the realm of the personal and private:

...by making sex seem irrelevant or merely personal, heteronormative conventions of intimacy block the building of nonnormative or explicit public sexual cultures... Indeed, one of the unforeseen paradoxes of national-capitalist privatization has been that citizens have been led through heterosexual culture to identify themselves *and their politics* with privacy. (p. 172-173)

When Hunter says he is "dogmatic about being anti-dogmatic," his statement aligns with a discourse that enforces the privacy of critical forms of political ideology, in this case, those associated with gay male culture. Yet Tierney (1997a) alerts us to an unseen ideology of heteronormativity, "As a signifying system, cultures have built into them ideological components that get played out in the interstices of everyday life. When ideology goes unquestioned, it is hegemonic and enforces hidden norms..." (p. 22)

While Hunter remains uncritical of the ideology of masculinity and heterosexuality, he does recognize heterosexuality as an "oppressive form." He suggests homosexuals often need to talk about what it means to them to be gay because of their marginalized status:

A couple years ago I lived with a gay couple and they would really talk about their homosexuality, a lot. And what it meant to be a homosexual man and what it meant in their daily lives and how people looked at them because they were a homosexual man. And I realized at no time do I really ask myself, "Why am I a heterosexual man and what does that mean to me?"... I think there's definitely a reductionist idea of what a heterosexual man is.... I'm this guy who has this idea of masculinity, he doesn't like dudes. And that's pretty much it. Like leave it be..... I mean in comparing it with the rhetoric that's associated with an exploration of what it means to be a homosexual man that I've heard and that I've

engaged in with my buddies that I lived with, it's a lot different because there's an understanding of, there's a prejudice that's associated with being a homosexual. There are religious ideas associated with being homosexual. They don't fit within the idea of masculine framework. Like a generalized masculine framework. So in that way you kind of have to look at it I think in a critical lens to understand they don't have the same rights. So you could see it as kind of an inequality issue.

But Hunter says, "I don't really feel like I'm oppressing homosexuals by being a heterosexual," even while oppressive discourses resonate in his construction of the rugged individual. The rugged individual is masculine *because* he doesn't talk about what it means to be a heterosexual. But the gay man who, marginalized as "Other" to the rugged individual, is seen to be flaunting his gayness when he mentions his identity. Publicizing his identity is political because doing so challenges heterosexuality's "sense of rightness," and conventions around privacy. By Hunter's logic, discussing his sexuality and making the private public renders the gay man effeminate.

However, the gay man need not necessarily be effeminate. Hunter gives the following example:

...I mean just because you like dudes doesn't mean you're not masculine. Because I've known some pretty masculine guys who have been homosexual.... I mean this guy, he was a homosexual, hung out with a bunch of dudes, we skied, we did some tough climbing. And at the end of the day, he liked dudes. But we'd been hanging out all day and it wasn't like he was overtly, I'm gay, that's why I'm skiing. And I'm gay, that's why I'm doing this or I'm gay and trying to always bring it back to that. He was like, yeah, whatever, I'm gay. And we were like, great. That's fantastic. And then we didn't talk about it. Because we were talking about doing stuff. It wasn't just, I'm not doing anything in my life so I'm going to become this cultural icon and that's what I'll do so I'll always talk about it as that's the focus point.

What makes the individual gay man masculine is when he is seen to be complicit with a hegemonic form of masculinity. As long as he doesn't talk about his identity, he

maintains his masculinity (and presumed heterosexuality). This logic reverberates in the U.S. Military's "Don't ask, don't tell" policy where gay and lesbian subject positions are rendered unintelligible through the process of silencing. In a similar way silence confers Hunter's gay male friend his masculinity, but denies his gayness. Tierney (1997a) speaks of the same forces in the academy felt by gay professors:

A double bind exists on a daily basis, according to another gay male academic: "My colleagues talk about their day-to-day lives, relationships, problems. But I can't. I can't share in their experiences because I choose not to share mine." Thus, he needs to listen to the stories of his colleagues but does not feel permitted to offer his own. (p. 104)

Contrasting the rugged individual to the gay man, how the gay man is marginalized by the normative ideals of the hegemonic man is understood. In a kind of Catch-22, the gay man is always already marginalized because his construction precludes a desire for women. This marginalized status can result in oppression, necessitating those who are relegated the position of "gay" to talk about "gayness" in relation to dominant norms. But to talk about being gay and making gayness public is inherently feminine. To be seen as masculine, the gay man must maintain his identity as private through silence or social isolation. In what seems a strange twist of logic, to attempt to challenge masculinity's normative ideals by identifying oneself as gay is positioned by Hunter as an act of weakness, rather than of strength.

Interestingly, this functions on an academic level where critical theorists can be discounted as feminine for focusing on issues of identity, their challenges mediated by their devalued position relative to a masculinity defined by an absence of private/personal (women's) talk. Indeed during the last interview Hunter said about participating in the study:

If a guy had been doing this study I would have thought there would have been some better dissertation topics. I might still have participated, but I would have been like, "Why didn't you want to study a bunch of chicks?"

But, since I'm a "woman," I'm allowed (however devalued) to ask the questions the interviews posed:

Because as a woman you're always going to ask those questions that guys just wouldn't ask. So you might understand why you wouldn't ask questions, but you're always going to want to ask the questions. So if you're trying to be a dude and I went up to you and I was like, "Oh, by the way, so and so broke up." You might be like, "Oh, alright." But at the same time in the back of your mind you'd be screaming, "Why?!!! Why?!!!" But you'd still be very stoic and be like, "Oh, that's cool."

Thus the rugged individual is seen as an oppressive form of masculinity that defines and devalues "Others" within a binary of personal/private talk vs. impersonal/public talk. The gay man and woman are devalued because, for different reasons, they engage in personal/private talk. However, the process of masculinization (silencing) confers women and the gay man a higher status among "men," even while they remain othered to "them." I next examine the rugged individual's relationship with women and how masculinization functions to elevate the status of women.

The Rugged Individual and Woman

Hunter's construction of the rugged individual requires and constructs women as his "Other." If he is rugged and individualistic, she is "fluffy" and dependent. Her dependency relegates her to the private sphere where woman comes to represent the desire to commit, marry, and have a family. She becomes the destroyer of man's independence by forcing him to be a "family man," often when he'd rather be in "Kung Fu mode." Women are also the place holders for the emotional and the personal.

Whereas women are adept and naturally skilled at communicating their thoughts and feelings, the rugged individual is inept at and doesn't want to talk about personal things. He is "largely apathetic to most things."

But, similar to the gay man, a woman can "exude a lot of masculine traits" associated with the rugged individual. Hunter says:

...in my life I see that as I work with women and they have the same terms that, kind of like your gut, you'd be like, "Oh, that's masculine." I mean I work with a bunch of firefighters, like smokejumpers, that are women and they're crazy. And they exude a lot of masculine traits that you would quickly group.

The masculine woman is "crazy," "burly," "tough," and "ruthless." Describing masculinity in his department, Hunter says the most masculine people are women:

I ranked the most masculine people in my mind, I kind of went down the department list. And the first two people on the list were my advisor and, this woman who's a graduate student. She does farm and range stuff. She's crazy, she's super burly, works in a bar as a bartender. Drinking under the table, she's tough. Super, super tough, rides bikes. Kind of like pounds the nail with the fist kind of girl. She's super cool. My advisor is just ruthless. Not very compassionate person. But she's very matter of fact, get it done, type of person. Which I thought was great. But I don't think she doesn't really have those same nurturing, caring capacities that I've worked with. They're the two very masculine, business oriented, less emotional side of the world...

Hunter's conceptualization of a masculine woman suggests a decay of the gender order that confers masculinity to male bodies and femininity to female bodies. As Halberstam (2003) says:

The continued refusal in Western society to admit ambiguously gendered bodies into functional social relations... is sustained by a conservative and protectionist attitude by men in general toward masculinity. Such an attitude has been bolstered by a more general disbelief in female masculinity. I can only describe such disbelief in terms of a failure in a collective imagination: in other words, female-born people have been making convincing and powerful assaults on the coherence of male masculinity for well over a hundred years; what prevents these

assaults from taking hold and accomplishing the diminution of the bonds between masculinity and men? (p. 362)

But, what is interesting is how Hunter describes the category woman as masculine. The two women in Hunter's department certainly possess some of the same characteristics as the rugged man. The graduate student has a physically demanding job and the professor is unemotional. But the adjectives used to convey these attributes simultaneously give her masculinity and *maintain her status* as a woman, still differentiated by the gender order from the rugged individual. For example, her outdoor adventures are "crazy," whereas the rugged individual's are characterized by "looking for challenges." Because she is not emotional and nurturing she is "ruthless," whereas the rugged individual is "apathetic."

Writing about female masculinity, Halberstam (2003) argues "tomboyism" in pre-pubescent girls is seen as a sign of independence and freedom. However it is punished when it "appears to be the sign of extreme male identification... and when it threatens to extend beyond childhood into adolescence" (p. 358). Therefore it makes sense Hunter's language differentiates masculine women from "actual men." While Hunter's masculinization elevates women's status, it does not present female masculinity in a way that threatens the masculine/feminine binary.

The Rugged Individual in Women's Clothing: Gazing at Bodies. The rugged individual is not concerned with appearances and, hence, does not make his body the object of gaze as do (effeminate) men and women. Despite this, Hunter arrived to our third interview wearing a much too small t-shirt and with his fingernails painted. He

explained he had told his roommate's girlfriend he was going to a masculinity interview and she had "decked him out" in a woman's shirt and painted his nails. In the context of our interviews this act of "cross-dressing" served to reify, rather than challenge his masculinity.

Hunter's cross dressing can be understood as similar to an event during an ethnographic study of male teacher masculinity in secondary schools. Two male teachers, who were aware of the purposes of the study, came across the grounds toward the researcher, holding hands and skipping. Upon reaching her they joked: "'We thought we'd give you some different sort of data!'" (Francis & Skelton, 2001, p. 15). The authors argue this was not only a performance to undermine the research, but also one that clearly defined what being a man was not:

...in sarcastically presenting themselves as effeminate (skipping) and gay (holding hands), they were suggesting how 'ridiculous' effete men are in contrast to (their) 'normal', usual presentations of heterosexual masculinity. They seem to be saying, 'perhaps you'd prefer us like this?' (with confidence that all 'normal - minded' people would laughingly shudder in the negative). (p. 15)

Hunter turned his body into a site of sarcastic humor in effect poking fun at the femininity of the interviews that had him exploring and talking about his masculinity. As the interviewer, I was challenged by his body, because to look meant to be confronted with mockery. My interviewer gaze was partially rendered powerless as he quite blatantly dared me to look. It is this perspective that allowed Hunter to talk about (not) looking at women's bodies in the following way:

I'm staring at this woman's eyes intensely so I'm not looking at the rest of her. But she knows I'm trying not to look at the rest of her. And she probably likes it. You kind of creep people out. Say I was covered in moles from my neck down. You'd probably stare at my face in order not to look at my moles and you would

in essence be doing the same thing. And I'd be like you're not looking at my moles, which I know I have.

Hunter's statement acknowledges the heterosexuality confers women a form of power over men (Bordo, 1999). As an object of desire, the woman *likes* knowing the man wants to look at her body. Bordo (1999) reminds us, some "women do dress in order to feel sexually powerful, and we need to acknowledge that fact" (p. 291). Yet the comparison Hunter draws is telling. In relation to the man's body, a woman's is an aberration, something to be stared at. This example naturalizes the man as gazer at woman as object (Who couldn't resist looking at someone with moles all over their body?) and draws on women's heterosexual "power" to detract from the normative force of the male gaze. This is not to conflate the male gaze with individual men, decrying all stolen glances as acts of sexism, but to acknowledge the heterosexual matrix produces women's bodies as different from men's and makes men their consumers.

The rugged individual is defined in opposition to woman. While woman is inherently emotional and likes to talk about emotional issues, similar to the gay man, through masculinization she becomes a better woman. However her masculine traits do not confer her equal status, rather they are reinterpreted through her sex. Her body similarly remains deviant, differentiated from and an object of the man's gaze.

For all this it would still be an error to define Hunter's ontological project as entirely complicit with the normative ideals of the hegemonic man and reproductive of the gender order. While his character types are rather fixed, there is an element of uncertainty in Hunter's system that emerges in the way he talks about masculinity. I now turn to the topics of resistance and complicity, examining how Hunter's constructions,

and the theories that enable them, function to undermine or reify masculinity's normative ideals.

Complicity, Subordination, and Marginalization

Hunter simultaneously rejects the hegemonic man and yet aligns with many normative ideals of masculinity. He rejects the emasculated "family man" in favor of a more rugged and highly individualized form of masculinity. His rejection of the family man's upper/middle class materialism amounts to a class-based resistance. The rugged individual is, by choice, simple and poor. But a resistance based on class does not necessarily confer a resistance based on gender. As I've shown, the rugged individual relies on the gender order to justify his rejection of the classed order. Clearly, not all resistance is critical (Hoy, 2005) and ruggedness and independence are certainly normative masculine ideals. Using Connell's (1995) framework Hunter's rugged individual can be understood as rejecting some aspects of a hegemonic form of masculinity, complicit with others, but certainly complicit with a gender order that privileges masculinity over femininity. The latter complicity is what permits Hunter, despite his outright feminizing of the hegemonic man, to say, "my form of masculinity... it's not disrespectful toward other forms of masculinity." So while Hunter's rugged individual relies on the effeminate hegemonic man for his construction, his complicity with the gender order allows him to, on some level, be respectful of him.

Within Connell's (1995) framework, the rugged individual is best understood as a form of "protest masculinity," a masculinity characterized in part by a "pressured exaggeration of masculine conventions" (Connell, 1995, p. 111). In rejecting normative

ideals of masculinity, devaluing them as associated with the hegemonic man, the rugged individual picks up and necessarily exaggerates other ideals. His ruggedness is “extreme.” His rejection of anything feminine is so complete he broadly uses femininity as a devaluation tool. His program and field of study are devalued because they are, “not masculine.” And, there is evidence the rugged individual may resonate or pick up other forms of protest masculinity. During the last interview Hunter talked about being attracted to a machismo form of protest masculinity:

I think for awhile I was just a very, not masculine guy. In the sense of machismo, I rejected that as a form of masculinity that was a veritable form. But now I kind of appreciate it. I enjoy the borderline arrogance that goes along with it sometimes.

This study is concerned the kinds of male subjects Hunter constructed and how their constructions were interdependent. Using Connell’s (1995) framework it is understood how the construction of the rugged individual necessitated a rejection of the hegemonic man, but also a deep and exaggerated alignment with some normative ideals of masculinity. Yet, this study is also interested with the academic and theoretical discourses that framed the men’s constructions. For example, it has become apparent how feminization became a technique of devaluation while masculinization served to elevate an object or idea’s value. The rugged individual was better than the hegemonic man not because the hegemonic man was a capitalist, but because he was *too feminine*. It is through an examination of these discourses that the rugged individual’s relationship to masculinity’s normative ideals is better understood.

Critical Resistance as Desubjectification

Turning away from the relationship among Hunter's masculinity constructions, we now examine his relationship *with* his masculinity constructions and how he goes about fulfilling his masculine ontological project. This is accomplished through an analysis of the academic and theoretical discourses that enable his constructions.

Kung-Fu Mode, Theory Muddling, and Anti-Dogmatism: A Triune of Inaction

Hunter's rugged individual is "bound" to a theory of men's development, one Hunter originates in a conversation with a 13-year-old boy. This simple stage theory of men moving from "girl mode" to "Kung Fu mode" and then back again, simultaneously suggests stability and change. The rugged individual is not a permanent form. He will eventually be replaced, although Hunter does not theorize how this replacement will happen. Is the final "girl mode" stage a direct return to the original girl mode? Or does the transition follow a Hegelian model thesis-antithesis-synthesis where the final girl mode synthesizes elements of the original girl mode and the Kung Fu mode?

Regardless, Kung Fu mode also permits a certain stability of masculinity type. Whether the man in Kung Fu mode is the rugged individual or a "machismo" type, he is bound by a certain set of characteristics defined in opposition to and opposing femininity. The man in Kung Fu mode obligingly rejects anything feminine. And anything he does that can be construed as feminine must be immediately redefined such that it appears masculine. Thereby the rugged individual maintains an illusion of stability.

Yet the stability of the rugged individual is supported by another of Hunter's guiding principals, one he learned in graduate school: Don't muddle your theories. This

principle gives the rugged individual his stability in that it defines out any possibility of changing his mechanisms of construction. For example, being in Kung Fu mode requires a rejection of femininity. The rugged individual likes to snuggle. Kung Fu mode creates the situation where this activity must be evaluated for its masculinity and, if seen as lacking, entails it must be redefined as masculine. Adopting a critical theory in this instance, one that defines breaking the codes of masculinity as valuable in and of itself is impossible given Hunter's principle of theory muddling. The rugged individual remains unchanged.

But employing critical theory is denied in another way. Hunter values being "anti-dogmatic." Hunter's definition of dogmatism is associated with political movements that counter the mainstream. He does not seem to view "traditional masculinity" as containing its own dogmatism. But even if he did, the construction of the rugged individual as a public figure, rejecting the personal/private world of women, makes challenging traditional masculinity's dogmatism unimaginable. To engage in this activity would be to make what should be private public, and be cast as effeminate.

In terms of resistance it becomes very clear how Kung Fu mode, along with the principle of theory muddling and an anti-dogmatic stance, forecloses on the possibility of critical resistance. Therefore Hunter remains invested in his masculine ontological project, in being the rugged individual, desiring his own subjectification. While Hunter suggested masculinity is an illusion, maintaining a socially constructed difference between genders, this critical perspective did not innervate his constructions of masculinity. This caveat was stated at the beginning of the interviews and then bracketed throughout the remainder of our conversations. Hunter's interviews largely

resulted in subjectification. Rather than distancing himself from what it means to be a man, Hunter's language became increasingly entrenched. During the last interview I asked Hunter if he'd changed his behavior as a result of participating in the study. Given Hunter's Kung Fu, theory muddling, and anti-dogmatism frameworks, the only avenue for change would be to become more or less masculine. And since becoming less masculine is inherently a devalued thing, he appeared to interpret my question to mean, "Have you become more masculine?" He responded, "I don't think it's [participating in the study] really made me more masculine or I tried to adopt a more masculine view, my masculine view's pretty good. And how I portray my masculinity, I also feel like that's in a good way."

The Computer Scientist: Franklin

Franklin's portrait contains figures and shapes of muted colors free floating on a grey background. The majority of the painting is fuzzy and unclear, as if the painter composed the images by consulting their out-of-focus images on photographs. Franklin sits in a metal chair on the left side of the portrait, just above center. He is pictured alone, wearing his long hair pulled back in a ponytail and a loose fitting flannel shirt. All of Franklin's attention is directed at an object in his hand, what appears to be a funnel. Looking around the scene it becomes clear the funnel acts as a gravitational source for the other objects in the painting.

Franklin's mother and father appear at the top of the painting, looking down toward Franklin. But their images are unfinished, as if the painter was composing from memory and has forgotten exactly what they looked like. Other images, a humanities text book, Franklin's sister and ex-wife, an old boss, a computer, and the results of a Myers-Briggs assessment circulate below, all vaguely drawn downward toward the funnel.

Franklin's partner and their two sons appear in the lower portions of the portrait. They are partially, but not wholly, effected by the funnel's gravitational pull. To their left stands Franklin's advisor, her face, clearer than the rest of her figure, shows a kindly expression, gazing up at Franklin as he puzzles over his funnel.

But to the far right of the portrait, directly opposite Franklin, is a scene painted in direct contrast to the remainder of fuzzy portrait. The figures are distinct, colors bright, and images sharp. The scene depicts a classroom, full of male and female students, taught by a female instructor. She is wearing tight clothes that expose her midriff when she raises her arms. Looking closely, one can see Franklin appears in the front of the

classroom, off to the side as if evaluating her instruction. His arms are folded and legs crossed, but his thoughtful expression suggests action. As if any moment he will pop out of his chair and address the concerns that preoccupy his mind. In contrast to the Franklin holding the funnel, immobilized by his concentration, this Franklin is spurred into action by the clarity and vividness of his surroundings.

(De)Constructing the Hegemonic Man

Franklin's construction of the hegemonic man was diffuse and reflected the ability and language critical awareness gives to pick apart and challenge the social world. Franklin's hegemonic man emerged not as a character type or fixed set of expectations, but as a (largely fictitious) place holder for society's expectations for men. These included the simple discourses given by Hollywood and other media; the stereotypes that men are not adept caregivers, that they must prove their heterosexuality, and that they need to ogle women's bodies. Franklin felt very strongly that, "Being a man in this culture really sucks."

Franklin did not align with this rather simple and monolithic portrait of the hegemonic man. He said, "I definitely don't feel like I am the hegemonic man, so that's a pivot around which I move." Despite being a "pivot," Franklin challenged the hegemonic man's material and social reality throughout the interviews. While society holds certain expectations for men, for Franklin, these were not reflective of how men "actually are." He said, for example, "It's a stereotype of a man that they don't know how to take care of kids. And that really burns me. Because as somebody who's

competent in that and learned that, it's very frustrating to see men portrayed that way."

Franklin also challenged the reality of other male subject positions:

My [male relative] is a great hunter. If I automatically assume he's the prototypical hunter in the sense that he spends almost all of his spring and fall hunting, and yet he's one of the most sincere and genuine people I know. And I think a lot of the times in movies and what-not, the hunter prototype is very insensitive and very crass. And there are those kinds out there. So certainly that could be reinforced. But if I started to think in terms of manhood as being a hunter manhood, then suddenly I might miss a whole chunk of my [male relative's] personality and being because I don't try to interact with him on that level.

Therefore Franklin's construction of the hegemonic man is more appropriately seen as *deconstruction* in that Franklin's hegemonic man was simultaneously built and torn down in Franklin's interviews.

Deconstruction via Anti-Binary Discourse

Franklin was critical of the binary ordering of gender and its constraints and adopted an explicit anti-binary stance throughout the interviews. Opposing binary thinking allowed Franklin to critique the hegemonic man and engage in his deconstruction. It is already clear Franklin challenged essentialist accounts of fathering founded on a binary gender order where women are emotional caregivers and men are financial providers (Macnamara, 2006; Marsiglio & Pleck, 2005). But Franklin was also explicit in denying the reality of masculinity as a subject position opposite of femininity:

How do you deal with a binary definition? It's not diverse enough. It's not wide enough. It doesn't encompass the range of humanity so I would poo poo the idea because I think that there's a broader spectrum than just binary attributes.

However this is not to claim Franklin's "anti-binary" stance was always upheld over some polar opposite "pro-binary" position. As in any system of binary opposites, the anti-binary stance also deconstructed. When Franklin was asked what he liked about being a man, he expressed confusion:

So the question of what do I like or dislike about being male. I was a little bit confused whether you were wanting the gender component or whether you were wanting the sexuality component. Because I can't really think of anything that... I was born this way. And for the most part I guess I accepted it so I know in our culture I can exert a choice, decide to be female. But that's not something that I would choose to do. But what do I like about that? I don't know. I wouldn't know how to see it the other way, because I'm not female. Or it wouldn't be easy for me.

Two binaries operated in the preceding quote. First, the discourse of a difference between sex (biological) and gender (social) opened up the space for Franklin to think about being a man in terms of his biology (penis, facial hair, etc...) and in terms of social types (the buffoon father). While the social type certainly had no material or social reality, the biological man existed as a natural form. Second, biological sex was divided between male and female such that they could only be talked about in opposition to one another. Because Franklin had never experienced having a vagina or breasts, for example, he could not say what he liked about lacking those parts. Franklin's anti-binary stance functioned to deconstruct gender's binary, but not the gender binary that innervates sex. As, Butler (1990) points out, "It would make no sense, then, to define gender as the cultural interpretation of sex, if sex itself is a gendered category" (p. 7). Franklin cannot talk about what he likes about being a man, because to do so would require an experiential understanding of the woman's (as "Other") anatomy. Therefore Franklin maintained the "compulsory order" of sex and gender (Butler, 1990, p. 6). The

implications of assuming a natural sex as opposed to a cultural gender will be discussed later when I consider the role of gendered bodies in Franklin's constructions. At this juncture, it is enough to say that Franklin's explicit challenging of the masculine/feminine binary in gender did not extend to the category of sex. Franklin maintained a sex/gender binary that assumed the material reality of a prediscursive sex that naturalizes and conceals the way gender acts on bodies (Butler, 1990).

A binary discourse also crept into Franklin's discussion of the differences between boys and girls:

I used to think there was absolutely no difference between genders. It was all nurturing. And then I starting thinking well, when my [relative] had daughters, I had my son and I wonder if maybe there isn't a difference. But at this stage where they're old enough now, there certainly has been plenty of nurturing along the way. I start to wonder, well, have they just been treated differently enough that now they are different? So I guess the question is still open to me. It's sort of like questions that I have about life in general. I'm not convinced one way or the other. So I just don't ask the question or say I'm not sure it's that relevant or not sure why it matters. Why does it matter?

In this case when Franklin slips into the binary thinking implied by the questions: Are boys and girls different? Is the difference a result of nature or nurture?, he decides there probably is no answer. Yet this position is not to say that differences arise out of a combination of nature and nurture, but to deny the importance of the question altogether. Franklin undermines the binary thinking which allows the question to be asked in the first place. This move allows him to ask another question, "Why does it matter?" This question simultaneously undercuts the nature vs. nurture debate and denies gender's ability to designate human traits as masculine and feminine. However it is a rhetorical question that stops analysis. Questions that would further analysis, such as, "How does it [the binary] function? Where is it to be found? How does it get produced and regulated?

What are its social effects? How does it exist?" (Bove, 1990, p. 54) remain among those unaskable when the social reality (i.e., social impact) of binaries is denied by an "It shouldn't matter" argument.

Deconstruction via Gender as Bias

Franklin used the term "bias" to talk about society's favoring of masculine modes of being over feminine ones. Largely, Franklin's use of the term bias can be understood as a code word for power and privilege. For example, he said:

I think I should be aware of the biases that [being a man] comes with. I certainly think I am aware of those. Sort of these things where women are less likely to be invited into the realm of science. And I think that shows up from the time girls get into school all the way through my level of work. I think it's less of a bias now. Women that get to this point have shown aptitude and are placed more or less on an equal plan, but then there are plenty of examples where that's not the case.

The discourse of social bias allowed Franklin to critique the hegemonic man by casting his masculine attributes (as opposed to feminine ones) as having negative consequences for men and women. Franklin had yet to access a critical discourse that named those biases as (unearned) privileges accorded to men. Indeed the ability to talk about gendered oppression in the objective language of bias (as if some unbiased perspective exists outside the gender order) is allowed by the gendered privilege to not name the ways power/knowledge circulate to create and deny subjects.

Yet through a bias discourse, Franklin could critique the hegemonic man as a mechanism for excluding women, rather than a real or fixed type. Franklin said:

I think movies like *American Beauty* (1999) really show how wide that range [of masculinities] is and that's not even including all the different kinds, prototypes we might have. I don't know what to call it, stereotype, attributes. I suppose

across all those there are obvious attributes, but I'm not sure I necessarily agree with those attributes. I'm not certain those typify men...

By pointing out his biases and challenging his binaries, Franklin deconstructed the hegemonic man, revealing him as a social fiction. The hegemonic man was, therefore, not a necessary touchstone for Franklin's construction of his ideal man. Recognized as illusory, the hegemonic man's (albeit simplistic) characteristics needed neither be resisted nor accepted. Yet the notion of defining the ideal man was distasteful to Franklin for similar reasons as the hegemonic man. Part of what it meant to be an ideal man, then, included those elements that deconstructed the hegemonic man: an anti-binary and an anti-bias stance. Through the logic of these discourses, Franklin felt naming and gendering an ideal type would result in the necessary exclusion and devaluation of women. It also would prevent him from constructing a masculinity that included both stereotypically masculine and feminine traits. Franklin resisted a discourse that would associate his ideals with characteristics exclusive to the category "man" and exclusive of the category "woman." Franklin's solution was to construct the ideal *person*.

Constructing the Ideal Person

Drawing on humanist discourses, Franklin's ideal person resisted being gendered. To honor Franklin's construction as applicable to both men and women, I hereon refer to the ideal person by a "gender-free" and plural pronoun: "they" (declensions include: they, their, theirs, themselves)⁸. Franklin's ideal person was not man *or* woman, rather

⁸ I realize the incorrect grammar may be confusing to read, but it is important to maintain Franklin's intention the ideal person be a gender-free subject. Using "they" as a gender-free pronoun is one of many strategies adopted by some gender scholars who use gender neutral pronouns in their writing. (Spivak, 1990, for example, uses "ze".)

they were *both* man and woman. The ideal person was a both/and construction because they contained qualities typically associated with men and women. Franklin said:

I think if you were to show a list of different attributes and say these are traditional men and these are traditional female, I would probably pick evenly from both of them. Maybe. I don't know. That would be my guess.

Yet it is important to note Franklin's use of "person" was not necessarily a retreat to "gender blindness." It has been long recognized in the literature on race that color blindness serves to privilege White over color and ignores difference (e.g., Bonilla-Silva, 2006; Brown, Carnoy, Currie, Duster, Oppenheimer, Schultz, & Wellman, 2005).

Containing both "masculine" and "feminine" attributes, the ideal person was a construction that did not ignore gender, but sought not to organize itself around gender. The ideal person remains aware of gender "biases" (this is part of what makes the ideal person ideal), but resists the prescriptives a gendered construction would entail.

Therefore Franklin's ideal person was viewed as less constricted and more flexible than an ideal *man* would be:

I'm still bothered by the question of what does it mean to be a heterosexual. Or even what does it mean to be a man. In the sense that, it's good to understand up to the point where you try to figure out what your bias is and then stop there. I think if you keep going beyond that and try to come up with a general definition, it confines you so you can't move easily. And you can't be flexible with a dynamic situation. The other thing is that it shapes the way you look at things. So it actually reinforces your bias.

Qualities of the Ideal Person

Franklin's ideal person is flexible. They are courageous and an agent for change. The ideal person is self-aware, acknowledges their biases, and has a strong sense of self. Franklin said:

They're [ideal people] courageous. At some point they had some awakening or some moment where they realize this is directly contrasting with what I want, what I see the world needs or something. They're courageous about stepping out and saying, "Something's got to change here." Doesn't necessarily mean they make the right decisions, but they at least try something.

The ideal person is gentle, kind, personable and tactful. They are confident as

opposed to insecure. The ideal person is persistent and doesn't easily give-up:

My favorite quote right now is that success in life is based on hard slogging. And there will be times of disappointment and frustration, though, the basic measure against this is that it's important to have a sense of confidence about what you're capable of doing. I'd never heard that word before, slogging. But I think it characterized a lot of what you do in life is sort of persistent and if you want something you really just have to keep trying. It's not to be annoying, but just try to keep working at it until you can find a solution or change the perception inside yourself.

The ideal person is "humble" and "knowledgeable" as opposed to "arrogant" and "ignorant." The ideal person has overcome adversity, either social or physical. Finally, they value both logic and decisions made instinctually.

People Franklin felt contained many elements of the ideal person were Fred Rogers (from *Mr. Roger's Neighborhood*), Theodore Roosevelt, and Stephen B. Hawking.

Fred Rogers... worked a lot of his life towards children, but from what I understand of his life, he was a minister and he also worked a lot and just healing people in general. Just happened to be his ministry was children. He was a very gentle, kind soul a lot people admired him and looked up to him. He was again driven by a vision of what he wanted and he had a lot of physical obstacles. When he was a child he was sick all the time. I think throughout a lot of his adult life he also tended to get sick, but maybe that's not a fair characterization, but he had to deal with that. Theodore Roosevelt was another example. If my memory serves me, he had polio. He was paralyzed or had an issue with his legs for most of his adult life. And yet he was very courageous, very adventuresome. He's sort of a prototypical hunter, but he had a lot of interesting things to say about our society and how we could change it for the better.

Other exemplars of the ideal person included Franklin's advisor and his current partner:

In some ways my partner's sort of mine. I just really appreciate her style. She's very direct. I think sometimes she's come a long way in her life. So I really appreciate her presence in my life. I currently work with a woman who's my advisor. I would count her as a hero. She's more of a mentor to me, but I think later in life she'll definitely be somebody I admired and looked up to. She's got a lot of strong attributes. Very knowledgeable about her work. She's extremely personable, approachable. And she's really a neat person.

Franklin deconstructed, rather than constructed, the hegemonic man. He resisted gendering the ideal person and the ideal person's "Other" emerged after-the-fact, rather than as a necessary antagonist. Indeed, while Franklin could point to qualities he admired in people and generally constructed a sketch of the ideal person, Franklin's "scientific mind" made him wary of adhering too closely to any solid subjectivity. As noted earlier, the ideal person is characterized by flexibility of self-definition. This flexibility was allowed in part by refusing to construct explicit character types to contrast the ideal person. Franklin's wariness of adhering to any one definitive character type (subjectivity) is best illustrated by his discussions around the "humanities student" and the "engineer" in graduate school.

Ideal Person in Graduate School: Humanities Student and Engineer

Franklin's ideal person most closely aligned with the humanities student and the humanities student was largely opposed to the engineer. A quick list of contrasts will make the point. The humanities student is tactful whereas the engineer is tactless. The humanities student has to develop a "thick skin" to be around engineers. The humanities student is oriented towards the personal and feelings. The engineer is impersonal and scientific. The humanities student sees truth as "up to interpretation" and the engineer sees truth as composed of "right and wrong." Yet, while Franklin held these two

discursive types as distinct, he did not view them as necessarily incompatible. He said, "Maybe this is typical for someone like me, but I don't necessarily see that they necessarily do [fit together].... I think they're as harmonious as any two things that are distinct would be." In addition, Franklin argued bringing the humanities perspective into an engineering field allowed him a "bigger picture." Franklin said:

I'm hoping to bring something that some scientists don't have, which is a background in Humanities. A lot of them are just very technical and they have great technical prowess, but they don't necessarily understand the background for it all.

Franklin's ideal person remained committed to being tactful, but their flexibility allowed the ideal person/humanities student to appreciate and interact harmoniously with the engineer. Franklin had learned:

...there really is some external object that's out there. The model is sitting out there to be explored, to be poked at, to be prodded. To be analyzed and it's nothing personal. It's rarely anything personal. At least in the group that I work with, the people I work with.

Despite this, Franklin's ideal person worked better with his advisor whose approach is "sort of a gentle nudge" instead of the "crispness" he associated with engineering types. Holding to his ideals or merging the two types remained problematic in his program. The ideal person values relationships and tact. But in Franklin's program, "You certainly seem to come across as more competent when you're sharp and quick. So there's definitely a fine line. You don't want to say, 'I'm not sure I understand all this.'"

Indeed the literature on how to be a successful graduate student suggests that appearing ignorant is one of the biggest worries a graduate student faces (Leonard, 2001). Franklin's construction of the engineer is emblematic of an academic culture that

privileges logic over emotions, the impersonal over the personal, and requires graduate students continually demonstrate their competency (Leonard, 2001; Phillips & Pugh, 2005). Yet when I asked Franklin if “there’s kind of a masculine culture that’s developed” in his department, he responded, “No, I wouldn’t say so. No.” This is not to say Franklin did not acknowledge his program was largely “male biased” and composed almost entirely of White males. However it begins to point to the problematics of clinging to a humanist discourse that constructs the ideal person as “ungendered.”

Problematics of the ideal person in graduate school. Franklin’s interviews reflected the problematic of (pro)feminist men who adopt humanist discourses. I said before that the construction of the ideal person was not tantamount to a reversion to a discourse of “gender blindness.” While this remains overall true, holding too tightly the ideals of gender similitude (that women and men are fundamentally the same) carries with it a danger of failing to recognize when masculine modes are privileged over feminine ones. The ideal person runs the risk of simply being an unnamed and unrecognized ideal *man*. For example, Franklin said, “A scientist is a scientist. I don’t think of that person as male or female. I just think of it as a good researcher.” But then continued:

I think most people think of them as male, White.... I am definitely quite aware of the sort of prototype people have of scientists in general. And I’m not one to say that’s not true. But in my locality it’s not true.... Although all the people in my direct line of study are all White males. They’re all domestic [from the US], in fact I don’t think we have any females in our group.... I don’t know why that is.

While Franklin offered reasons like an overall “male bias,” the program’s emphasis on hard science and mathematics, and the relative lack of female role models (there were very few women faculty in his department), it is noteworthy he did not discuss the construction of masculine scientific identities as a barrier for women. Even in their flexibility, the ideal person, the engineer, and the humanities student remained intentionally “un”gendered. This “de”gendering was certainly intended as a move to open up these subjectivities to contain masculine and feminine traits and to be embodied by women and men. But it also functioned to temper criticality by making invisible men’s genders.

Kimmel and Messner (1998) point out the link between the discourses of gender neutrality and the mechanisms that afford men privilege. They argue:

...men often think of themselves as genderless, as if gender did not matter in the daily experiences of our lives.... For example we treat male scientist as if their being men had nothing to do with the organization of their experiments, the logic of scientific inquiry, or the questions posed by science itself. (p. xv)

Without a clear distinction between a gender lens and a critical gender lens, the ideal person was rendered blind to some of the normative ideals of masculinity and femininity that imbue academic disciplines and their subjects.

A final note is that Franklin’s ideal person and the humanities student are certainly a challenge to the masculine graduate student (Franklin’s engineer). Yet it is significant Franklin did not conceptualize their relationship as antagonistic. Again, the anti-binary stance functions to undercut the potential criticality of the ideal person. Certainly this is how Franklin got along in his program, yet he also conceptualized his

goal for these interviews as answering the question, “What am I going to do about it?,” when faced with situations that devalue women.

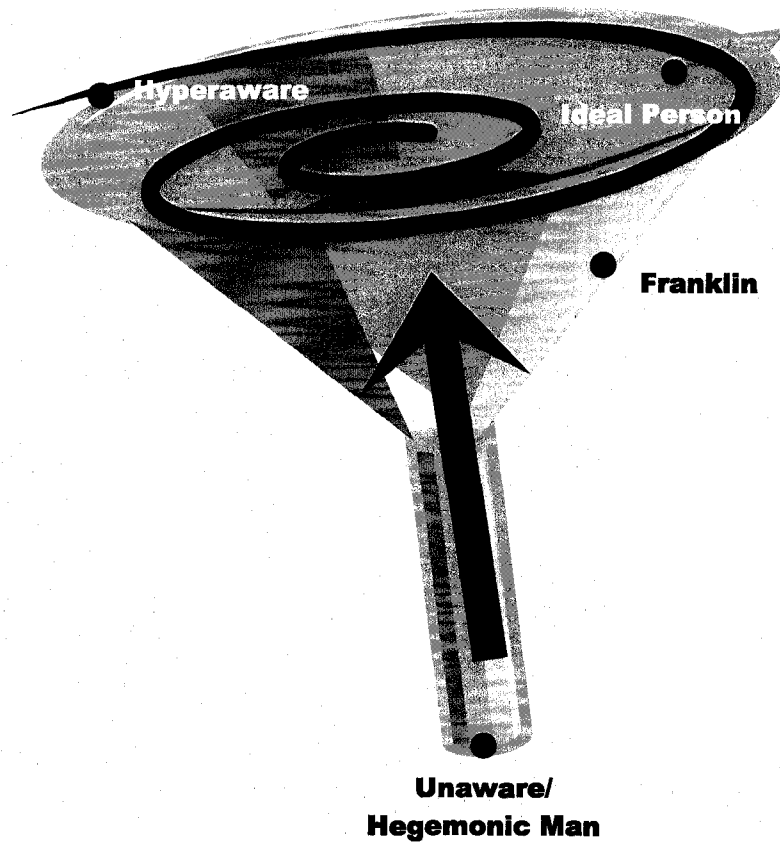
Adopting a humanist discourse prevented Franklin from naming and constructing the hegemonic man and gendering the ideal person. This same discourse dilutes the criticality of Franklin’s ideal person and shows how, in the early stages of (pro)feminist awareness, competing discourses may deny men a space in which to act. I now turn to the relationship between the ideal person and the hegemonic man, examining how the hegemonic man’s deconstruction enabled the ideal person’s flexibility, but diminished their criticality and stymied action.

The Ideal Person and the Hegemonic Man

Franklin employed a complex funnel and spiral model, a metaphor drawn from the field of computer science, to explain the relationship between the hegemonic man and the ideal person. The model is recreated in Figure 1 based on a sketch Franklin drew during a follow-up interview.

Figure 1

Spiraling out of the funnel: From unaware to hyper aware



At the bottom of the funnel is the hegemonic man, immersed and unaware of his biases, unable to move. At the top of the funnel, toward the edge, is the gender neutral, ideal person. At the extreme edges of the funnel is the “hyper aware” individual who runs the risk of falling out of the funnel and into the depths of another bias structure. Franklin used the funnel and spiral model to explain why men who have worked their way out of the funnel could talk about what it means to be a man. They do so from a “top-down” perspective that allows them to see the biases below. Franklin placed himself in the middle of the funnel and felt that focusing on what it means to be a man might run the

risk of entrenching him further within the funnel, rather than pushing him up to the top, towards the gender neutrality of the ideal person. Franklin said:

So I think at one point, I was like well, isn't it just enough to admit your bias and be a good human? And that didn't seem to be a very satisfying answer. I suppose because there's sort of a funnel, right? To use an analogy, if you're down here and you need a lot of energy to get up to the top so you can either stay at the top, but once you're up there it's not too difficult to stay out and about, but it's sort of a precarious position. Because if too much energy and you'll go right off the edge, and then you have to find a, because I believe that humans can't really operate outside some sort of a bias structure, you're going to have to find another funnel, which means you're going to fall right into the middle of it and have to dig out of it again. So it didn't seem to be a very satisfying answer and I think maybe the reason is because people are fearing that if you're sort of on the cusp of the funnel about ready to go back down inside and certain experiences can drive you completely one way or completely the other and make you accept your bias without ever thinking about it again, like this is the way all people are. I don't have to think about it anymore.... We call those basins of attraction. They're just points if you go into you can never get back out. So I think maybe that's the reason I got the response I did from just saying, isn't it enough just to be a good human? It's like well, not entirely, because you need to know what your bias is and you need to be out above that deep part of the funnel for long enough that you get a good sense of how deep the funnel really is and the advantages and disadvantages of taking this viewpoint. So I, that was my explanation for why it wasn't received very well. But I still believe pretty strongly that it all comes down to being a good human. And trying to understand whatever it is that you're a part of.

From this analogy it is seen Franklin's ideal person emerged not as the necessary opposite of the hegemonic man, but the middle ground between the hyper-aware individual (in danger of falling out of the funnel and into another one, or back into the depths of the same funnel) and the unaware hegemonic man. This explains why the hegemonic man was a "pivot" around which Franklin moved, but was not characteristically constructed in opposition to the ideal man.

As stated earlier, Franklin did not so much construct as he deconstructed the hegemonic man. This is not to imply that Franklin employed deconstruction as a

“method” (Derrida [1990] holds deconstruction is something that is always already happening), but that Franklin’s anti-bias and anti-binary discourses established his alignment with the process of deconstruction. Importantly, Franklin did not attempt to reconstruct the hegemonic man when his falsehoods were revealed, but viewed deconstruction positively.

Yet Franklin’s rejection of a binary gender system did not so much result in a proliferation of subject positions (although Franklin certainly recognized masculinity to be multiple), rather Franklin bracketed the binary gender order and abstracted “up” to the human, constructing the ideal person. What was the hegemonic man’s undoing became the foundation for the ideal person. Where the hegemonic man is gendered, the ideal person is gender-free. Where the hegemonic man is constrained, the ideal person is unfettered. Where the hegemonic man is unaware of his biases, the ideal person sees their biases. And where the hegemonic man is an illusion, the ideal person is real. Franklin’s positive appraisal of the ideal person relied heavily on a binary construction between “reality” and “illusion.” Franklin believed that, in reality, “people are people.” As a force of social ordering, gender is an illusion, but being “human” had an objective ontology. In comparison to the hegemonic man, the ideal person emerged as having a social, if not material, reality.

There is danger in assuming the reality of the ideal person and the falsehood of the hegemonic man. The ideal person, near the top of the funnel, is conferred a vantage of their biases. Franklin wonders, “...isn’t it enough to admit your bias and be a good human?” Franklin’s argument held the ideal person should be aware of and able to “let go of” their gender biases and that being a good human was a veritable position somehow

external to the gender order. It is as if being aware of their biases somehow makes them free of their effects. But, as Franklin acknowledges, this position is problematic:

But this notion of bias is definitely something I've been thinking about in the sense that it's difficult to let go of it. Because you sort of can't frame your world without it and you can't reason about things without making some qualifying exceptions.

Franklin's construction of the ideal person as external to gender and better able to recognize their biases, renders the ideal person unaware of how they are (and can be) gendered. As Butler (1990) informs us, there is no outside gender. And, as Franklin argues above, biases are (almost) impossible to eliminate. Yet from the advantage near the top of the funnel an individual can adopt a position that is largely external to many of the biases contained within the funnel. While the ideal person can be understood as a both/and position (both man and woman), Franklin's ideal person is constructed without gender, or "gender neutral." Therefore anyone can be an ideal person, but, per Butler (1990), we are obliged to ask, does this ideal person look different when taken up by those who appear as women and men? Franklin suggested this happens in his graduate program:

She [my advisor] says something in class and she's assertive and some men in that culture don't like that. They get very, it's not like they say, "What a bitch," but I can tell that's sort of what they're thinking... If a man had said the same thing there would be very different in their response. So I think there's a difference in the way it [strength] plays out.

But, Franklin concluded, "I think fundamentally a strong person is just a strong person."

Franklin's return to the ideal person as gender neutral evidences the allure of an objective reality that positions individuals external to the gender order.

Franklin argues the ideal person should be aware of their biases, but the degree to which this is possible is undercut by the construction of the ideal person as external to the gender order. As Whitehead (2002) says, “Despite the absence of any biological grounding to people’s identities, the categories woman and man are too accessible, powerful and seductive to be removed by the political will of any group or social movement (p. 217)” The ideal person may be a construction with the aim of eliminating gender as an organizing feature of social life and is a challenge to the gender order in its possession of both masculine and feminine characteristics. But the ideal person will always be partially blind to the gendering of their construction. Franklin’s ideal person draws on humanist discourses that have been critiqued as touting masculine (at the exclusion of feminine) norms (St. Pierre & Pillow, 2000). As I’ve noted, the ideal person or humanistic subject is often an artifact of male privilege, appearing as synonym for “man” (Kimmel & Messner, 1998). That Franklin touts “strength” as a positive characteristic, as opposed to weakness, evidences the leakage of the masculine/feminine binary into the ideal person’s construction. While Franklin would certainly argue “strength” ought not to belong to the category male, his challenge would fail to acknowledge how gender is a mechanism by which strength comes to be valued above weakness, and, subsequently, the masculine above the feminine.

Therefore it becomes easier to understand how Franklin simultaneously acknowledged his field is biased against women, but continued to privilege a “gender neutral” (masculine) subject that ultimately rendered him uncertain of why his field is biased. Franklin noted how “strength” played out differently for his female advisor and yet he continued to believe “a strong person is just a strong person.” But, the partial view

permitted by touting a gender neutral subject was most obvious when way Franklin answered questions around what it was like to be a male scientist.

The ideal person's discourse of gender neutrality may not have prevented Franklin from recognizing gender bias against women in his program, but it certainly made it impossible for him to talk about himself as a gendered scientist. When I asked Franklin what it was like to be a male scientist he said, "I think it's pretty exciting. It's neat work to do.... I feel like I'm part of a community. And I am standing on the shoulders of other people's work. I don't have to reinvent it all myself." Franklin conflated what it meant to be a "male" scientist with what it meant to be a "scientist in general." While he could talk about women as having different experiences, he was unaware of the "male" components of a male scientist. The discourse of gender neutrality did not prevent Franklin from recognizing gender "bias," but prevented him from recognizing the "biases" in neutrality.

Franklin's construction of the ideal person as gender neutral was untenable in his graduate program and gender appeared as an important ordering force. Here begins an exploration of how the gender neutral person functions upon an encounter with sexed bodies. It was noted earlier Franklin maintained a distinction between sex and gender. While gender's masculine/feminine binary was illusory, sex was conferred a material reality that failed to acknowledge its own gendering. Sexed bodies presented a problem for the ideal person in their obvious lack of neutrality. While Franklin wanted to maintain the social reality of the genderless scientist, when our discussion about gender in graduate school turned to the materiality of women's bodies, the gender neutral position was disrupted. Rather than reconceptualize the ideal person, Franklin

constructed two clearly gendered subjects (the “geeky male” and the sexy female scientists) in order to talk about bodies in graduate school. The following sections will compare the geeky male scientist and the ideal person and then discuss the implications of their constructions for gay men and women.

The Ideal Person and the Geeky Male Scientist

The geeky male scientist emerged when Franklin and I discussed heterosexuality in his graduate program. He said:

...there's this sort of geeky trend and I don't know if this is true in other disciplines, but I've noticed that people in the sciences tend to not have very good social skills sometimes. Particularly men don't seem to have very good social skills when it comes to relating to women. They turn into the really nervous geeky type if an attractive woman who happens to be a scientist walks in and says, “Oh, I'm really interested in your research.” They don't seem to respond to the woman in the same way they'd respond to me... Because women are such a rare occurrence, I think they get a little more attention because I think the men find them attractive... I don't know if that's me projecting.

The ideal person was constructed as containing both masculine and feminine characteristics such that their sexuality was not a necessary organizing feature. This is not to suggest that the ideal person was/is not presumed heterosexual (although it is certain Franklin would say the ideal person could have any sexuality), but that heterosexuality was not a central frame from which the ideal person emerged. In contrast, the geeky male scientist clearly relied on the heterosexual matrix for his construction. He is rendered powerless in the face of attractive women and all but falls over himself in conversations with them.

Faced with the materiality of women's bodies, the ability to maintain the ideal person as a tenable subject position is belied. Franklin's geeky male scientist emerged

within the heterosexual matrix because Franklin could not deny men's differential reactions to women. While Franklin did not recognize the biases of the ideal person, he could certainly recognize the biases of the geeky male scientist, especially when Franklin took up that discourse to describe his behaviors:

When a woman says you look nice...I wonder is she hitting on me? If I walk into the office and a guy says, "Hey, you look sharp." I'm pretty sure they're not hitting on me. I mean I'm reasonably sure. But if they are, I'm comfortable with it... I know myself well enough, I'm not interested. But when a woman hits on me or when she says something like, "You look nice" or "You look handsome," I'm like, "Is she hitting on me?"... So that probably says something more about me, but at the same time its like, why is there such a difference? A guy says it, no big deal. A woman says it, I'm awkward, I blush.

The geeky male scientist reveals the power of the heterosexual matrix to construct men and women as social types. In the face of women's bodies the male scientist loses the objectivity and gender neutrality of the ideal person and becomes a "nervous" and "awkward" man.

Not only was the ideal person untenable in the face of women's bodies, they dissolved when he encountered men's bodies. The next section discusses the ideal person and heterosexuality.

"Others"

The Ideal Person and the Issue of (Hetero/Homo)Sexuality

"What does sexuality have to do with being a man? Any more than having a favorite color has to do with being a man?" Franklin challenged the proscriptions of the heterosexual matrix that confer a compulsory heterosexuality on men. His ideal person was not presumed to be heterosexual so they were not necessarily constructed in opposition to the gay man. Therefore Franklin's discussion of heterosexuality was

similar to his discussions of gender, he drew on anti-binary and anti-bias discourses when talking about heterosexuality in order to construct a largely “neutral” position on the issue. Franklin said, “To me it’s like you are the way you are. Why does it matter? You’re a homosexual. You’re a heterosexual, they’re not going to hit on you so quit worrying about it.”

Franklin was critical of men who work to prove their sexuality. He said:

My [male relative] is entirely homophobic. He and his friends tend to focus on that really a lot. In fact the next time I’m with him I’m going to say something like, “You know if you really want me to believe you’re not homosexual, why don’t you just quit talking about it all the time? Because I think by constantly bringing it up, “I’m not gay, see, I’m not gay. Look at this magazine. I’m not gay. I’m not gay,” there’s a lot of focus on that. And it’s like well, you’re spending so much energy showing what you aren’t instead of being who you are.

Additionally, Franklin challenged discourses that draw a strict distinction between heterosexuality and homosexuality:

I think a lot of men aren’t willing to admit they’re attracted to other men. That they find certain attributes about them attractive. I might be attracted to the way a guy is always dressed up nicely or maybe attracted to his physique... I’m like does that mean I’m homosexual?... I think the way I really know it [I’m heterosexual], to put it in a positive way, is that I’m definitely more attracted to women. Even though I do feel attraction to other men, I probably feel some sort of sexual attraction to every female...

Yet, as a father, Franklin found himself disciplining heterosexuality in his sons. He described the men’s locker room:

So you cannot really take a shower without identifying at least the other men in the room. You walk in and you’re certainly not going to be looking at their testicles, right? Because that’s not really good behavior. So... yeah similarly when I take my sons there, I have to say out loud, “We don’t look at other men’s penises in the locker room.” Because they don’t know that social convention. Right? They don’t know that they’re not supposed to do that.

Franklin didn't see anything wrong with being a homosexual, noted that heterosexuality puts pressure on men to evaluate women's bodies, and argued heterosexuality is so strictly defined it doesn't allow men to express their attractions for one another. Despite adopting a critical stance toward heteronormativity, as a discourse heterosexuality continued its disciplinary function. "Social convention" continued to dictate that in order for men to be men, they must not appear gay by looking at other men's genitalia. Adhering to social convention, Franklin enacted what society expects of fathers, that they dutifully instruct their sons how to be "men" (Adams & Coltrane, 2005). Similar to what we saw with gender, Franklin's belief that sexuality shouldn't matter and has nothing to do with being a man rendered invisible the inseparability of the discourses of masculinity and heterosexuality and the ways they create and discipline heterosexual male subjects. In the face of men's bodies, the neutrality of the ideal person was impossible and Franklin revealed himself in the above instance as an enforcer of masculinity's norms. In order for a man to be a man he must avert his gaze from men's bodies (and direct it toward women's).

The Ideal Person and Women

But Franklin was certainly critical of media portrayals of women and how their objectification sets up unrealistic expectations, damaging to women's self-perceptions and heterosexual relationships. He said:

I'm really actively involved in my son's care and raising him and I actually was the one who put him in daycare and got all these things organized. So I was the one who got women's magazine, as a male. And I remember opening them and thinking, how offensive. These mothers' magazines, they're sending them out to women who are just getting over pregnancy and everybody knows after pregnancy you're a little flabby, your body's got a lot of extra padding on it

because it supported a baby for almost a year. And here are these pictures of these women that look nothing like mothers who have just had babies. If ever. I mean really truly, their bodies... sometimes they looked like they'd never even had a baby. So those sort of things are frustrating from my perspective. So I don't know if that answers your question about why I'm interested in this study, but I'm sort of interested in issues that center around... this interplay of what people think should exist and what actually exists. There's definitely a conflict and in my mind... This sort of distinction between, I keep calling it fantasy, but it's sort of like a fantasy world of what people are told about how sexuality works. And there's the real world where you have to be with somebody day in and day out and deal with a lot of other things besides the sexual issues and I don't think there's much focus on those things that are supposed to help people stay together and help them cope with what's going on.

As noted earlier, the divide between fantasy and reality was an important binary in Franklin's constructions. In "reality" men and women are no different. The ideal person is more real because they are constructed external to a fictitious gender order and is therefore aware of gender biases. But as argued earlier, the ideal person is rendered blind to their gender and is a largely untenable subject position when faced with gendered bodies. In this way, the ideal person's reality is belied as fantasy. Unable to recognize their gender, the ideal person's potential for critical resistance is undercut. The point is, despite Franklin's desire, the gender neutral ideal person often fails to effectively challenge the gender order. This statement requires further explanation.

Franklin's ideal person is "aware" of gender biases, but nowhere does Franklin construct the ideal person as one who acts on their awareness. It is not that Franklin's ideal person draws on discourses that value inaction, Franklin does believe it is important to challenge sexism. By participating in this study and articulating action as a goal, Franklin can be seen to be reaching out to deepen his awareness and in a way this can be understood as a form of action. However, Franklin's construction of the ideal person is limited by the availability of discourses that would allow Franklin to talk about

the ideal person as an activist, as one who can make changes in the social world.

Franklin is certainly aware of this limitation:

So even though I'm aware of these issues, it doesn't mean I actually do anything about them, or I do the right thing. I don't know what the right thing is... So I don't know. Just because I'm aware of these issues and I'm sensitive to them, doesn't mean that I've arrived at some point where I know what to do about the situations.

Franklin would like to "take the next step" and challenge sexism, but the construction of the ideal person as gender neutral is an act that potentially mobilizes male privilege and renders the ideal person's (masculine) gender invisible (Kimmel & Messner, 1998). As a "person" the ideal man largely fails to challenge the discourses that dictate men engage in masculine ontological projects. The best he can do is turn his back to them and deny their material and social reality. The ideal person can pretend he is not a male and be relieved of the task of constructing an alternative masculinity that would more directly challenge the gender order.

As is, other gendered subjectivities must be constructed in order to challenge a sexist gender order. For example, Franklin is critical of pornography. Yet he is "uncomfortable" speaking out against pornography among his male peers. Through the discourse of the "good father," Franklin is able to keep pornography away from his sons.

He said:

I was actually grateful when I had a son who I didn't want to be around pornographic material. I said to the guys on the fishing trip, "Don't bring that shit." You know it was a perfect reason for me to be the FATHER and say don't show this or talk about this kind of stuff around my son. But that's sort of a cop out, right? I'm not really addressing the issue and saying, "I'm not comfortable with that. I wish you wouldn't show it or bring it. How do you address this in an appropriate, kind way, that doesn't alienate you from your friends?"

The ideal person is kind and appropriate. But Franklin did not conceptualize challenging men on their consumption of pornography as an act of kindness. Were kindness to be understood as a form of social justice, for example, the ideal person could be enabled to act. But the ideal person's gender neutrality renders the ideal person unaware of their gender and largely non-functional in challenging sexism. As we've seen earlier, the ideal person is similarly paralyzed in graduate school. Confronted with sexy women scientists, the geeky male scientist becomes socially awkward and nervous. The ideal person's characteristics and mechanisms of construction also disappear when Franklin discusses men and women in graduate school.

Male and Female Bodies in Graduate School

Discussing (heterosexual) gender dynamics in graduate school, Franklin constructed the geeky male scientist as opposed to the sexy female scientist. The geeky male scientist is anxious and nervous around sexy women. But men in general can also be distracted by women's bodies as was revealed when Franklin was asked what made his masculinity obvious to him in his department. He said:

Sometimes a woman will wear something that's more revealing than is appropriate for the office. And that's a little hard to get the work done. No pun intended... A woman wears a halter top to work and it lifts her breasts up and it makes them stand out, shows her cleavage... I'm sitting there and trying to talk about an algorithm and I'm like, "Jesus, nice rack."... And that's really not appropriate for the workplace.... It's something that is a distraction. That doesn't happen very often I don't think... I guess I'm fortunate too that both [females in his department] wear business clothing. So they don't wear clothing that makes them appear overtly woman, in a sexual way.

Franklin deals with the distractions of women's bodies by shutting "that part off and not talk about it. Not deal with it because that's what other men do." Once again the

passivity of the ideal person and their inability to act against sexism in a sexed/gendered environment is made obvious.

The ideal person can maintain their gender neutrality as long as women's femininity is not expressed. When confronted with the obviousness of female bodies, the ideal person gives way to a gendered subjectivity, whether it be "man" or the "geeky male scientist" who is distracted at best and anxious at worst. The solution is to "shut that part off," a strategy that assumes the gendered subject is internal and separable from other, presumably gender neutral, subjectivities.

What this implies for women is that their bodies are what make gender obvious in a department. The more obvious their femininity, the more distracted and anxious they will make men. Rockhill (2000) talks about her experience of being a university professor, "... to appear sexual [in the academy] was to become a target of ridicule, charged with inappropriate behavior and appearance" (p. 394). Franklin prefers women to dress more "conservatively," and suggests attractive women may have a sort of power over men (especially the geeky male scientist). He talked about a young woman who interned in his program, but wasn't successful:

Franklin: And it was one of those cases where I was like, did she float [earn her degree] because she's a woman?...

Jenni: How would that happen? How would she float because she's a woman? How does that happen in CS?

Franklin: She was an attractive woman no less. And I think that same thing where she may be able to take advantage of that and...

Discourses that position women as the sole arbiters of gender and as having power over men via heterosexuality converge to suggest women can use their appearance to get

ahead in their programs. That this question is not similarly asked about attractive men points to the influence of a heterosexual discourse that assumes its own veracity (the heterosexuality and gender of female bodies) and the inherent sexuality of female, but not male, bodies. In this case, women's only recourse is to dress less feminine, making less obvious their sexualized femininity. Only by doing so can women aspire to the gender neutrality of the ideal person.

But this is not to outright condemn the ideal person. Their sensitivity to bias, even if not the ideal person's own, permits the ideal person to take note of instances in which male bias pervades the graduate department. Franklin observed some professors fail to use gender neutral language, referring to abstract symbols as "guys." He was critical his department contained only a few women students and advisors and he speculated the overrepresentation of males may have made it easier for him to choose his program:

I think probably the barrier was lower. If it had been an all woman sect that I was deciding to join, it might have been a little intimidating. So maybe the barrier was easier for me as a man, because I go into the office and I see mostly other males. And so I'm like, "Okay, I'll fit right in because I'm male and they're male."

Touting gender neutrality, Franklin would like to see an equal representation of males and females in his program. Franklin's discussion of his department's culture suggests he was aware of some of the ways the gender order functions to marginalize women. But, drawing on a discourse of gender neutrality, Franklin denied his department touts an overall masculine culture. He ultimately argued it was a place where a "scientist is a scientist," elevating the gender neutral subject as the ideal. However the gender neutral subject was unaware of how their construction was gendered and finally

functioned to reify the gender order that privileges the masculine over the feminine. The following sections discuss resistance and consider how the ideal person emerged from and aligned with a discourse critical of the gender order.

Complicity, Subordination and Marginalization

Returning to Connell's (1995) framework, the ideal person appears to resist the hegemonic man. However, the ideal person is not defined in opposition to the hegemonic man. Remember the hegemonic man is characterized by lack of parenting skills, unawareness of gender biases, a need to prove his heterosexuality, and stereotypical male traits. The ideal person's characteristics, self-awareness, kindness, having overcome adversity, and confidence, to name a few, do not entail a hegemonic man as an opposite for their construction. However, the ideal person is resistive of the gender order that enables the construction of the hegemonic man.

The ideal person is constructed as possessing both masculine and feminine traits. And, importantly, no discourse is employed to masculinize their feminine traits. The ideal person is, for example, gentle and kind, as exemplified by Mr. Rogers and Franklin's female advisor. The ideal person's both/and gender construction is therefore resistive of a gender order that insists on a binary gender system and privileges the masculine over the feminine. However, the ideal person's gender neutrality functions to undercut that resistance, revealing the ways in which the ideal person is complicit with normative ideals of masculinity.

The ideal person denies the material and social reality of gender. Franklin believes that gender, in its binary form, is not reflective of the "way people really are."

Yet this denial is not critical in that it does not readily recognize the ways gender disciplines and creates subjects. The ideal person is able to recognize gender bias in gendered subjects, but denies the gender forces in their own construction.

The ideal person is emblematic of the humanist subject. The ideal person is self-aware with strong sense of self, independent, intelligent, rational (although this is not at the exclusion of using intuition), and direct. While women can be the ideal person, the valuing of gender neutrality functions to govern women's, rather than men's bodies. The ideal person's supposed gender neutrality is therefore rendered untenable and *he* emerges as complicit with forces that function to normalize masculinity. It is not that the ideal person is complicit because he shares traits with the hegemonic man (although some traits do align with ideals of masculinity). Rather, he is complicit because his construction reifies the presumed normalcy associated with masculinity. Franklin remains largely unaware of the ways the power and privilege of being a man play out in his daily life. But men who engage in feminism cannot deny their genders anymore than they can rid themselves of the privileges associated with their gender. As Flood (2005) points out:

Men's collective efforts to undermine patriarchal inequalities are themselves shaped by those same inequalities. Although many men's participation in antiviolenence movements is informed by their critical distance from hegemonic masculinity, they also may struggle with complicity in patriarchal behaviors and attitudes. Many men have carried an invisible backpack of privilege, a taken-for-granted set of unearned benefits and assets. (p. 464)

A contrast is warranted to better make the point. Franklin began the interviews stating his alignment with feminist discourses and his desire to integrate feminist practices into his everyday life. Given these aims it seemed likely Franklin would

construct the ideal man as a (pro)feminist. Franklin's ideal began predictably by denying the gender order, but then took that denial to construct a gender neutral subject position external to the gender order. Denying the social reality of (his) gender, Franklin drew from a discourse that assumed the human to be neither masculine nor feminine. That the ideal person was silenced and replaced when faced with gendered bodies revealed his gender neutrality to be untenable. Had Franklin constructed an ideal masculine subject as a (pro)feminist, he would have emerged in Connell's (1995) framework as a socially "real" and more resistive subject. He would have been on the way to achieving what many profeminist men call for, a greater number of men who espouse a masculinity that defines itself as (pro)feminist (Connell, 1995, 2000; Flood, 2005).

Critical Resistance as Desubjectification

Examining Franklin's anti-binary and anti-bias stances we can understand Franklin's touting of a flexible subject as a gesture toward desubjectification and critical resistance. Franklin held back the masculine ontological project, denying the material and social reality of the masculine subject. While he talked about the ideal person as being self-aware and having a strong sense of self, the ideal person was also characterized by a flexibility of self and a resistance of self-definition. The less defined, the freer was the ideal person.

Additionally, Franklin gestured toward desubjectification by problematizing the male subject. Franklin first struggled with his "inability" to talk about what it means to be a man. But he ultimately settled on a position that denied an active construction of a male subject. He said, "I still have not come up with a good answer [to what does it

mean to be a man] so I've decided to unask the question." By unasking the question, Franklin challenged the gendered and subject discourses that make the question, "What does it mean to be a man?" possible. Indeed asking the participants to talk about the "ideal man," ran the risk of subjectification. In resisting the interview as a site of subjectification, Franklin deterred the forces of masculine subjectification.

However, Franklin's resistance of the male subject was traded by the desire to be a gender neutral subject. After unasking the "man" question Franklin said, "So I'm going to be a good human and be aware of my own biases." Franklin went on to discuss what it means to be a good human, committing himself to the human ontological project and subjectifying himself to humanist discourses and the forces of masculinization they entail. For Franklin, freedom from defining masculinity was inextricably linked with a position of gender neutrality. But this gender neutrality was limited in its ability to recognize its own gendering, calling into question its freedom, especially its ability to act against sexism. Further, that it was untenable in the face of a socially real gender order, called into question its privileged ontology. Similar to the hegemonic man, the ideal person was belied as a masculine social fiction.

Franklin's ideal person was an ideal form that resisted subjectification within the gender order, but nonetheless remained committed to making itself manifest in the world. Franklin held the ideal person was more real than the hegemonic man, for example. However if the ideal person had been claimed as a masculine subject, his resistance would have served as a more instrumental challenge to constructions of masculinity based on a masculine-feminine binary. As Whitehead (2002) said, "There can be no possibility of the sex/gender dichotomy disappearing, though the ideal representations

that configure it are under constant movement and (re)negotiation across countless cultural sites” (p. 217-218). But gender neutrality denied the ideal person a renegotiation of masculinity and instead set him in alignment with standards that create men’s bodies as normative and genderless and female bodies as gendered. In order for a woman to be neutral, she must hide the obviousness of her body. By continuing to tout the ideal of gender neutrality, Franklin unwittingly undercut what he aspired to do, critically resist and act in a gendered world on a day-to-day basis.

The Media Analyst: Clark

Clark's portrait shows two men sitting in the middle of a bedroom, side-by-side on an unmade twin bed. The viewer assumes the perspective of the bedroom's 4th wall, as one would view a diorama, ceiling and wall removed to reveal the scene inside. The two men are nearly indistinguishable, both wear tight shorts and a t-shirt, have curly brown hair, and slender physiques. The only things that distinguish Clark from the man sitting next to him are facial expression and posture. Clark leans into the man next to him and his furrowed brow simultaneously conveys worry and confusion. The man next to Clark sits up straight, supporting Clark's weight. His expression is caring and thoughtful as he points to a poster hanging on the far wall.

The three walls in Clark's bedroom are covered entirely with posters of men. Some are old, tattered and frayed and tend to be pictures of men in overalls standing around trucks with Rebel flags proudly flying behind. Other posters are new and shiny, recent additions to the collection. The recent posters tend to be of movie stars. One is of a man on stage, dressed in a woman's red suit and high heels. Some posters are carefully placed while others appear to have been hastily stuck up over other posters. The men depicted in these posters vary in just about every way imaginable. Some are tall and thin, others are short and stocky. Their hair is long and short. They are nicely dressed or half naked. But they are all idealized images in their own way.

In some places the posters have started to peel away from the wall. But rather than revealing neutral wallpaper beneath, another poster, sometimes the original's duplicate, is seen underneath. The painting suggests the walls are made entirely of posters. Closer inspection, however, reveals this is not exactly the case. Some spaces

between posters contain mirrors that reflect back the two men and other posters. The mirrors are positioned like those in a Fun House so that every mirror reflects another such that the two men appear infinitely in the mirrors.

Below the painting, centered on a brass plate set into the frame, is the sentence:
"This is not a Man."

Constructing the Hegemonic Man

Clark's hegemonic man emerged as a conglomeration of three types of men: The "Redneck", the "Man's Man," and the "Poster Man." Each of these men represented aspects of masculinity Clark hadn't "lived up to" at various points in his life. While I will discuss each of these masculinities as they emerged temporally in Clark's story, their traits can be seen to overlap to create an overall picture of the kinds of social expectations Clark navigated. But what is important about Clark's construction of the hegemonic man is it reveals his multiplicity and context dependency. Clark makes obvious the hegemonic man is not, characteristically, a monolithic construction. Pfeil (1995) notes that while feminism recognizes the female subject as multi-faceted and mutable, it is less clear the same "assumption could or can be stretched to include white straight men" (p. viii). Clark shows how it stretches and that what it means to be (perform) a "straight white man" can differ by culture, class, geography, and the discourses men pick up. While these differences may very well be "variations on a theme," they also point toward a "fluidity in social life," that importantly challenges the solidity and permanence of the hegemonic man (Morgan, 2005, p. 176).

Redneck Masculinity

The Redneck stood for the kind of hegemonic masculinity Clark encountered as he was growing up in the U.S. South. A Redneck masculinity was seen to be embodied by Clark's father, brother, and most of the men in Clark's high school. The Redneck is "hypermacho," he hunts, shoots guns, works on cars, plays "Redneck Games" (like "distance spitting"), and is particularly skilled with chewing tobacco:

I don't know if you're familiar with this but when you have a can of dip you have to get it to settle so you put it in your fingers and do some weird like popping sound... it's kind of like a secret handshake in a society. It kind of lets you in the door: "I can do this so I'm part of the Redneck society."

Throughout his school Clark failed to "exude a Redneck masculinity" and was "picked on" by the Rednecks. Of his male peers in high school Clark said:

They perpetuated, all right they lived out what I had been trying to learn to live out from the rest of my life. It's like, all right, we're gonna hunt, we're gonna spit, we're gonna skip class, and we're going to make fun of the nerds. We're just going to be interested in sex with women and making lewd jokes..."

As he moved on from high school to college, Clark navigated a different kind of hegemonic masculinity, one he referred to as the "Man's Man."

Man's Man Masculinity

The Man's Man stood for the kind of masculinity Clark encountered from college to graduate school. The Man's Man was seen to be embodied by Clark's co-worker at the department store and later by his graduate school roommate. The Man's Man was defined by his success with women. He was:

...a player. And he was the one that all the women seemed to want to be with. Because he was an asshole. And by asshole, I mean he was rude to people, selfish, didn't care about anybody else. He only did his own thing.

The Man's Man does not have the "freedom to be emotional" and is not someone with whom Clark can share his feelings. Clark said he must "keep my guard up" and "shift my language" around the Man's Man.

The Redneck and the Man's Man were both masculinities Clark attributed to people in his life. He described these two masculinities as embodied by his father, brother, and male peers and co-workers. However Clark's third and most recent hegemonic man was both a materialist (embodied) and an idealist (social/mental) construction. Like the Redneck and the Man's Man, he was seen to be embodied by living men, albeit Hollywood actors and television stars, but most importantly he also stood for some "internal" pressures Clark experienced related to masculinity and heterosexuality. Clark referred to this third hegemonic man as the "Poster Man."

Poster Man Masculinity

Clark's Poster Man is a conglomeration of Hollywood and television representations of masculinity. He is built from the mass media "representations of masculinities – from rock music, beer commercials, sitcoms, action movies, and war films to news programs – which circulate on a vast scale" (Macnamara, 2006, p. 151). Clark's construction of the Poster Man can be seen as a product of his postsecondary education that focuses on critical media studies (e.g., the media and masculinity work of Macnamara, 2006). As Clark has learned to turn a critical eye toward gender, ethnicity, and sexuality messages in television and film he has come to understand media

representations of masculinity as impacting (disciplining, governing, and regulating) his sense of what it means to be a man. Clark would agree with Gauntlett (2002) who states:

Media and communications are a central element of modern life, whilst gender and sexuality remain at the core of how we think about our identities. With the media containing so many images of women and men, and messages about men, women, and sexuality today, it is highly unlikely that these ideas would have no impact on our sense of identity. (p. 1)

The Poster Man is slender and toned, a “little hirsute,” and has a “strong and powerful moustache.” He has a confident walk, with his “legs apart and shoulders leading the way.” In the 1980s he was represented by Tom Selleck in Magnum PI. More recently, he is found in various media images portrayed by Brad Pitt:

So actually I think Brad Pitt most encapsulates the various posters that I have.... So there are three movies I'm thinking, Ocean's 11, Snatch, and Troy. So in each one of those he has a different body type. In Ocean's 11 he's sharply dressed and just smart and knows what he's doing and is in control of his environment. So I have that picture like, the well dressed man, like dressed for success, cool cat. In Snatch, he's just very thin. Really skinny, actually. I think in Ocean's 11 he's slender, but in Snatch he's really skinny and like all you can see are muscles all over his body. But the ones that come from just having no body fat at all and just being really skinny. So that image. And then there's him in Troy where he has legs as big as my torso and so I think I have all of those various images in my brain.

Regardless of whether Poster Man is skinny and toned or very large, his body conveys its masculinity through “hardness” and a defined musculature.

The Poster Man is irresistible, “universally, instantly desired by women.” This sets him apart from the Man's Man in that the Poster Man doesn't need to “gawk at,” pursue, or compete with other men for women. His irresistibility has women throwing themselves at his feet. And he somehow innately knows how to please women. He never worries about his penis size or his ability to perform sexually.

The Poster Man is independent, always gets what he wants, is confident, in control, and self-assured. He is invariably “seen as successful,” where success is intertwined with the ability to “get the girl.” Describing Tom Selleck as Magnum PI, Clark encapsulates the Poster Man:

...he also is in his own world almost. Like, not caring what else is going on. He’s just doing things for himself. He knows that he can get things done. He’s trying to steal a car in this scene. And he breaks into the car. He gets away from some Doberman Pinchers, just kind of doing his own thing, not really afraid that it’s not going to work out. Because it just will for him and he’s really confident in that. And the women come out and they’re all just kind of looking at him like, “Wow, I instantly want to be with you. There’s just something about that I instantly want to be with.” And so I would say the physical discipline, perhaps, the natural charm and playfulness and confidence and then the, I guess irresistible sexual... attractiveness. Irresistibility.

The Poster Man represented society’s ideal man, but he was also the ideal man Clark said he had “in my brain.” Clark called this hegemonic man the Poster Man because he is an image Clark felt he navigated “internally.” He described a scene from the first Rocky movie to make the point:

...when the camera’s in Rocky’s apartment at one point Mickey comes over to try to tell Rocky, “You need a manager to fight Apollo Creed.” And you see this big poster of Rocky Marciano, the boxer in Rocky Balboa’s room. So that’s kind of what the ideal man is to me. It’s kind of like that poster that you put up in your room. Of like Zach Morris, or your favorite star, or like Jesse from Full House or whatever. So it’s kind of like that, but at the same time, that’s not exactly who I want to be I guess. But it’s this image that keeps reminding me of what maybe I should be. That’s how I view it. So ideal man in my brain, but not necessarily for me.

It is important Clark recognized the Poster Man is not what he would espouse as his ideal, but rather, as a hegemonic man, constitutes a set of social and normative ideals he felt expected to live up to. Navigating the Poster Man’s expectations was not a simple

matter of acceptance or rejection for Clark. Rather, the Posters were “internalized” social expectations that served a “disciplining function:”

They’re that bar people jump over in the Olympics. They’re kind of watching over me saying, so I guess a phrase that maybe even some of friends would say, or, especially my former roommate, “That was a little too gay,” or “You’re not working out enough,” or “What are you doing? I bet you could have made out with that woman,” or “Why are you crying right now? You shouldn’t be doing that.”

The Poster Man cannot merely be torn down from the walls of Clark’s mind.

Clark said:

I guess it’s kind of like thinking that it’s just these posters and so tearing them down, but really there’s mold behind the wall that’s like getting into me I guess. So that’s how I view it in my mind right now. It looks like if I stop this superficial thing or if I cut down this connection or I break a connection with a certain person then I’ll be freed and I can make my own decision. But really it’s deeper than that. *It’s in the structure of the house, not just on the walls.*

Clarks’ relationship with the Poster Man then was “oppositional and simultaneously contradictory.” He said:

Because as much as I try to set myself apart from that, there is still a longing for that. And I feel that way with these ideal men in my life. Like I’m kind of repulsed by that and I know that I want to do something different with my life, but maybe I do want big biceps... I’m at this stage where it’s like, maybe I should have a Tom Selleck stomach. Do I want to do anything about that?

Clark’s understanding of the Poster Man complicates the inside/outside binary thinking of the so-called autonomous individual. Engaging with the proscriptions of the Poster Man it is seen how the power of social messages *create* Clark as an individual. This is in direct contrast to Enlightenment conceptualizations of individuality that posit individuals (inside) stand alone to resist oppression (outside) (Mansfield, 2000). Clark’s understanding of individuality aligns with Foucault (1980) who argues individuality is an

“effect of power,” rather than an “inert material on which power comes to fasten or against which it happens to strike, and in so doing subdues or crushes individuals” (p. 98). Clark’s engagement with the Poster Man therefore points to the “impersonal power that saturates the pettiest and quietest moments of our personal lives, pressing us with what we should be – at the height of its operation, even becoming us,” as we become its vehicle (Mansfield, 2000).

Clark’s ideal man, the man Clark would like to be, emerged in the juncture between Clark’s internal/external desire/pressure to simultaneously reject and emulate the hegemonic man. (Hereafter referred to as the Poster Man to reflect Clark’s most current construction of the hegemonic man.) Clark’s ideal man is therefore best understood as a mechanism for helping Clark as he negotiated the Poster Man. Through the ideal man, Clark could begin to make sense of and manage the posters hanging in his mind.

Constructing the Ideal Man: Form versus Function

Describing Clark’s ideal man is like nailing Jell-O to a wall. He resists definition. This is because Clark’s ideal man is not as much a form, an identifiable man-type with a namable set of characteristics, as he was constructed by Clark to serve a function. To continue with Clark’s Poster Man analogy, the ideal man is not best viewed as another poster that can be placed on the wall to oppose the Poster Man’s idealized images of masculinity. Rather, he is better understood as a friend or a counselor who shares Clark’s room and assists him in his struggle with the Poster Man. The ideal man is therefore a transitional figure, not so much embodying an ideal, but pointing toward a possible ideal at the boundaries of what can be found on the posters.

Clark's graduate program included courses with "postmodern perspectives."

Indeed, Clark critiqued his program as composed of two antagonistic camps: the feminist and the postmodern. He noted the young male professors tended to adopt the poststructural position while the older female professors more often expressed radical views. In general Clark struggled against identification with either side, but took up discourses that likely emanated from a combination of the two. It is therefore unsurprising that Clark talked about gender in terms of action. Clark's discourse resonates a number of "postmodern/poststructural" (feminist) theorists who argue "there is no being beyond becoming" (Deleuze & Guattari, 1983, p. 23), "one is not born, but becomes a woman," (de Beauvoir, 1949/1972, p. 301) and "gender is... instituted through a stylized repetition of acts" (Butler, 1990, p. 140). Echoing these theorists, Clark's ideal man was constructed with *verbs* instead of nouns. The ideal man is "resistive," "critical," and "wary." He "*questions* the Poster Man," "*has* good, intellectual conversations," does not have to "*gawk* at women," and "*shares* his emotions." As an active construction, the ideal man emerged as a mechanism by which Clark could resist the Poster Man, rather than representing an explicit and oppositional masculinity he could adopt.

The following sections discuss the functions of the ideal man and how they helped Clark begin to construct and value his "own definition," as opposed to a "socially given," definition of masculinity. The functions of the ideal man included: Opposing the hegemonic man, valuing femininity, mixing gender codes, sharing emotions, and forming different relationships.

Opposing the Poster Man: The Ideal Man as "Not"

Many of Clark's descriptions of the ideal man came in the form of "nots," negations of characteristics and ways of being associated with the Poster Man. But it is important to note these "nots" were not merely reactive, unthinkingly pointing toward an alternative masculinity characterized by the opposite of the Poster Man's traits. Rather they complexly engaged the Poster Man's proscriptions, pointing toward a newly defined masculinity that could emerge from criticism. First, Clark's ideal man was defined as "non-traditional" in heterosexual relationships. Clark did not want to be a father; "tied down by children," "entirely fulfilled by having offspring," and/or committed to "leaving a legacy." But this did not mean Clark rejected women or monogamous relationships as we've seen other men do when they oppose this feature of the hegemonic man. Clark continued to value long term relationships, but didn't feel he had to "get married to prove my commitment."

Second, the ideal man points toward a masculinity that does not have to prove itself. The ideal man's criticality permitted Clark to critique the Poster Man's insistence that masculinity is demonstrated by having heterosexual relationships:

I can't understand why people were like heterosexuality is so simple, because it's so tied in with masculinity for me that like, it's so complex... But as a heterosexual man, you're assumed that you're going to date someone. You're going to get married with that person and you're going to have children. And that's what a lot of my friends have done. And that's so tied up with religion as well. So that's definitely a pressure that I feel from my mom a lot of times. And I gotta bet that my friend, when we were growing up, probably felt that too because he never dated anyone and still hasn't and it's like well... you gotta prove that you're heterosexual by showing the picture of the girlfriend and until that, people are going to wonder... and you even see this in movies sometimes. I can't think of any right offhand, but like, "Why aren't you getting married young man? Like what's wrong or is he gay?"

The ideal man critiques the Poster Man for needing to compete with other men for women to prove their masculinity. Clark's ideal man rejects a discourse that says men have to "fight" for the women they love:

[Men] need to pursue women incessantly 'cause that's what men do and what we learn is, "No doesn't mean no." No means like try something else. I mean we see that in films too, I'm thinking specifically of *Big Fish*. I don't know if you saw that film, but... where the Ewan McGregor character woos a woman who is engaged. Because it's true love. Well, not everything is true love, if anything.

And the ideal man critiques the Man's Man who bonds with other men and does not hold gawks at women to reify his masculinity. The ideal man's critique allows Clark to be "able to talk about why someone makes me happy besides, 'Damn she's got such a great ass.'"

The ideal man was constructed in an oppositional negotiation with the Poster Man, resulting in careful redefinitions of "masculine" characteristics. In this way, Clark's ideal man can be seen as an attempt to imagine masculinity otherwise. But, again, the ideal man is not a solid type, held up by Clark as an exemplar of an otherwise masculinity. He is a functional figure who permitted Clark to criticize and resist the Poster Man. Most often the ideal man pointed to how the Poster Man enforced the masculine/feminine binary. The ideal man resisted this binary by challenging the construction of masculinity as entailing the exclusion of femininity. The ideal man did so, in part, by deliberately challenging gender boundaries, valuing "feminine" characteristics over their presumed "masculine" counterparts.

The Ideal Man Values the Feminine

Employing a masculine/feminine binary, it is seen Clark's ideal man valued some characteristics (stereo)typically associated with femininity. These included being emotional, having deep and intimate relationships, being a good communicator, being intuitive, and being collaborative. In graduate school Clark described his academic conferences as being gendered in that panel proposals, which tend to be more collaborative, are not esteemed as highly as "competitive" paper proposals. He said:

... you can submit a competitive paper or you can submit a panel. And one thing I've decided recently is I want to submit panels. Because I feel like that's the more quality research, I guess. Like not more quality, but I feel like it's, I mean it's a panel. It's people working together on one issue rather than who can come up with the best paper in this one category. And while, once again I don't want to disparage that scholarship because I think it brings good things up, for myself personally right now, it just, those ties between competition and men.... like I just saw a lot of women oriented, women only panels at conferences that made me think, this is really what I want to be doing... like panels instead of who's the best.

The ideal man's criticality of the connection between masculinity and competition opened the door for Clark to intentionally choose to value collaboration. The ideal man's resistance of the Poster Man allowed Clark to privilege "feminine" over "masculine" characteristics or behaviors.

The Ideal Man's Gendered Body: Mixing Gender Codes

Clark's ideal man values "mixing gender codes" as a way to challenge the Poster Man's norms. He does so by viewing the male body as a site of gender performance and contestation. This understanding of the male body would agree with Bordo (1999) who identifies the link between bodies and culture: "...when we look at bodies (including our

own in the mirror), we don't just see biological nature at work, but values and ideals, differences and similarities that culture has 'written,' so to speak, on those bodies" (p.

26). The ideal man's construction therefore allows Clark to use his body to challenge the Poster Man's ideals. For example, Clark enjoyed wearing clothing that is more typically seen on women. He said:

Where when I go to the gym I wear like speedo shorts and a shirt and shoes. And so like, even though I'm doing like masculine weight training, I still have kind of this feminine dress kind of mixing those codes I guess. Because like the women you see at the gym usually, short-shorts and like whatever... and so I'm like, oh I can wear that too.

In graduate school, Clark intentionally adopted a more "feminine persona" when he taught. His strategic performance of a feminized masculinity served two purposes. First, he believed it made his class a more open and less threatening space for sexual minorities. If read as gay, bisexual, ambiguous, or even simply as not enforcing a traditional masculinity, he creates a classroom environment that is open to non-hegemonic gender and sexuality performances. In Butler's (2004) terms, Clark's feminine performance intentionally fosters ambiguity around gender and sexuality and increases the number of people whose "lives count as lives" in the classroom (p. 17). Second, it undermines the potential for his interest in female students to be read as an oppressive sexual attraction (i.e., a form of harassment). He said:

I tend to move with my hips a little more in classroom, which is really funny. So I literally change the way that I walk. I mention certain examples in class that might lead people to believe that I'm thinking about certain issues, which I am, but wonder why do I bring up those issues up in class? Rather than other issues or other topics... So one [reason I do that] is to not be a threat in the classroom. Like I don't want people to think that I'm just there like attracted to them...

The Ideal Man Shares Emotions

Clark's ideal man values a man who has "fully developed his emotional self," "shares his emotions" with others, and has the "freedom to be emotional." The ideal man's critique of the Poster Man would align with Kilmartin (2007) who discusses the emotional price men pay when they attempt to live up to hegemonic ideals:

To strip a man of his emotional life is to take away one of the most basic aspects of human existence. The experience of positive emotion would seem to be profoundly important. When a man is made into a machine, he loses his humanity and is rendered less capable of having empathic, caring, intimate relationships with other people. (p. 12).

When asked what being emotional meant to him Clark said:

It means being able to talk about anxieties. To talk about the fact that I can't figure out something in my life. To be able to discuss that I'm scared with someone or in a situation. To be able to talk about why someone really makes me happy besides, "Damn, she's got such a great ass." To say like, "Wow, we're talking about all these great things or we're really struggling with this issue." So I guess emotional intimacy for me has a lot to do with can I share the wounds with you? Or do I have to put, just put on a long sleeve shirt?

The ideal man values caring and avoids "superficiality." Emotional intimacy was important to Clark because:

...A) I just feel that that's important for my life. I just feel, I guess a concern for people. I guess I've seen too many people with sad faces to not care about people. And, B) My own sad faces. Like I want someone there for me as well. So I think that's what's so important for me.

Men who have developed their emotional selves are better able to have "real," rather than superficial relationships. The ideal man applauds these men because they are able to have "deep" and "intellectual" conversations with male and female friends and their romantic relationships are less conscripted by traditional gender roles.

The Ideal Man's Friendships

Because he values emotions, the ideal man allows Clark to seek out male friends with whom he can be “vulnerable” and, most notably, with whom he does not feel he has to prove his masculinity (put on the “Rambo suit”). These friendships challenge the consensus about “gender and friendship in the US: Women have deep, intimate, meaningful, and lasting friendships, while men have a number of shallow, superficial, and unsatisfying ‘acquaintances’” (Messner, 2001, p. 253). His closest male friends, therefore, are men who are similarly critical of hegemonic Poster Man masculinity and seek more meaningful relationships with their friends. Of his close male friends Clark said:

We can have good intellectual conversations we can share things with each other, we don't have to, I guess the thing that makes all these people different is I never gawk at women when I'm with these people and I never feel the need to do that. So that's really nice and safe.

Clark and his friends were united, for example, by their critique of men whose relationships are superficial. Clark was wary of how these superficial male “friendships” form in his graduate program:

I find that the male professors in our department seem to have, seem to like latch onto the male students quicker and form like, I don't want to say friendships, but, like part of that group, that male group that's in the department.... I'm always a little wary about groups of men. I mean it's part of that image, that we were talking about in the last meeting. I don't want to have to put on that like Rambo suit or whatever to just be able to hang out.... So I don't want that for my life with men and I'm always wary about that sort of macho play that goes along with that.

Clark contrasted his male friendships to those allowed by the Poster Man.

Whereas the Poster Man is in competition with other men, where their bonding serves to

simultaneously differentiate them from women and establish their masculinity, the ideal man values more “authentic” relationships where men are under less pressure to prove their masculinity. Clark illustrated the point further by discussing an exchange he had with male peers in his graduate program:

On an 18 hour drive to California you end up talking about a lot of things. And the four of us had a conversation about porn at one point and I think that’s almost like a right of passage for a lot of men, a lot of young men. When did you get your first Playboy? Or when did you first see a porn video or who’s your favorite porn star?... And I, I don’t know. Like I can’t enter this conversation. I guess I don’t really want to. But in some sense it’s like... be sure to research this. Like kind of mental note... find out who you think your favorite porn star is. So you can pass the man test next time.

And later he said:

So, yeah, I do feel that tension of, yes, by just being a man you’re part of our group [men in the department], but you have to be this type of man to stay in our group. And I just never, I don’t have any close relationships to the men in our department.

In critiquing the Poster Man’s friendships, the ideal man creates a space for Clark to cultivate emotionally close relationships with other men in which he does not have to objectify women in order to prove his masculinity. Through an engagement with feminism, Clark has come to be critical of a culture that objectifies women. He is aware of “the ways that sexual talk among men about women might contribute to certain kinds of attitudes toward and relationships with women” (Messner, 2001, p. 255). In graduate school, Clark described this resistance of objectification as opening up new ways to interact with his female students:

I have to say, it’s only as I begin to break out of that view that women are only sex objects. Like only as I begin to break out of that for myself have I been able to have potentially less awkward relationship with my female students.

Through the ideal man's critique, Clark becomes freer to have non-sexual relationships with women.

The ideal man criticizes the Poster Man for being incapable of having "deep" and "intimate" friendships with women. The ideal man points toward a masculinity that does not have to "consummate sexual attraction" to prove itself a man. Clark said:

I'm attracted to women. But I want to make sure that I'm not taking that as the only aspect of our relationships. So I can only look at you sexually. Or I can only ever want to make out with you. Instead of the reality that, you know, I would like to kiss you. I think that would be nice. But that's not all I want out of this relationship. That's not even the sole thing I want out of this relationship.

Clark acknowledged developing and maintaining friendships with women is not something at which he had been successful. Kilmartin (2007) notes the "cultural prescription for the sexual objectification of women makes it very difficult for some men to relate to women as friends or coworkers" (p. 208). In middle school, for example, Clark tried to date a lot of women, confusing his desire to befriend women with the expectation that he should want to date them:

...I quickly learned that I'm not supposed to be friends with girls. They're just there for something else. We didn't talk about sex necessarily when I was in middle school, or as far as girls are there to have sex with. But that was at least the message that I was getting, however implicitly or without the words to describe it at that point. So I found myself trying to go out with women, like giving them the letters, do you like me? Do you want to go out? In my head I distinctly remember thinking I don't even know what to do if we go out. What would I do?... But I knew that's what other people were doing.... I guess in some way I overcompensated and asked a lot of people out. And always got the "No." And, you know it kind of made me sad. But I can see at the same time, I think I was making situations very awkward because I thought, "Well, I'm attracted to you, there's something about you that interests me, I should go out with you." Not, we should be friends.

More recently, Clark had developed closer relationships with some of his women friends. While he sometimes “still wants to kiss” some of them, he described his friendships as not solely based on that desire. In this way Clark joins the ideal man in constructing an understanding of friendships with women that, importantly, does not turn a blind eye to Clark’s heterosexual desires. Clark maintained he wanted to be sure “my desires are my own,” rather than those found in living up to the Poster Man ideal that would have him proving his masculinity by being “universally desirable” to women. When Clark did act on his desires, it was because he had found a partner of whom the ideal man approves, one who similarly values sharing emotions and did not hold Clark to the Poster Man’s expectations.

The Ideal Man’s Romantic Relationships

The ideal man values heterosexual relationships as reciprocal partnerships that permit both people to “just be who you want to be.” The ideal man espouses a sex life invested with a similar freedom. The ideal man criticizes the Poster Man’s masculinity for limiting men’s sexual expression to their penises. Indeed, Kilmartin (2007) points out that the “masculine ‘genitalization’ of sex may dissuade males from developing a sensuality – an appreciation of pleasurable sensations in other parts of the body” (p. 204). Plummer (2005) discusses the physical and symbolic problems of reducing men’s sexualities to their organs:

...there are worries of size when it is flaccid, worries of it not getting erect quickly enough, worries of it being too erect too often, worries of it not staying erect long enough, and severe worries of it not getting erect at all. Then there are problems of ejaculation – of coming too soon, too late, or not at all. Often, all of this is significant because men let it – or make it – define their masculinity. (p. 180)

Clark's ideal man, on the other hand, seeks not to limit sexual expression, nor manhood, to the penis. Clark drew on his relationship as an example:

... with my current partner, I don't have to be a sexual man. And by sexual man I mean like John Holmes or, porn star man. Like I don't have to be that person. I don't have that pressure on my life. Whereas with other partners, well really there was one partner where sex was like being in a porn with this person. And as much as I enjoy that sometimes, when that's all that we have, like you're really limiting what I could be as a man. Like you're not letting me centralize my entire body. So yes, I love my penis. I mean this is true. If you ask me, that obviously is the first thing I say about being a man that I like. But I also have other sensitive body areas or areas on my body that maybe we can explore instead of just limiting me to this space so...

By decentralizing his penis, Clark is simultaneously freer in terms of constructing what it means to be a man and in his ability to enjoy a more satisfying sex life.

Another interesting construction emerges from the ideal man's resistance of the Poster Man's romantic relationships: an important portrait of the ideal woman. Unlike other constructions of women, Clark's ideal woman was not constructed as the opposite of the ideal man. Rather, she is ideal because she is *similar* to the ideal man. But it is important this similarity does not require her gender be ignored (as in a humanist construction). She remains a woman, but one who, like the ideal man, resists the proscriptions of (her) gender. She similarly mixes gender codes and carefully adopts and reframes masculine characteristics.

The Ideal Man and Freedom (to)

All this means the ideal man can be viewed as more "free" than the Poster Man. To return to Clark's metaphor, the ideal man is not pinned to the wall, but free to roam about the room with Clark examining each of the hegemonic Poster Men. But it is

important to note this freedom is not a “freedom from” the Poster Man. Clark has already pointed out the Poster Man is as much a part of himself as it is an external pressure. Rather, the ideal man signifies a freedom to criticize, resist, imagine, and think differently. Foucault is helpful to further understand this freedom to. Navigating a space between overly simplistic humanistic representations of an autonomous self and social determinism, Foucault (1988a) argues that people, “are much freer than they feel, that people accept as truth, as evidence, some themes which have built up at a certain moment during history, and this so-called evidence can be criticized and destroyed” (p. 10). Pringle (2002) argues Foucault’s “notion of the constructed self clearly allows for a type of agency; although individuals are constituted by discourse, they are still capable of critically reflecting on how certain discourses have developed” (p. 63). This is Clark’s project.

While the Poster Man is emblematic of the social power associated with living up to society’s expectations, men who attempt to perform his scripts are more constrained by the constant demands of his expectations. The Poster Man must always prove his masculinity, most notably by rejecting femininity. In contrast, the ideal man creates the space for Clark to “mix gender codes.” For example, Clark does not assume men don’t have emotions, just that they must perform a masculinity that denies their emotionality. This dynamic is best illustrated when men discuss their relationships with women. In these conversations, Clark felt men must characterize themselves as physical/sexual, rather than emotional/intimate, beings:

And it [conversation between men] starts off sometimes innocent like, “So, how are things going with you two?” “Oh, they’re good.” “Sex going good?” “Yeah, thank you...” I think men ask each other that because we don’t yet have a language to talk about other aspects of relationships. So it’s like we don’t want

to seem like our relationships are emotional. And I think it lets us distance ourselves from that part of ourselves a little more. And continue that stereotype that men are just physical beings. Like Neanderthal kind of thing.

In contrast, the ideal man argues men should create a language for talking about their emotions. But, despite this freedom, that language is limited to Clark's conversations with women, gay men, and men who similarly resist a hegemonic form of masculinity.

The Ideal Man and the Poster Man

Even while he compared himself to the Poster Man, Clark acknowledged "the Poster Man is bad for me." In this way Clark's ideal man is understood as an attempt to construct a position from which an alternative masculinity that opposes the (oppressive) disciplinary function of the Poster Man can be imagined. The ideal man creates a space for Clark to imagine a different kind of masculinity without ignoring the allure of the Poster Man. As noted previously, Clark viewed the Poster Man's ideals as necessary complications in his make-up. Rather than deny the Poster Man, Clark employed three strategies to help him deal with the Poster Man's expectations: a) Seeking refuge, b) Fitting in, and c) Valuing the other side.

Seeking Refuge

Clark sought refuge from the Poster Man by associating and identifying with men who espouse masculinities that align with the ideal man's resistance. Four of Clark's friends were described as having similar characteristics to the kind of man Clark wants to be:

One is my best friend and maybe it's no accident that he is gay. So he has all those... I don't want to say gay men... I'll just say with him, it seems like he has the freedom to be emotional. And, people say, well, it's because you're gay. I mean and gay people are more like women or whatever... or gay men are more like women. Whatever the reason. He has that freedom to be more emotional. So we connect on that level and that's really nice.... And then, there's a guy on campus who, actually two guys on campus who I became friends with recently, and they seem to kind of be living their life. One is a little more, I don't want to say more self-aware, but more into like questioning masculinity and challenging himself and these issues, so that's nice. And another just seems to just be living his life, like... whatever, I don't think he's dating anyone, but he's just, he's just happy. He does what he wants. And I would say that people might probably guess that he's gay. So maybe I'm attracted to those kinds of men because they seem to be able to share that emotional component... And then one of my other friends from back home. He just, again, doesn't date anyone, just does what he wants, rides his bike, and seems to be doing well.

The men who best align with the ideal man are either gay or tend to be “read as homosexual” because they acknowledge and share their emotions. Clark's ideal man is critical of heterosexuality and he has few heterosexual role models who espouse an “alternative” masculinity that values emotional expression. It is significant, but not surprising, Clark's Poster Man is constructed entirely from recognizable media images, but his ideal man is resonated only in his gay or “effeminate” friends. It is possible Clark's ideal man privileges function over form because he lacks socially positive representations of non-hegemonic masculinity that would identify him as “man.” Certainly, the ideal masculinity to which the ideal man points is yet-to-be-named and identified as a veritable form of masculinity.

Fitting In

Clark navigated the proscriptions of the Poster Man by, at times, attempting to “fit in.” Employing these strategies largely involved temporarily silencing or setting aside the ideal man. One strategy Clark learned early on was to “develop a quick wit.” Clark said:

I would say with the guys I didn’t fit in either.... And part of it was because I didn’t know the things that they knew. And so I was always kind of afraid I was going to get made fun of. I developed a quick wit very early on as sort of a defense mechanism. Maybe I had it anyway, I don’t know. Like I think I’m just a humorous person, but it’s kind of hard to distinguish survival tactics from intrinsic qualities.... So I was definitely known for quick comebacks. And to shut people down.

Clark’s quick wit at times helped him “fit in” with and “stand up” to his male peers. A more recently developed strategy is what Clark referred to as “language shifting.” Clark had learned to change the way he talked in order to blend in with the more “Man’s Man” kind of men. Clark admired what he called his “cultural competence:”

When I’m around men like my former roommate and his friends, I sort of shift to their language to fit in. Or we’re just going to argue the whole time....I do appreciate that sort of cultural competence that I have in myself. But I also like to be able to let people know that those resources are available to them, those emotional resources of mine.

However, despite his best attempts to fit in, Clark was still sometimes not “read” as man. For the time being, Clark was willing to perform this sort of gender “code switching” in order to “avoid arguments,” but he was well aware of the costs. He said, “When I get around certain people I do have to cut off certain parts of myself I guess, like emotional parts.” In order to be a whole person with other males, Clark said he was learning to be “assertive.” The ideal man was mobilized to help Clark understand what this power as

assertiveness might look like. The ideal man is critical of the Poster Man who “always gets what he wants” and points Clark toward a redefinition of assertiveness, resonated in Gilligan’s (1982) work on women’s moral development, that includes a care for himself and others. Clark said:

I guess we typically think of the ideal man [Poster Man] as always getting what he wants. That’s never really been my game and I’ve only done that really to just survive. Like to just get along I guess. Because I had to do that or people would manipulate me or take me over. I want to continue to find that balance of empathy for other people while making sure that my needs are met. First actually... Trying to find a balance between what I internally feel and some of the things that may, I guess inadvertently coincide with the posters in my head. Like being assertive... but realize that’s a choice that I’m making and not a choice I feel others are making for me.

Thinking Differently

The previous two strategies, seeking refuge and fitting in, for different reasons, failed to adequately equip Clark with the resources to openly resist the Poster Man. Taken together they can be seen as a masculinity survival guide, a way for men who are not accorded the status of their gender to get by and/or to pass as men. Butler’s (2004) recent text, *Undoing Gender*, is an effort to “relate the problematics of gender and sexuality to the tasks of persistence and survival” (p. 4). She argues that to be recognized as a (gendered) subject is to find oneself disciplined within a binary system that “confers intelligibility” (p. 73). Clark’s struggle with the Poster Man can therefore be understood as a struggle for and against a desire to be recognized as man. In criticizing the Poster Man, Clark is presented with the “problem” of unintelligibility. The ideal man can therefore be seen as Clark’s attempt to construct a masculinity that explicitly values this unintelligibility. The ideal man emerges as a transitional figure whose actions (criticality, resistance, valuing of the “Other,”) propel Clark toward unintelligibility.

When Clark mixes gender codes, he “renders himself unintelligible to those who seek to know and capture his identity” (Butler, 2004, p. 73). Clark said:

... sometimes wearing tight pants and having a beard because that really, I feel like I really throw people for a loop there. Because it's like, what are you? What the hell? Like I don't even know what to do. Here's like gay mountain man? I'm not sure, should I make him pancakes or like a crepe? So yeah it's just kind of funny.

It is this movement toward unintelligibility that marks the ideal man's resistance of the Poster Man as critical. His unintelligibility is seen as desubjectification that ensures, “my attractions are my own and they're not the attractions that these posters are telling me I should have.” While Clark employed a discourse of autonomy (“I want to create my own definition...”), he simultaneously understands the Poster Man is a social force that is both internal and external to himself. His struggle to create his “own definition” is therefore a problematic statement. In some ways Clark addressed this problem by fragmenting himself into parts. He talked about his “emotional part” as being closer to his “true self” and other parts as being more akin to social productions. Here we see how humanist discourses run the risk of reifying binary thinking. Clark's slippage into a discourse that espouses a true self pitted against a “fake” self would have him ignoring the complications and leakages that occur when the “true self” meets the “real self.” Yet Clark did not fully tout a humanist discourse of self-actualization. Rather, he recognized the value of not rejecting “parts of himself” and, with the freedom to think differently, adopted a new definition of self-actualization that included negotiating “those complexities in myself while still allowing them to exist.”

Clark's ideal man emerged in Clark's struggle to simultaneously resist and live up to the expectations of the hegemonic Poster Man. As Clark noted, rejecting social norms

is complicated because they, in part, govern the ways he could understand himself. He knows he cannot claim independence from those norms because they are what he simultaneously defines himself with and against. Clark's ideal person and the Poster Man are both part of his masculine ontological project that is carried out by engaging the complexities that emerge when the ideal and Poster Men meet. I now turn to examine the relationship between the ideal man and the Poster Man's "Others;" gay men and women.

"Others"

The Ideal and the Gay Man

The ideal man admires much in the gay man. The gay man has the ability to express his emotions and have deep relationships with men. Clark described the gay man as being "more feminine" than most men, but simultaneously finds this statement troublesome. In talking about his gay friend, Clark said:

One is my best friend and maybe it's no accident that he is gay. So he has all those... I don't know, it just seems like... at least with him. I don't want to say gay men... I'll just say with him, it seems like he has the freedom to be emotional. And, you know, that's... people say, well, it's because you're gay. I mean and gay people are more like women or whatever... or gay men are more like women. Whatever the reason. He has that freedom to be more emotional.

The ideal man is critical of the connections between masculinity and heterosexuality that result in the gay man being "read" as feminine. And Clark continued to ask of being called "feminine," "What does that even mean?" Clearly it is not that Clark was unaware of the characteristics and behaviors that can result in men being perceived as "effeminate." Rather, Clark's question simultaneously challenges the gender binary that

imbues men with certain characteristics and denies them others and asks why we should devalue seemingly transgressive forms of masculinity.

Clark and the gay man are best friends because the gay man is a masculinity that could emerge from engaging the ideal man's critiques. But Clark cannot fully identify with the gay man because Clark "is" heterosexual. As a heterosexual man who "acts gay," Clark becomes socially unintelligible, lost within Butler's (1990) heterosexual matrix. He is pressured to live up to the Poster Man's ideals, even as he casts a wistful eye at the gay man. And here it is understand why Clark would envy the gay man.

The gay man may be devalued, but he is also intelligible. His recognition within:

...a restrictive discourse on gender that insists on the binary of man and woman as the exclusive ways to understand the gender field performs a regulatory operation of power that naturalizes the hegemonic instances and forecloses the thinkability of its disruption. (Butler, 2004, p. 43).

Thus the gay man's intelligibility that subjectifies him as "feminine" also allows him a paradoxical "freedom to be emotional." His embodiment of a recognizable form of masculinity, albeit a marginalized and devalued form per Connell (1995), gives him permission to express his emotions. In this way naming himself as a gay man permits Clark's friend to act stereotypically feminine, because that is what would be expected of him. Clark's "feminine" behavior, allowed by the ideal man's critique, confuses the heterosexual matrix. His wearing of tight clothing, privileging of emotions, and "gay performance" are not easily explained away by his sexual orientation. Within the heterosexual matrix, men are not permitted the freedom to be emotional, and Clark is therefore not recognized as performing a veritable masculinity. He emerges in the spaces between the heterosexual matrix, not-quite heterosexual man, not-quite gay man.

Paradoxically, this unintelligibility permits a kind of freedom unavailable to the gay and the Poster Man. The ideal man permits Clark the freedom to mix and match and perform an array of femininities and masculinities. But this is more than what Connell (1995) might refer to as multiple masculinities. Clark is *playing* with gender, doing what queer theorists refer to as a “queering” gender (e.g., Umphrey, 2003, p. 4) and challenging gender and sexual identities, complicating “the neat delimitation of any such constituency” (Mansfield, 2000, p. 115). This queering is what Clark referred to as having the ability to “mix gender codes.” Clark could strategically perform the hegemonic ideal, just as he could perform the gay man in his classroom. Using his body as a site of gender contestation, Clark enjoyed the freedom to play with gender scripts.

Despite Clark’s envy of the gay man, the ideal man provides a subjective space in which Clark can embrace this freedom. Through the ideal man’s construction, Clark had come to value the ability to define for himself, and carefully carve out, the man he wants to be. He did so working with and against the expectations of the Poster Man. Yet it is not just the Poster Man’s expectations the ideal man must navigate. Clark’s heterosexuality makes him reliant on the expectations of women. With their approval of the ideal man’s values, Clark feels freer. Fearful of their sanctioning, Clark silences or sets aside the ideal man’s criticality.

The Ideal Man and Women

Before I talk about the ideal man and women, it is important to note the ideal man does not point toward a masculinity that characteristically opposes women as “Others.” The ideal man values characteristics associated with femininity and, similar to the gay

man, helps explain why Clark might be envious of women who also have the “freedom to be emotional.” Looking back on his childhood, Clark remembered wanting to be like the girls in his classroom. He described this feeling as a form of attraction, but not one of sexual attraction of “opposites.” His attraction is best understood as one of similitude, the mutual attraction of familiars. Clark liked the clothes the girls got to wear and “wanted what they had.” It is not that Clark wanted to “be” a woman, he desired the freedom to, as a man, do some of the things women were permitted.

Later, Clark’s heterosexuality made women prominent figures in how he performed his masculinity. Clark recognized a pattern in his struggle against the Poster Man, a pattern in which his sexual desire for women played an important role. Clark said:

I think what triggers my move back from going toward my ideal self, from being what I want to be from realizing those parts of myself that are important and utilizing those parts of myself, the trigger I think is usually insecurity. And relationships, intimate relationships... I definitely feel very wounded based on patterns in relationships.... So then I instantly start thinking. “Dude, you need to start working out. Like you need to get ready to be single again.” Because this may be over and you want to be in shape and ready for some lovin’ or ready to get back out there and date people. So I think that’s the trigger.

Clark’s ability to perform an alternative masculinity depended, in part, on feeling “secure” in a romantic relationship with women. When single, Clark felt he must act “more masculine” in order to attract women. Clark said:

...because I still think that, even though I feel a lot more comfortable with it [being the ideal man], there are definitely times where I kind of wish I was more heterosexual acting. Or looking. One of the things in my life that I’ve always wanted was for a woman, like for me to know that a woman is attracted to me. Which, a) I’m kind of clueless sometimes as to what’s going on, so that’s definitely affected that, but b) it’s like I see the way women talk about or act toward men who are distinctly heterosexual, especially more body sculpted men. And it’s like, damn, I really wish I could do that. Like I don’t even want to date

this person, I don't even necessarily want to make out with this person. I just want that attention that heterosexual men get from heterosexual women in that way. So in that way I think it's still kind of an issue for me. It's not as much of a situation now since I'm in a relationship, but I definitely notice when I'm not in relationships. I think that's when, like there was a brief time when I was between relationships here in Colorado and I could definitely notice myself becoming more heterosexual, like kind of throwing off those things that I would wear in a comfortable relationship and putting on more of my masculine heterosexual persona.

While Clark questioned whether he really wanted a woman he had to "fight for," the point remains that Clark's heterosexuality entails a certain reliance on recognition and approval of women. Clark is most free to express and explore the "transgressive parts" of himself when he is in a relationship with a woman who similarly values gender transgression. Clark's current partner was one of these women. Clark said:

So my current partner, it's really great because she had definitely gotten the comment, "Are you a lesbian?" before because she doesn't come off as a heterosexual woman. Even heterosexual women a lot that you see on college campuses, especially are definitely performing that sexuality thing as well. Like just the way they dress, the way that they walk as well. And so my partner has a very, she has a very stereotypically masculine walk, masculine way of communicating, she wears baggy clothes and definitely nothing like tight fitting and so it's like, okay, she kind of mixes those codes of heterosexuality and homosexuality. And then I come along and so I feel like I can play with those a lot more when I'm around her. So it's a very comfortable space for experimentation...

Clark's heterosexuality, defined as a desire to attract women, played an important role in his ability to maintain the ideal man's critique and resistance. When he was single, or feared being single, Clark reverted back to a recognizable gender performance more akin to that of the Poster Man. This reversion is based on the discourses of heterosexuality that function to divide and discipline gender. Clark makes clear the important role heterosexuality plays in reinforcing the binary gender system and vice versa (Butler,

1990; Wittig, 1980). Were it not for heterosexuality, we would all be queer. But when Clark finds a female partner who aligns with his ideal man, similarly valuing transgression (and queer performance), he is freer to seek out his ideals, to “express the parts of himself” he most values.

For Clark, the ideal man functions as an explicit critique of the hegemonic Poster Man. Clark realized the Poster Man was “bad” for him and he sought out relationships that allowed him more freedom to construct and pursue transgressive ideals. I now turn to an explicit discussion of the ideal man as a resistive construction.

Complicity, Marginalization, and Subordination: The Ideal Man as a Resistive Subject

Clark is the first participant to introduce an ideal man who is ideal because of his resistance. Clark is clear about his desire to resist the Poster Man. He does so for personal (“the Poster Man is bad for me”) and, as I now consider, for implicit political reasons.

Clark’s media studies program values critical and postmodern perspectives on gender. Clark said:

And, I think these men, and by men I do want to constantly to refer to the students, myself included. I think we have the tendency, like if someone said, “Well, you’re not a feminist,” in our field, that’s kind of detrimental, I guess. “What? No. We’re fair. We like everything. We’ve thought about all these issues so we’re both feminists and not racist or sexist or whatever, classist, heterosexist,” any of those things.

And, during the interviews, Clark’s academic work involved examining how the media portrays violence against women. While it was clear Clark’s ideal man adopted critical, transgressive, and resistive perspectives on gender, it is interesting he never explicitly named the (an) ideal man as a (pro)feminist. Similar to his relationship with the gay man,

the ideal man would certainly align with and point toward a postmodern (pro)feminist masculinity, but Clark never identified him as such. Clark's ideal man functioned largely to negotiate Clark's personal struggle with the Poster Man.

But the ideal man was certainly a politically charged form of masculinity. He was Clark's attempt to value a form of masculinity that is, in Connell's (1995) terms, marginalized. Through the ideal man, Clark adopted a standpoint that allowed him a broader (but not wholly external) view of the hegemonic man. From this perspective, Clark criticized his male graduate student peers who weren't consistent with their feminist beliefs:

I feel like sometimes as people in grad school, people who have done readings and research we think, "Oh, I understand what I'm doing so that makes it not as bad." "I understand this is patriarchal so that's no big deal. People who do it without understanding it, that's the people who shouldn't be doing it." So I feel like we get that tension when I go out with these people [male graduate students]. Like... "Oh, I just made a sexist comment..." and it doesn't have to be exclusively sexist, it can be racist or whatever. "I've just made this comment and that's funny because I know I shouldn't make that comment." I don't, I personally don't feel comfortable with that.

Clark's ideal man largely emerged from Clark's self-described life-long struggle with the proscriptions of masculinity. This is opposed to other participants who described their awareness of gender as occurring, for example, in college upon taking their first women's studies class. Clark continuously struggled with being a man because he had strong memories of being on boundaries of gender, certainly never occupying the center stage. The Poster Man is a social force with which Clark must contend and in doing so he employed the ideal man as a resistive form. Graduate school had given Clark the language to understand his self as in process and resistant, but he brought to that an already developed strong processing that came from living a life on the boundaries of

gender. Clark now understands it is harmful for him to continually strive (and fail) to fully live up to the Poster Man's ideals. Yet the desire for social recognition, especially that of women, remained alluring.

Additionally, the ideal man's functionality renders him a fragile construction. As should be clear by now, the ideal man is not so much a solid alternative masculinity, but better understood as a means by which Clark could resist the Poster Man. But, Clark's rationale for constructing the ideal man is based almost solely on his (in)ability to meet the Poster Man's expectations. While he certainly is a resistive construction, the ideal man is not explicitly described by Clark as a transgressive masculinity. In other words, the ideal man is not imbued with characteristics that identify him as a resistive subject (except that he values resistance). Because the ideal man points toward unintelligibility, he does not represent an explicitly resistive masculinity (i.e., as would be seen in the construction of a profeminist masculinity) that Clark could adopt to oppose the Poster Man. While Clark's ontological project can be seen to as an attempt to (eventually) construct and value a non-hegemonic masculinity, the ideal man does not serve this purpose. When I asked Clark how he would change society's definition of masculinity, Clark said:

I would change it only by suggesting that it not be a definition. So, because definition I think of dictionary. And what I'd like to rather think of it as is belonging in a thesaurus. I would say thesaurize it.

"Thesaurizing" masculinity challenges Connell's (1995) work on multiple masculinities. Butler (2004) points out the problematics of touting a "multiplication of genders. Such an approach invariably provokes the question: how many genders can there be, and what will they be called?" (p. 43). Drawing on the thesaurus as a metaphor,

Clark simultaneously said he would like there to be more recognizable forms of masculinity and pointed to an important process component. Masculinity will never be fully “thesaurisized,” but is always in the process of becoming more than it currently is. The ideal man can be seen as a construction that facilitates the process of thesaurisizing, rather than one of many multiple forms.

If we view resistance in the way Connell’s (1995) framework would imply, that resistance happens when one constructs and values an alternative (recognizable) masculinity, we would have to conclude Clark’s ideal man is non-resistive because he fails to (subjectify) identify and value himself. But seen through the lens of Hoy’s (2005) critical resistance, we come to understand Clark’s ideal man as both personally and politically resistive in his refusal to be subjectified.

Critical Resistance as Desubjectification

Clark’s ideal man is resistive of the hegemonic Poster Man. But Clark’s ontological project is more complicated and incomplete, best seen as a form of critical resistance born out of his struggle to be recognized as a man and to deny that recognition. Clark’s ideal man allows him to maintain a critical distance from his desire to be recognized as a man and a heterosexual. Clark was, for example, wary of participating in all male groups whose commonality is only that they (supposedly) share the same gender. He was skeptical of his graduate student peers who claim to be feminists, but feel it is acceptable to make sexist comments. He worries about getting too much credit as a man for engaging feminist issues. Clark’s ideal man allows him to maintain a critical distance when he intentionally and strategically mixed gender codes. Most importantly, Clark’s

critical perspective on his desire to be recognized as a man is seen in his continual struggle with the Poster Man.

Clark acknowledged there are times when he aspires to the Poster Man's ideals. Most notably this occurred when he was single and seeking to attract women. Rather than deny, acquiesce to, or justify these desires, however, Clark was "self-aware." But this self-awareness is not so much a fall back to an autonomous and latent self as it marks a capacity for self-criticality. The ideal man emerges as Clark attempted to resist his desire for subjectification; to be recognized as a heterosexual man. Earlier I noted the ideal man is rendered uncritical because he espouses an unrecognizable and therefore veritable form of masculinity. Clark failed to name the masculinity to which the ideal man points and this, if we accept that form is necessary to contradict form, would decrease Clark's capacity for overt social resistance. However, the notion of critical resistance allows us to see Clark's ideal man as a *more* resistive "subject." The ideal man is a tentative construction and functions less as a solid type than as an invitation to imagine otherwise. Imbuing the ideal man with namable and solid characteristics would create him as a form "to be desired." As is, the ideal man is not an identity replacement for the Poster Man, but is an ideal to which Clark can aspire without retreating to a desire to be (recognized). The ideal man's criticality is found in his unintelligibility, which allows Clark to function at the limits of discourse and to begin to think differently.

The Social Scientist: Jake

Jake's portrait is composed entirely of a man with excellent posture sitting at an inexpensive wooden desk and staring numbly at a computer screen. The outer portions of the painting are dark, revealing only vague shapes suggestive of the edge of a bed, a dresser, and what could either be a closet or the room's door. Jake's back is to the viewer, although his profile can be made out as he has to turn slightly to see the monitor on the corner of his desk. A dark ring can be discerned underneath Jake's visible eye. Jake's long hair hangs from a ponytail underneath a backwards turned red baseball cap with an embroidered rainbow. On the bookshelf above Jake's desk are several textbooks whose titles are sporadically legible. One reads, "Statistical Analysis for the Social Sciences." Another says, "Studying Gender: Theory and Method." And a third, to the right of Jake's head, is titled "Men in Feminism."

Also on the bookshelf are photos of Jake's family. His mom and brother, arms around each other, smile at him in a picture taken at what appears to be a small museum. In another frame, Jake and his dad grin at the camera from atop a mountain; their arms too wrapped warmly around one another. Further back, but centered, is an older photograph of Jake's grandmother holding a baby who, even as an infant, has hair similar to Jake's.

Looking down, Jake's desk is cluttered, but not chaotic. Half drunken bottles of water, yellow sticky notes, photocopied articles, course syllabi, pens and pencils, two coffee mugs, and stacks of journals are among the items that litter his desk. A desk lamp provides the sole source of light and the remainder of the room is shadowed. At Jake's feet lie discarded candy wrappers, hiking boots, a guitar pick, and a climbing rope.

Close inspection reveals Jake's computer screen is largely blank; a cursor stands alone at the second line of his open document. The first line is centered and reads: "On Being a Male Graduate Student." The digital clock on the top of the bookshelf reads 3:47... a.m..

Constructing the Hegemonic Man

Jake's hegemonic man emerged when he talked about "social" and "cultural" expectations for men. Most of the pressures were a burden for Jake and he wished he didn't "let society's definition of masculinity affect me." Jake had "mixed feelings" about other pressures. I will discuss the latter pressures first and then turn to those that Jake perceived as more of a burden.

"Be a Success, Son!"

The hegemonic man is career oriented and a "financial success." He is an "independent," "self-made man." In order to be successful, the hegemonic man is goal-oriented. He has learned to be "organized and efficient."

This is the part of the hegemonic man with which Jake most struggles in graduate school. Jake's story begins when his grandmother took one look at baby Jake and pronounced him a "professor." Currently this pronouncement sounds more like a curse than a blessing to Jake. In graduate school he struggles to be "organized and efficient." He may be "on the road to success," but he's not completing his program as quickly as he would like. The hegemonic man's success comes through dedication and "hard work" and Jake struggles with the amount of work that is expected of him in graduate school.

He said, "I get frustrated when I don't feel motivated to break my back all the time... The graduate school community is all about graduate students basically working like slaves. Their lives should be miserable." As we will see later, Jake's ideal man provides some relief from the proscriptions of the hegemonic man, but not enough that Jake doesn't still "know there's a part of me that really wishes I was organized and efficient."

Being a graduate student is, as Jake pointed out, antithetical to being the hegemonic man. Jake said:

...at a certain age you've done this much with your life and I haven't... I mean most people would think [at my age]... my dad, when he was my age he had already had two kids. And he had health care and a steady job.... And when you're a graduate student... I mean I'm broke. I owe money to the federal government... Sometimes I feel that tension... about being [my age] and not having these other developmental milestones accomplished yet, like having a house.

Indeed, in the US, most graduate students support themselves by working as teaching and research assistants "often on very low wages" (Leonard, 2001, p. 28). While some schools now have graduate student unions, graduate employee wages continue to fail to keep up with inflation and most graduate students have to pay for health insurance out of their own pockets (Leonard, 2001). Clearly the male graduate student is not emblematic of masculinity associated with fiscal accrual. While Jake sometimes "feels proud of being different" from his friends who are "married, have kids," most of the time "it wears" on him. He said, "Sometimes you're tired of being different... there's a part of me that wants to get those things because I want to fit in."

The hegemonic man's model of male success is tied to a notion of successful fatherhood that defines man as a family breadwinner. Adams and Coltrane (2005) argue this definition allows men to "force-fit their masculine ideals into the domestic sphere"

(p. 239). They are providers, protectors, and guardians of their families. Adams and Coltrane (2005) note the model of man as family provider also “serves the interests of the state” that requires a male citizenry “prone to violence, unemotional, patriotic, competitive, and somewhat distanced from the family” (p. 239). Jake wants to be a father (“Although,” he said, “recently I don’t know if I’m as attached to becoming a father as I used to be.”), but doesn’t “like the pressure to be successful” that is part of the definition of fatherhood. He envied women who, because of their gender, have less of a pressure to provide for their families:

...it’s less of an option for me to say like, ‘Well I’ll just look for a wife and then she’ll take care of me and I’ll take care of the kids.’... I’m not saying that guys have it better or that’s terrible because I don’t have that option. I’m just saying that’s a disadvantage because there’s a stress involved, a pressure, a burden on the shoulders that I wish I didn’t have sometimes.

While Adams and Coltrane (2005) note men in families tend to “expect their wives will care for and serve them,” Jake’s complaint involves a different definition of care in which men’s “care” of their families is associated with having a successful career; being able to “bring home the bacon.” What Jake points out aligns with Adams and Coltrane (2005) who note even though the US is “currently witnessing emergent forms of marital negotiation and sharing not contingent on the economic and political dominance of men” (p. 243), many men continue to negotiate traditional expectations of their gender. That they are beginning to imagine otherwise is, however, promising.

The Hegemonic Man's Enforcers

One "cool revelation" Jake had during the interviews was that he most felt the hegemonic man's pressure to be successful coming from his mother. He said:

...my mom has pressured me more about moving up than my dad. So maybe my mom's ideal of masculinity is operating in my career goals without me being aware of it being masculinity... A driving force in my graduate school, in all my schooling, is my mother. So... her gender ideology might be part of that driving force. That a man, "My boy, my young man, needs to be successful. And part of my sense of being a successful mother is having a man that is successful." I imagine that's probably operating in her brain.

Adams and Coltrane (2005) point out, "as gendered parents and grandparents, we expect and encourage boys to pursue our cultural ideals of masculinity" (p. 237). The raising of boys to be men is done by gendered parents who, to relative degrees, enforce society's expectations of masculinity (Coltrane & Adams, 1997). What Jake makes clear is that both mothers and fathers function as arbiters (or resisters) of society's expectations for men. Jake came to realize women's, his mother's and grandmother's in particular, gender ideology were important enforcers of hegemonic masculinity. He said, "Ironically, the woman's version of masculinity... affected my career choice" and how he could understand himself as (or not as) a successful man.

Jake had "mixed feelings" about the pressure to be successful. He acknowledged part of him desired to meet society's (and his mother's) expectations that he succeed in school. However, Jake was freer to reject other aspects of hegemonic masculinity.

The Hegemonic Man is Competitive

In graduate school Jake felt men are "more aware of the competition, the need to be successful." Indeed Leonard (2001) notes "managerialism" has become the

predominate mode in higher education, emphasizing “competitiveness,” “profitability,” and “effectiveness” (p. 31). This translates to competition among graduate students, especially in the US where research and teaching assistant positions are limited and the glut of doctoral students means students must outshine their peers to attain these positions (Leonard, 2001). Managerialism in the university aligns well with Jake’s hegemonic man whose success in graduate school is understood in terms of how he is performing relative to other graduate students. Jake said:

When I’m in graduate student mode, I’m comparing how I’m doing compared to other people... my goodness seems dependent on what I get done. That’s why I’m less secure. It’s very stressful because I feel like I’m not very efficient.... It’s tiresome after awhile.

The hegemonic man promotes a model of professional success that is contingent on the performance of others. Jake, in part, did not feel successful in his graduate program because his peers were finishing their programs more quickly. But, when he was with his friends, Jake did not feel like “they think less of me if I haven’t accomplished things.” Jake found refuge from the competitive pressures of graduate school in his friendships with men and women. Despite being a refuge, Jake also pointed out how the norms of hegemonic masculinity govern the structure and interactions of these friendships.

Intimacy and the Hegemonic Man’s Relationships

Jake described his male friendships as lacking in physical intimacy, noting how the pressures of the hegemonic man limit the ways he can interact with men and women. Jake said, “A handshake is usually as intimate as I can get with men” in the US. Having

spent several months in Costa Rica and a year in Argentina, Jake had been exposed to models of male intimacy that included “kissing on the cheek” and “hugging,” which points to a “considerable cross-cultural diversity in the character of men’s friendships (Kilmartin, 2007, p. 254). Returning to the US, Jake said:

...when I came back... it felt very distant to shake hands with my guy friends. I mean I was used to giving a kiss on the cheek to my guy friends, my close friends in Argentina. And it seemed weird, but I mean I knew it that it [kissing his U.S. friends] wouldn’t work because, you know, it just wouldn’t work.

Jake argued the physical intimacy he could have with his U.S. friends was limited by the proscriptions of masculinity that maintain men’s friendships as “not gay:”

That’s a disadvantage particularly of our culture. Masculinity in our culture is a lot less intimate than other cultures. You know, where you kiss guys and guys are more physically intimate. It’s not like, you know, it’s not gay. Men cannot be seen as gay.

As Kilmartin (2007) notes the “sexualization of feelings of attachment causes considerable consternation when heterosexual men begin to feel close to other men” such that their relationships are constrained “by the homophobic threat of feeling too close” (p. 208). To be physically intimate with a male friend in the US would call the hegemonic man’s sexuality into question.

Jake felt not being able to be intimate with men is a disadvantage because, as “humans,” men need physical intimacy. Looking back on the physical intimacy with his male friends in the US, Jake said:

We had a special handshake. So that was... our physical intimacy. And to me it’s very telling. That guys have physical intimacy, it just is in a different form. It’s more distant, but it’s there, I think. The punches, you know, on the shoulder or whatever. There is contact, like we need physical contact. I think as humans we’re desperate for it. And unfortunately that’s the disadvantage of being a man,

we don't get as much of it.... I think men are starved for physical intimacy, more so than women.

Indeed, Kilmartin (2007) makes the point that “males have a strong desire to maintain interpersonal contact with other males, but the threat of homophobic labeling increasingly forces this contact to become highly ritualized [i.e., with a handshake] and sometimes aggressive [slap on the back]” (p. 253). The handshake is “symbolic of men’s ambivalence around being close to one another” (Kilmartin, 2007, p. 253). Men can touch, but their contact needs to simultaneously deny any vulnerability, emotionality, femininity, and gayness. According to Rotundo (1993), the need for men to maintain a distance from one another is a relatively recent occurrence, coinciding with the shift of homosexuality as being something one does versus a matter of identity, something one *is*. And Nardi (1992) traces the discursive history of men’s same-sex friendships noting how they were “highly revered in ancient Greece and during the European Renaissance” (p. 2) to now being framed around homophobic discourses. It would seem, however, that the sexualized meaning of men’s intimacy with women has a less recent history.

Jake noted hegemonic masculinity similarly limits the way men can be intimate with women. He argued that hegemonic masculinity “oversexualizes” men such that they’re expected to make sexual advances and want sex all the time. He said:

Being sort of oversexualized I think is a disadvantage... I think men tend to oversexualize women. And any affection that we get from them is sexual.... I don't know, maybe that just an experience of being an adolescent. But I remember there being times where... on the one hand I was sexually excited by somebody, but on the other hand I kind of didn't want that to come in.... I felt it was something that was hard to constantly control. And I feel like maybe that's a result of social relations of men being... we're rewarded for being sex maniacs more so than women....

Kilmartin (2007) notes one way for men to “deal with the contradiction between naturally occurring desires for intimacy and gender role demands for separation is by learning to equate sex with intimacy” (p. 205). Additionally, men are expected to be “sexual masters” and know how to “please women,” an expectation Clare (2000) links to the association of masculinity with control, what she describes as the urge “to master and possess the other” (p. 201). This makes honest sex talk with women troublesome for men because to ask a woman what she wants gives her a kind of control and entails the man admit what he does not know.

But, ironically, Jake pointed out the only way a man can learn to please a woman is through “open communication.” Jake said:

I think a lot of men suffer because they don’t know what and they just try to do what the script is... to not talk and just plug away or whatever it is they think is working. And women are shy about it, don’t get satisfied, and they’re afraid to say something because they’ll hurt his ego.

Jake felt like he’d “gotten lucky” because his previous partners had all been communicative with him about sex. The most troublesome aspect of the hegemonic man’s relationships for Jake was the insistence that men must pursue women.

Why Didn’t You Get Her Digits?

The hegemonic man pursues (and successfully gets) women. Regardless of how he meets her, he is “responsible” for starting the courtship process. Jake’s construction of the hegemonic man agrees with Kilmartin (2007) who argues, “traditional gender roles dictate that men take every sexual initiative” (p. 209). As we’ve already seen, Jake described himself as “shy” and “anxious” around women. He had not become

comfortable with what Farrell (1986) recommended to dating men: “be prepared to risk rejection about 150 times between eye contact and sexual contact. Start all 150 over again with each girl” (p. 126). Jake wished he could turn the hegemonic man’s expectations around on women. He said:

Sometimes I wish I could just sit around and wait for women to court me. You know, then I could just pick and choose and say, “Oh yeah, sure I’ll go out with you,” or “I’m busy, I’ve got to do my hair.” Instead I have to answer to, “Did you get her digits?” Well why didn’t she ask me for my digits? I don’t want to have to ask her for her damn digits.

Again, heterosexuality is seen as an important enforcer of traditional masculinity and femininity. Kilmartin (2007) points out the enactment of these scripts is not particularly desirable for men or women:

Because men are expected to be tough and strong, rejection is not supposed to hurt. Although the sexual initiator has a kind of power, the ability to reject is also powerful. Neither role in the mainstream culture’s [hetero]sexual script seems very comfortable: she must wait somewhat passively for him to approach, signaling her availability without being “too forward”; he must gather his courage and risk his masculinity despite his anxiety and feelings of inadequacy. (p. 209)

Even men like Jake who desire to undermine the proscriptions of the hegemonic man are tempted to perform his scripts in order to attract a female partner. Jake said, “Part of me wants to hold out until some woman is brave enough to ask me out. But I recognize at the same time, I mean there are a lot less women who are likely to do that.”

Better Watch What you Wear!

The hegemonic man’s final dictate concerned what men could put on their bodies. Jake said, “...the disadvantage [of being a man] is that if you do anything that looks feminine, you’re labeled as bad.” Whitehead (2002) states men are “constantly riding

those gender boundaries, checking the fences we have constructed on the perimeter, making sure that nothing even remotely feminine might show through” (p. 278). And Connell (2002) notes “feminine conduct with a male body” is “felt to be anomalous or transgressive” (p. 29). Yet Jake intentionally transgressed this proscriptive in his everyday life by wearing a baseball hat with a rainbow flag embroidered on the front⁹.

Jake said:

I mean the [rainbow hat] I’m sure gets some weird looks. And I mean even in some areas you have to seriously consider the impact that could have on you by [wearing the rainbow hat]. I mean Laramie’s¹⁰ not that far from here... so that’s kind of scary. I don’t like that.... What I can wear is somewhat limited in terms of a fear of looking gay.

Before turning to Jake’s construction of the ideal man, it is important to note Jake did not just solely construct the hegemonic man as a negative force. Jake also discussed the advantages the hegemonic man confers men.

The Hegemonic Man has Some Advantages

Jake pointed out the scripts associated with the hegemonic confer some advantages for men. This aligns with Messner (1997) and Connell (1995) who both describe male privilege as maintaining men’s dominance over women. Jake specifically talked about men’s “privilege” to speak and be heard in public group discussions. Jake said:

⁹ This is fictional. The object has been changed to help shield Jake’s identity. The rainbow flag, also referred to as the freedom flag, is commonly known as the symbol of the gay pride movement.

¹⁰ Jake is referring to Laramie, Wyoming, which is about 60 miles north of Fort Collins. Laramie is the city where, in 1998, college student Matthew Shepard was fatally beaten and left to die, strung to a fence in a rural area. The attack was revealed as a hate crime, attributed to Shepard’s homosexuality. More information on Matthew Shepard and the aftermath of his attack (including film and dramatic productions) can be found on the Matthew Shepard Foundation website:

<http://www.matthewshepard.org/site/PageServer>

I feel guilty about it sometimes, when I became more of a feminist [but]... Like in a group setting... when you're in a mixed gender group, when a man talks, I start noticing it basically more. It's become more salient to me as I learned more about feminism, the dynamics between men and women. It's like, whoa, people listen to me if I'm like one of the few men in the group.

Indeed those who study gender in the classrooms suggest teachers pay unequal attention to male students, praising males for academic interests and females for being quiet and agreeable (e.g., Wood, 2001; Wood & Lenze, 1991). In terms of communication, males are socialized to use "talk to assert themselves and compete" whereas females are expected to communicate to "build cooperative relationships with others" (Wood, 2001, p. 237). It is no surprise, then, that a "masculine style" of communication is overly valued in higher education where graduate students are expected to "argue their viewpoint with anybody regardless of status" (Phillips & Pugh, 2005, p. 4). While men's privilege to be heard is something Jake appreciates, he realizes it comes at the cost of "women's voices," a consequence he ultimately decided was a "disadvantage."

Another, more positive, aspect of hegemonic masculinity is "the male style of conflict resolution." Jake said he appreciates that men can just "let it out and then it's over with" as opposed to women who "hold grudges for months," something Jake felt would be "more horrible than getting beat up."

Jake also appreciated that the norms of masculinity allow him to dress more slovenly, pay less attention to his appearance, and worry less about being raped. Jake especially appreciated that "I will grow distinguished as I grow older." Jake said he "felt ripped off because women always thought that older men were attractive." But then he "started learning about gender" and he realized if he "held out for a little while... there's

going to be more women than men as you get older and you're going to stay distinguished looking even though you're wrinkly and crusty."

Despite these advantages, Jake largely sought to struggle against and challenge the hegemonic man's enforcement of male gender norms. Jake did so, in part, through his construction of the ideal man (person).

Constructing the Ideal Man (Person)

Jake began talking about his ideal man with a caveat. He said:

I think consciously my ideology for the ideal man is the same as the ideal woman. So to say that I have a masculine ideology, I don't... the way I ought to be to me should be the same for a man or a woman. Now there's probably stuff I feel is important for myself that is affected by the male role models in my life, maybe more so than the female role modes...

Jake was intentional that his ideal construction should be attainable for both men and women. He said, "So the ideal characteristics of a good person now I'll say. Because I'm pretty sure that all these characteristics of that person, I would consider those important for a woman too." What Jake wished to avoid was reifying a gender binary by constructing an ideal masculinity that was, by definition, exclusive of femininity.

However, in the same breath, Jake acknowledged there may be "unconscious" gender forces, as in those of male role models, that influenced the ideal person's construction.

With this move Jake attempted to allow the ideal person to be a gendered construction yet avoid saying their¹¹ characteristics apply only to men. In a sort of input, output model, Jake suggests the ideal person may be a gendered creation, but not necessarily when the ideal person is taken up by gendered bodies. The ideal person is therefore understood as

¹¹ As in Franklin's chapter, Jake's "ideal person" will be referred to with the plural gender neutral pronoun "they," despite being grammatically incorrect.

a construction partially influenced by, but assumed to be external to, a gender order. As I will argue, holding that the ideal can apply to men as well as women denies a critical gender analysis of the ideal person.

Social Science and the Ideal Person's "Neutrality"

Constructing the ideal man as an ideal person is a complicated move in that, by espousing a gender neutral position, the ideal person is rendered partially blind to their own gender. Yet Jake is clear there are aspects of the ideal person that may be influenced by Jake's gendered upbringing. In part, Jake participated in these interviews to uncover the ways gender may "unconsciously" influence his construction of the ideal person. Jake's search was one of causality in which Jake mined the data of his past to explain why he thought the way he did about gender. This is what Jake referred to as "self-analysis," and what I came to refer to as the "big regression equation in the sky." Jake and I had the following exchange:

Jenni: You know, it's like you have this constant regression equation running in your head and you're trying to parse out the variability (laughs).

Jake: Totally, yeah. That's the way I think (laughs). I mean I can't... it's hard for me to just give you an answer like, this is the way it is. This is clear, this is clearly the causal you know chain of events. I just can't do it....That was a good way of expressing it, a regression equation. It's like I qualify all my hypotheses about causation. Unless I'm very, feel strongly about the data.

Jenni: Right, right. And it's interesting because the questions I'm asking you aren't causal questions at all. Like, "What does it mean to you to be a man in your graduate program?"

So while Jake identified as a "gender savvy" "critical person," he continued to espouse a modernist social science discourse preoccupied with causality, bias, and objectivity. This

positivist-empiricist epistemology has long been exposed by many feminist scholars as androcentric, perpetuating a model of science that privileges masculinity and “male experience” (e.g., Bordo, 1987; Code, 1995; Haraway, 1991; Harding, 1986; Harding, 1991; Keller, 1985; Lloyd, 1984; Longino, 1996). Jake’s construction of the ideal person revealed Jake had yet to take up a critical discourse to trouble social science’s modernist assumptions. Certainly the ideal person challenged the hegemonic man’s “biases,” but failed to examine how adopting a “neutral position,” what Nagel (1986) referred to as a “view from nowhere,” obfuscates *his* own “biases.”

Just as a social science discourse (as any discourse) is an “inevitable precondition that shapes findings” of research studies (Yanchar & Williams, 2006), it too can be understood to shape the way people make sense of their everyday lives. Indeed, it is Jake’s commitment to a social science discourse that privileges objectivity, neutrality, Humean causality, and prediction, what Polkinghorn (1983) refers to as a “received view” (p. 59) of 20th century behavioral science, that governs the way Jake can talk about gender and the kinds of subjects he can construct. It is the logic of this discourse that permits Jake to associate “gender neutrality” with being “gender savvy.” The following sections examine Jake’s construction of the ideal person and reveal how their characteristics are associated with masculinity, belying the ideal person’s neutrality.

The Ideal Person’s Fitness

The ideal person is physically fit. They recognize “exercise is important for your health.” Jake’s “dad and grandfather were fairly big men... naturally muscular.... They

were pretty strong so I probably saw strength as an important value.” When I asked him how women could meet this ideal Jake said:

...in high school the women that we knew that did lift weights were very impressive.... Where it was an atmosphere where I mostly saw men, but if there was a woman that could do it, like that was impressive and I thought she was attractive because of it. So I’ve always thought athletic or strong women were impress- like were attractive.

Jake then described his first girlfriend who was a runner. He said, “I thought it was hot because, like her body was a runner body. Runners have nice bodies.” Jake holds that the ideal person’s standard of physical fitness can be adopted by both men and women, but it is interesting Jake immediately sexualizes physical fitness in women. The physically fit female is objectified and her strength co-opted by the man’s gaze. This is the first example of how the ideal person neutralizes a critical discourse and fails to reflect on their own gendering.

Bravery in the Face of Injustice

The ideal person seeks to “improve the welfare of others.” They are committed to “social justice” and helping those “who are less fortunate.” But most importantly, the ideal person shows “bravery in the face of injustice.” Jake said:

I saw the movie Gandhi... and there’s a scene where he is tossing his cards at this little fire and this policeman comes and starts beating the crap out of him with a Billy club. And he’s beat the hell up, but he gets up anyway and grabs the card... and throws it in the trash and basically he doesn’t stop until he physically has been beat down and knocked unconscious.... So that’s a very vivid image of bravery in the face of injustice. So that’s very important, as part of masculinity or femininity... as human beings to me that’s a very important value is bravery in the face of injustice.

Later, Jake talks about how his grandmother defied the law for a cause she felt was important. Jake said, "My grandmother, who is also a role model for me, for being a person... She got arrested at the age of 81... for protesting nuclear weapons." But Jake questions the extent to which her arrest signified "bravery in the face of injustice" because "it wasn't really a very dangerous thing that she went to" and, it was "her goal to get arrested."

It becomes clear Jake's definition of bravery requires an element of "danger" and "physical confrontation," ultimately evidenced in the masculine ability to "take a beating." Applying this standard to women is problematic because, as Jake has noted, the physical violence most women experience comes from men. When women adopt this standard we see the outcome in recent films such as *300* (2007) where the strong Spartan Queen "bravely" submits to being raped for the greater good of her beloved Spartan people. This form of bravery, ironically, entails her submission to male dominance. While Jake wishes to hold the ideal of bravery as attainable for both men and women, doing so nullifies a critical analysis of how the ideal person's bravery functions differently for men and women. Jake's ideal person is thereby revealed a masculine subject.

The Ideal Person in Graduate School

The ideal person struggles to maintain their ideals in graduate school. They find it difficult to maintain their physical fitness and "balance work and play" because the "graduate school community is all about graduate students should be working like slaves." Phillips and Pugh (2005) validate Jake's image of the graduate student, noting

that many graduate programs expect “students to be working alone in libraries or at home, reading, writing, and thinking rather than experimenting. Any socializing that may take place as a result of a seminar, shared room or organized event is perceived as a bonus” (p. 19). Graduate students who make time to socialize and exercise run the risk of not being perceived as neglecting their coursework and research. Jake said:

Sometimes it makes me sad kind of like unhappy where I’m at because when people make comments like... “What? You have time to do that?!... to the point where you don’t want to tell them you went climbing or that you went on a bike ride or you went snowboarding because you feel like someone’s going to judge you. And it’s like, man, what an awful environment when people are feeling guilty about stuff like that... it’s wasteful of people’s physical health.

The ideal person also struggles to maintain their commitment to “contributing to the welfare of others” in graduate school. Before enrolling in his graduate program Jake worked at a mental health center. He found this job “fulfilling” and missed the satisfaction he got from helping people and participating in a worthy cause. Now he studies suicide, rather than “doing anything about it.” He said:

In graduate school you’re working for your degree. It’s for yourself, for your career development. A Ph.D. or an M.S. next to my name doesn’t do squat for everybody else except me.... Unless you could argue I can do whatever it is, whatever I value would be more with the letters at the end. But I worked for suicide prevention before I came to graduate school and I was working with people and the community everyday. I felt everyday that I... was doing something good. You don’t feel good when you read for a couple of hours some technical journal and you highlight a couple passages and then discuss it in class or write a paper about it... it doesn’t give the same sense of fulfillment.

Jake’s ideal person is less than ideal in graduate school. Jake struggled to value and find the time to exercise and to find ways to “contribute to the welfare of others.” Indeed, the social science discourse of Jake’s graduate program is seen to be oppositional

to his commitment to social justice. In many ways the discourse of social science thwarts Jake's ability to engage in a critique of gender in his graduate program.

Social Justice and Social Science in Graduate School

Jake is adept at applying a critical gender lens and women's oppression and male privilege are certainly part of his discussion about gender. But when we turned to a discussion of masculinity in graduate school, Jake's language surprisingly lacked criticality. I argue the social science discourse that values neutrality, resulting in Jake's construction of the ideal person as opposed to an ideal man, also robbed Jake of a language that would allow him to see and critique the circulation of gendered power in his graduate school and discipline.

When I asked what it means to be a man in his graduate program Jake said:

What is it like to be a man? Well I don't think about my gender too much.... How is it to be a man? So when do I? Is it like when do I think about my gender in my graduate program? How is it different to be a man than a woman? I mean that's what's implied... Because the difference is assumed when you're saying what is it like to be a man.

Jake began the discussion by talking about the numbers of men and women in his program and their positions. He argued he would need "empirical evidence" to see if men and women are treated differently in graduate school. He said:

I guess I would have to see like does my advisor treat her woman students differently than me. And do I treat her different than the male advisor. And I don't know how I could, I mean how can you? I don't think I treat them differently. I mean I try not to.... I suppose it's possible. And it's likely. So... well yea, actually, you know I'm more open with my main advisor. And that could be because I just know her better from working with her closely or because she's a woman. So it might be easier for me as a man to tell her more about my personal problems.

Jake suspected gender may influence his “behavior,” but he ultimately was not sure. He said, “It’s hard for me to just give you an answer like this is the way it is. This is clearly the causal chain of events.”

Jake attributed his inability to talk about what it means to be a male graduate student to “male privilege,” as is apparent in our following exchange:

Jake: I guess it doesn’t mean anything to me to be a man in my graduate program.... I don’t usually think about, the two just don’t, I don’t think about the two in the same sentence. You know? I’m a man graduate student. I don’t think about that.

Jenni: It’s interesting how you study gender, you teach gender, but when it comes to your life in graduate school, it’s sort of a non-issue.

Jake: Yeah well, that’s because I’m a white man. I mean really, though. I mean it’s just not, it’s not salient for me.

Jenni: Do you think that’s okay?

Jake: Is it okay? I mean it’s unfair to a certain degree. I don’t think about the fact as much, until you made me think about it. You know the department chair’s a man. So that’s the person who’s in charge of everybody else. So I don’t think about it, but women probably do. Whether or not it does make a difference in graduate students’ lives, I don’t know. I’m always qualifying everything because I don’t have the data.

It becomes clear that Jake’s construction of the graduate student is similar to the ideal person in their gender neutrality. The genderless graduate student is clearly not neutral, but is revealed to be defaulted as male. And this explains why Jake is unable to talk about his experience as a male graduate student; he struggles to see past the “normalcy” of his own gender. As Jake has pointed out, graduate students are expected to be hardworking, organized and efficient. It is no coincidence that the pressures Jake associates with the hegemonic man are the same he says are expected of graduate

students. As we've seen, this portrait of what it takes to be a successful graduate student aligns with the literature that critiques the masculinity of higher education (Boler, 1999; Leonard, 2001) and science (Code, 1995).

The social science discourse that espouses neutrality and objectivity emerges as Jake attempted to grapple with masculinity in graduate school. Despite identifying as "gender savvy," the social science discourse muddles his ability to employ a critical gender critique of the graduate student. Similar to the ideal person, what it means to be a graduate student is rendered "gender neutral" and, hence, male. But it is not that Jake was not aware of critical discourses or that it is likely gendered power differentials exist within his graduate program. He clearly suspected they do and attributed his inability to name them to male privilege. What he had yet to articulate is that his male privilege may be tied up in the discourse of social science. As Jake said, "I have problems with objectivity."

The Ideal Person and the Hegemonic Man

The ideal person and the hegemonic man share many characteristics in what Whitehead (2002) refers to as the "public world of men" (p. 146). They are "hard working," "successful," "goal oriented," and "organized and efficient." Jake therefore saw himself as experiencing a double-pressure, simultaneously struggling to live up to society's and his ideal person's expectations, specifically in graduate school. Jake has been in his program long enough to watch students enter after and finish their degrees before him. He believed if he were more "organized and efficient" he would complete

his program more quickly. Just as the ideal person compounds Jake's self-criticism, they also provided Jake a degree of relief.

Redefining Success

The ideal person espouses a different definition of success than the hegemonic man. Whereas the hegemonic man equates success with financial security, "making lots of money, providing for his family," the ideal person defines success as "making the world a better place." When I asked Jake how his ideal person compared to the hegemonic man he said:

...I can do all the things that I want to do to be the ideal man I think without having to own a house, without having to, I don't know, secure property or a steady job or anything. But I still, there's part of me that wants to get those things because I want to fit in.

Despite holding a different definition of success, the ideal person provided Jake only a slight relief from the pressures of the hegemonic man. Jake said, "I try to reject it [the hegemonic man's pressure to be successful] to make myself feel better about being [my age] and still not being financially secure." But Jake's desire to reject the hegemonic man's expectations is not solely based on a belief that the hegemonic man is wrong, dangerous, or problematic. Jake's need to reject the hegemonic man's expectations is also based on a perception of personal failure. This rejection therefore remains incomplete in that Jake's feeling of failure necessitates a degree of collusion with the hegemonic man. The desire to "fit in," to "live up to" the hegemonic man's valued masculinity in graduate school, overpowers Jake's critical challenge the hegemonic man's proscriptions.

But this is not to say the ideal person is entirely ineffective in challenging the hegemonic man. The ideal person's commitment to social justice translates to a commitment to (pro)feminism for Jake. In his daily life, by always wearing the rainbow hat for example, he challenged the hegemonic man's dictate that men cannot wear anything that "appears feminine." While Jake did not name his ideal man a feminist, Jake named himself a (pro)feminist and described himself as "gender savvy." Even while he acquiesced to some of the hegemonic man's proscriptions, he aspired to an ideal that was less conscripted by a binary conceptualization of gender. It is from this perspective Jake's ideal person (as opposed to man) is seen as an attempt to challenge the solely masculine construction of the hegemonic man. The following section considers the potential "Others" of the hegemonic and ideal person, including the gay man and woman.

"Others"

The Ideal Person and the Gay Man

The hegemonic man is concerned with enforcing a "compulsory heterosexuality" (Rich, 1980). In order to be masculine, men must prove they are "not gay" and this limits the ways men can physically and verbally express their closeness with one another. In contrast, the gay man emerges as a "freer" form of masculinity, permitted emotional and physical intimacy with other men, even as he is a "marginalized masculinity" (Connell, 1995, p. 80). Examining Jake's construction of the hegemonic man, a portrait of the gay man emerges.

The gay man wears "effeminate" clothing, is physically intimate with men, and does not feel the pressure to pursue women. He also, apparently, does not experience the

pressure to get married and have kids. Jake described the gay man as being less conscripted than the heterosexual man:

...I guess because I'm heterosexual the traditional gender norms are more... so those problems I was telling you related to being a man really are related to being a heterosexual. So like having to be the person that takes the initiative in romantic relationship and issues with sexuality.

But Jake went on to say that, because gay men are men, they probably still have to negotiate the hegemonic man's "scripts."

...Although I imagine gay men have the same, some similar scripts as heterosexual men in terms of having to be bold or brave and risk taking and stuff like that. I think there's a lot of gay men that are trying to fulfill the same roles of masculinity and sometimes may be hyper so because they're concerned about the status loss of being gay. And so it's like well, if I can't match one of these traditional masculinities, I better pump up the other ones.

This description of the gay man simultaneously positions him as "Other" to the hegemonic man and suggests he has to work harder to maintain his status of man. What is interesting is Jake does not talk about the gay man as a resistive subject. He is, rather, an unfortunate victim of a society that oppresses and discriminates against him.

But so far I've discussed the relationship between the gay man and the hegemonic man. The question remains: What can be said about Jake's ideal person and the gay man? First, I argued earlier that the ideal person is not a gender neutral subject, but a heterosexual man. He values "bravery in the face of injustice" and struggles with society's expectations that he should be the (heterosexual) family breadwinner. His characteristics align with several of those of the hegemonic man. Therefore it seems reasonable that the picture of the gay man created by the hegemonic man would similarly be drawn from an examination of the ideal man's construction. Yet the ideal person is

also a resistive subject. The ideal person's commitment to social justice manifests itself as Jake's desire to challenge the hegemonic man's narrow definition of masculinity.

Jake's wearing of the rainbow hat, for example, is permitted by a critical and resistive discourse. It is an act of defiance that "queers" traditional notions of masculinity (Corber & Valocchi, 2003, p. 14) and carries with it the danger of making Jake "appear gay." Jake's other acts of resistance included hosting a cross-dressing party and teaching courses on gender from a critical perspective. Clearly Jake's desire to "fit in" did not preclude his ability to challenge some of the hegemonic man's dictates, particularly those he felt discriminate against women and gay men. Jake's ideal person is a heterosexual man and, in some ways his construction entails a certain portrait of the gay man. The gay man is revealed as effeminate, needing to story his experience, and a victim of society's expectations. But the ideal man does not view these characteristics as unproblematic. His commitment to social justice means he challenges the hegemonic man's proscriptions that create the gay man as "Other," even while he attempts to live up to them.

Understanding heterosexuality through the gay man. Jake uses the "gay man" to interrogate his own heterosexuality. Jake recalls the first time he thought about himself as "not gay:"

I remember thinking of myself as not gay. One time was the first time exposed to pornography... And at some point somebody said that they didn't like the sex scenes, they liked the lesbian scenes, the women on women scenes, because they didn't like dicks... And I remember thinking, "Yeah, I don't like dicks either." I prefer not seeing penises... and so that was a time that I remember thinking, "Well, I guess I'm not gay then because shouldn't that be attractive to me? Or at least not take away from the experience as much?"

While Jake can recall that instance of realizing he wasn't gay, he couldn't recall a point when he came to understand himself as heterosexual. He said:

...I knew I wasn't gay. I don't remember when I realized I was heterosexual. It wasn't something I thought of consciously. That's a hard question for me. I was like, what do you mean when I knew I was heterosexual?

Compared to the other participants, Jake's story is not unique. All the men, even those whose sexuality had been called into question at some point in their lives, said they hadn't thought much about being heterosexual. What this reveals is that, unlike the "coming out of the closet" story of bisexuals, gays, and lesbians, there is no parallel story for heterosexuals to talk about their heterosexuality. For Jake, heterosexuality was "normal," something he "didn't have to think about." As we've come to see, heterosexuality is so intertwined with masculinity that discussing them separately is almost nonsensical (e.g., Butler, 1990, 2004, & Whitehead, 2002). To be a man is to be heterosexual and Jake's ideal person is no exception. It is interesting, for example, Jake's ideal person is constructed so that both men and women can aspire to the ideal person's ideals. However, Jake does not make the same statement about sexual minorities; that the ideal person should be attainable for "gays" and "straights." The ideal person's sexuality is not called into question and therefore is largely understood to be heterosexual. Ultimately, Jake's ideal person is revealed not as a gender neutral subject, or even just a man, but as a heterosexual man.

"Making jokes at gays' expense." While Jake wears the rainbow hat to "disrupt enforced normative sex/gender systems" (Hale, 2003, p. 61), he does not overtly attempt to enact a gay masculinity. In fact, he fears the consequences (i.e., physical violence) of

being perceived as being gay. But, Jake does describe a particular phenomenon among his male friends where they joke with one another about being gay. This joking involves pretending to be sexually attracted to one another and, generally, performing a stereotypical gay masculinity.

Jake theorized that joking about being gay with friends is a way for men to deal with the hegemonic man's expectations:

...Actually it's a regular joke with one of my guy friends... I think it's related... I think it's like humor. So if you have a good friend who, it doesn't challenge your masculinity, it feels good to be able to release that sort of pressure you might feel otherwise... And so it creates a tension that when you break it, it causes laughter. Because you're not. And it's usually underlined with the security about you definitely being heterosexual. So my guess is that you wouldn't be able to joke as well if your heterosexuality was in question... So you're laughing at gayness. You're making a joke at gays' expense.

This form of joking is a relief from the hegemonic man's insistence that men must be heterosexual, but, as Jake points out, it is predicated on the assumption of a man's heterosexuality. Therefore when men begin to feel close to one another, it becomes very important for them to state clearly, as Jake notes, that they are "not gay." For heterosexual men who are committed to issues of social justice the overtly homophobic strategy of "gay bashing" or telling "anti-gay jokes" is certainly not an option (Whitehead, 2001). Jake suggests the humor of pretending to be gay is an alternative strategy that serves the same function, but does not rely on an overtly homophobic discourse. But, as Jake acknowledges, it is a strategy that still has men "making jokes at gays' expense."

The Ideal Person and Women

From Jake's construction of the hegemonic man and the ideal person we can draw a fairly clear picture of woman. The "hegemonic woman" is a homemaker and a caregiver, passive in dating, is allowed to just want to be a mom, becomes less attractive as she ages, feels a pressure to look good, can be physically intimate with other women, holds grudges, and has to worry about being raped, for example. The ideal person/woman is "brave in the face of injustice," is committed to social justice, physically fit, optimistic, organized and efficient, hard working, humorous, intelligent, and balances work and play. But as we've seen, these supposed list of gender neutral traits play out differently for women than men. For example the ideal woman's physical fitness is "sexy." Despite her "neutrality," she remains an object of men's gaze. About women in graduate school, Jake says:

Being a heterosexual male on campus, there's a lot of eye candy. So being a gender person I'm like, "Don't objectify women. Don't objectify women." But I deal with that on a daily basis. Sometimes I criticize myself for it. But on the other hand it's a challenging issue I think that a lot of men who study feminism deal with. Because there's a lot of rules. So depending on what kind of feminist circle you come from, I could be a male pig just for even glancing at scantily clad women. Or I could be a human being. So I try to check myself, control yourself I guess. But then that sounds terrible too, you know? I feel like, what am I? Some kind of sexual animal that has to control myself? It seems bizarre.

The ideal person's neutrality does not succeed in nullifying women's marginalization, nor does it eliminate the gender binary that assumes differences between men and women.

Differences between men and women. Jake espoused several different views on the nature of differences between men and women, but these views most often culminated in a social critical analysis based on power. This is best seen in Jake's discussion of empathy and nonverbal communication. Jake said:

I think in general women are more empathic. I covered nonverbal cues in one of my labs and in some situations women are better than men. In general women are better at nonverbal cues. Now you could argue about why they are better and whether or not you're biologically evolved that way or whether or not it's got a social base, but part of it has to do with power.... Men typically have all the power in a patriarchal society so it's only natural that a person who has less power is going to be more in tune to nonverbal cues. Because it's going to be important to them to know what the heck that person's gonna do, in the next second or whatever. So that's one theory about why women would be better.

The above quote speaks to a regression equation running through Jake's mind. The dependent variable is women's ability to detect nonverbal communication and the predictor variables are "biologically evolved," "socially based," and "patriarchal power." Each of these variables predicts some variance in the dependent variable, but Jake theorizes that "power in a patriarchal society" would predict the most variance. Jake finishes his thoughts by suggesting a follow-up research experiment that would test whether males and females actually do differ in their detection of nonverbal communication:

How would you? It would be interesting to get a nonverbal communication tester and see, did you know that this person, this participant was able to detect all of your attempts at communication of the experiment? They scored high on nonverbal communication.

What is evident in this predictive, linear model of causality is that the binary nature of the invisible independent variable, "gender," is never called into question. The category woman is assumed to stand for an identifiable and known subject, whether social or

biological, and to be different from the category man. It also shows how deeply saturated Jake is in psychological discourses and the discursive environment of his program.

Following psychological discourses, Jake holds that people can be understood when the examination moves to the level of the individual. This is a view most notably critiqued by Foucault (1975/1995) who argues it is the act of examination that *creates* individuals, rather than explaining them.

All this means that, despite Jake's commitment to gender critique, despite his attempt to construct a gender neutral ideal person, he continues, through psychological discourses, to hold that men and women are socially and/or biologically "real" subjects. To deny this would be to challenge social science's ability to study sex and gender, either at the social or the individual level. But, it is important to point out, Jake is not fully blind to the problem of conflating sex and gender, for example. Conscious of the social construction of gender, Jake employs a discourse that, by separating sex and gender, puts this dilemma in relief.

Jake draws on the work of Pleck (1981) and Bem (1981, 1993) who argue gender is a multiple and continuous, rather than a discrete and dichotomous, variable. They also both hold that gender, as a social construct, is not reducible to sexed bodies, what Bem (1993) refers to as "biological essentialism." Both can be seen as critics of male dominance and power in U.S. society. Citing their work, Jake draws a clear distinction between sex and gender. He says:

I've been trained to think of man as physiological. It's even weird for me to see your questions. Because it's like well, physiologically, most people split between males and females. But my understanding up to this point is you've got your genetics. Because most people end up with XX or XY on that pair that determines sex. So you're born usually with a penis or a vagina. There's a percentage that are along a spectrum. But most people tend to be, it's a

qualitative variable. For most, not all. And come puberty, certain hormones kick in and for most people it's gonna develop breasts or it's gonna make your voice deeper. So physiologically most people can be categorized as male or female.

But Jake is a social scientist, not a physiologist or a biologist, and therefore he must be concerned with studying gender. Jake said, "I think of masculinity as the sociopsychological variable of being a man." What this statement shows is that, despite studying gender and acknowledging not all men are genetically and phenotypically male, the taken-for-granted discourse of social science continues to associate masculinity with male bodies and femininity with female bodies. And masculinity and femininity continue to be constructed in opposition to one another where feminine females are the "Others" of masculine males.

Perhaps with this problematic in mind, Jake resorted to touting the "ideal" of gender neutrality. He said:

It's hard for me to say what I feel like it means to be a man because I identify as gender savvy. And so there's a part of me that automatically says, "This doesn't have to do with me being a male. I try to be gender neutral. Even in my self-thought. I think that I probably police myself. I'm still like this is what I want to do because I want to be a good person. Not because I want to be a good man per se. Because there's always, if I ever did come up with a thought like that, there'd be a little voice that says, "Well women can do that too so really that's not about being a man, it's about being a person."

Jake strives for gender neutrality because he doesn't want to exclude women from the possibility of attaining certain ideals. He even went so far to say he polices gender neutrality in himself. But, as previously noted, one problem with gender neutrality is its lack of self-reflexivity around gender. It also allows Jake to think of himself as "objective" and makes possible a form of blindness in relation to his own gender, especially in graduate school.

Yet Jake does engage in practices of resistance and his ideal person is constructed, in part, in opposition to the hegemonic man. The following sections concern the extent to which Jake's ideal person can be named "resistive" and to which Jake can be seen as invested in an "ontological quest of the masculine subject" (Whitehead, 2002, p. 215).

Complicity, Subordination and Marginalization

As noted earlier, Jake's ideal person is both similar to and resistive of the hegemonic man. Jake described himself in a struggle, largely centered on his productivity in graduate school. There he most feels the pressures of hegemonic masculinity that insist he be successful: "organized and efficient," "hard working," and "goal-oriented." Because Jake had not advanced in his program as quickly as his peers, he viewed this as a personal failure, attributed to his inability to meet these expectations. These attributes characterize the ideal person and in this way we can understand the ideal person as engaging in what Connell (1995) describes as complicity: Jake's ideal person, in some ways, mirrors his hegemonic man. This is especially demonstrated in graduate school where Jake could not progress through his program at a "slower" pace and still define his progress as successful.

Jake's ideal person is also somewhat resistive to the hegemonic man's definition of success. The ideal person defines success as working for the good of others and struggles in higher education where academics seem to be working only for themselves. The pressure of the hegemonic man is great, tied into discourses of mother's love and grandmother's hopes. Jake's ideal person values friends and family and this is what helps maintain his complicity with the hegemonic man.

The ideal person is also committed to social justice and we've seen this translates to (pro)feminism for Jake. And in this way the ideal person can be seen as a very resistive subject, denying his complicity with the hegemonic man. The hegemonic man says men cannot wear anything feminine so the ideal person (man) wears the rainbow hat and hosts cross dressing parties. The hegemonic man says that men must objectify and pursue women and Jake polices himself saying, "Don't objectify women." Jake's ideal person allows him to pursue a life that is resistive of gender norms and is committed to gender "equality." During the last interview Jake described a recent conversation he had with friends:

Here's a cool thing that happened to me the other day that made me aware that my sort of gender force field is getting wider and impacting people. My housemate's boyfriend comes in and he's like, "I had an interesting experience today that you might be interested in." So a) he recognizes it's salient to him that I'm studying gender. It was a gender issue and a women's rights issue. So he's already identifying me as a person who's interested in that kind of thing. Which I was kind of stoked about. And then, and then he's talking about it. So he feels comfortable enough to like bring it up and to share his experience which is cool.

Jake's ideal man is constructed such that Jake can highly value these conversations. They are about social justice, they allow for a kind of emotional intimacy between men, and they entail a kind of action Jake feels is missing in graduate school. The conversation ended with the two men "brainstorming" ways they could intervene in sexist situations. Jake said:

...So hopefully that made us think about what we could say if somebody were to say that [something sexist] around us.... It would empower us. Hopefully that little situation will remind us if that situation comes up again, like, no I should say something. Even if it isn't eloquent or something gets weird, at the very least it'll be like the beginning, you know pointing that kind of crap out.

Jake's ideal person is therefore both complicit with and resistive of the hegemonic man. But how can Jake's masculine ontological project be understood through the lens of Hoy's (2005) critical resistance?

Critical Resistance as Desubjectification

Jake's construction of the ideal person can be seen as an attempt to resist the hegemonic man's ideals and the "subordination" that produces subjects (Hoy, 2005, p. 97). But this attempt does not necessarily result in desubjectification. Jake cannot be seen as pursuing his "own dissolution" (Butler, 1997, p. 9). When Jake wears the rainbow hat, for example, he describes a fear of being perceived as gay. His ability to challenge the proscriptions of the hegemonic man, therefore, is dependent on the assumption that his heterosexual masculinity is not already called into question. And even while Jake critiques and turns away from some of the hegemonic man's norms, he embraces a new desire to be "a good person." And this move is dangerous because the person to which Jake aspires is largely revealed as masculine, purporting many of the same ideals as the hegemonic man.

Jake is proficient with social science discourses. He searches for causality, values objectivity, seeks to eliminate bias, and touts neutrality as an ideal. This positivist-empiricist discourse is what helps bind Jake to his masculine ontological project. Jake aspires to a "neutral" subjectivity, one that is particularly wrapped up in the desire to be a good social science graduate student. When I asked Jake what he gained from participating in the study he said:

I kind of feel like I've been Freud for my own, for myself, you know? Because we talked a lot about childhood so I'm analyzing events in my childhood and the

analyst in me is always trying to seek causal explanations for my behavior or my personality and who I am now. So I've birthed new theories with my identity. My present identity.

What is interesting about Jake's statement is that it simultaneously suggests an irrational and a rational self. Jake's childhood is filled with "unconscious" (irrational) experiences that have shaped his masculinity. The analyst represents Jake's rational self who attempts to make sense of these irrationalities. Speaking of the subject in this way can be seen to challenge Enlightenment conceptualizations of the self as independent, autonomous, and rational (Mansfield, 2000). But the analyst, in his ability to "step outside" and confer order, represents the triumph of masculine rationality over feminine irrationality. Jake's statement is therefore seen to align with the social science discourses of objectivity that privilege masculinity. The analyst looks back on Jake's childhood to explain why Jake is the way he is today, also suggesting "the Jake" he examines is a continuous, historical self. Regardless, this process for Jake is important because it helps him understand his *identity* and construct a definition of the person he is now. Jake is revealed as committed to the project of rationality, understanding, theorizing, and identifying himself.

While it can be argued Jake wishes to distance himself from the category "man," his replacement of that category with the notion of a person (masculinity disguised as neutrality) makes this distancing problematic. In some ways this covert investment is what makes Jake's project more insidious. Pursuing the ideal person renders Jake blind to the forces of gender that construct and extend from the ideal person. Overall, Jake is revealed to be committed to his masculine ontological project and his desire to be recognized, or "fit in," as a man.

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION

What can the ethics of an intellectual be... if not... to render oneself permanently capable of self detachment? To be at the same time an academic and an intellectual is to try to engage a type of knowledge and analysis that is taught and received in the university in a way so as to modify not only the thought of others, but of one's own as well.

Foucault, 1989, p. 303

The university is an ultimate place of critical resistance – and more than critical – to all the powers of dogmatic and unjust appropriation.

Derrida, 2001/2002, p. 204

The purpose of this dissertation was to elicit male graduate students' constructions of masculinity in order to examine potential links between higher education and the production of male subjects. These links were conceptualized in three ways: *Theory* – as masculine domination in higher education, *Practice* – as academic discourses taken up to construct gender and masculinity, and *Process* – as critical resistance to the proscriptions of normative masculinity. Designed as a narrative inquiry and using an interview method called an *inquiry of discomfort*, this study engaged five male graduate students from counseling, social economy, computer science, media analysis, and social science disciplines, in conversations about masculinity and their experiences as graduate students. These conversations occurred across five to seven audio recorded interviews, each lasting between 1 and 2 hours. The interviews were analyzed in three stages, likened to the process of gathering materials to paint:

deconstruction-trace analysis (pencils), argument analysis (brushes), and resistance analysis (paint). These analyses produced *subjectivity portraits*, write-ups of the participants' interviews, describing the subjects they constructed, the *hegemonic* and *ideal man*, and their "Others," and how they effected *critical resistance*.

The following discussion considers the participants' findings in terms of the dissertation's three foci: *Theory*, *Practice* and *Process*. Theoretically, a new understanding of male dominance is pursued, one that redefines male dominance as negotiated. In *Practice*, academic discourses are examined for how they were taken-up to construct masculinity and make sense of the gender order. And the *Process* of engaging in critical reflection is examined for its relation to the construction of subjects and critical resistance. The section concludes by weaving the three foci together, highlighting the lessons learned to inform supervisors' work with male graduate students.

Theory: The Hegemonic Man and Male Dominance in Graduate School

It's the subjectivity portraits' opening day at the university's art gallery. Arriving early, I carefully arrange each participant's portrait in its designated space on the solid white wall. After helping myself to a generous glass of Shiraz and a plate of assorted cheeses, I nervously join the other viewers who are just arriving. Slowly I walk down the row of portraits seeing them for the first time from the eyes of a viewer, rather than an artist. Still, perhaps out of habit, I stop at each one and worry over its composition. Are all the important constructions presented? Are their relationships clear? Does the portrait adequately depict the men they felt pressured to be?

"The time for fine tuning has passed," I admonish myself as I reach the last painting. And with this thought I step back several feet and examine the collection as a whole, taking careful note of the subjects depicted in each painting. It is from this perspective I begin to address the first of this dissertation's three foci: Theory.

This study was guided by a particular take on the hegemonic man. Instead of viewing him as a conduit of structural power, as guaranteeing the dominant position of men (Connell, 1995, 2005), he was taken to be a normative cultural representation constructed and negotiated by individual men. His normalizing power was neither totalizing nor hierarchical, but circulatory (Hall, 1997) and presumed to be constructed alongside his characteristics. Indeed, this perspective was born out in (and of) the research findings. The male graduate students' subjectivity portraits contained hegemonic men that differed in form, function, and, consequently, in the ways they were negotiated. In this section I briefly summarize the participant's constructions of the hegemonic man in terms of form and function. Turning to the implications of the hegemonic man's differential construction and function, I consider the multiplicity of the hegemonic man and how he is negotiated by the construction of the ideal man. A revised model of the hegemonic man is presented, one that entails his multiplicity of form, function, and negotiation.

The new model of the hegemonic man has implications for conceptualizing male dominance in graduate school. This section concludes by considering the hegemonic man's negotiation as producing *instances of dominance* and a reconceptualization of male dominance in higher education is suggested. I believe the term *subjectification* (Hoy, 2005) better describes the simultaneous power and powerlessness that is effected when

individual men submit to/take up normalizing discourses of masculinity. There can be no doubt normative discourses imply material and power consequences for those identified as men in the social field. But to be so easily identified comes at the cost of freedom, a freedom to choose which masculine discourses to engage in; a freedom to participate in knowing ways to the inevitable shifting of discursive constructions of masculinity; and ultimately, a freedom of subversion and resistance.

The Hegemonic Man's Form

This section summarizes the participants' hegemonic men in terms of form, by which I mean both their characteristics and how they emerged.

Characteristics of the Hegemonic Man

Certainly the participants' hegemonic men contained characteristics in common. For example, all participants constructed the hegemonic man as successful, a provider, strong, and a pursuer of women. Other "positive" characteristics included competitive, goal-oriented, independent, confident, professional, logical, in charge, and physically sexual. "Negative" characteristics included an inability to talk about his feelings, to take care of children, and to be physically intimate with other men.

But some characterizations of the hegemonic man contradicted one another. For example, Jake's hegemonic man allowed men to dress more slovenly and not have to pay attention to their physical appearance. In contrast, Hunter's hegemonic man was overly concerned with his appearance believing "the clothes make the man."

Internal/External Emergence of the Hegemonic Man

For most participants, the hegemonic man emerged from perceived external social pressures associated either with a ubiquitous society and/or with particular social groups or individuals. Graham's hegemonic man, for example, emerged broadly from "society" and was relayed through family, women, and work. Similarly, Jake's hegemonic man emerged from social expectations and cultural norms conveyed by his family, women, men, and within the expectations of his graduate degree program. Franklin's rather simplistic hegemonic man was largely conveyed through media representations (i.e., of the buffoon father). Two of Clark's hegemonic men, the Redneck and the Man's Man emerged in local cultural contexts, communicated through other men's performances of masculinity. Clark's third hegemonic man, the Poster Man, was conveyed through television and Hollywood media images.

In contrast to the proceeding external emergence of the hegemonic man, Graham, Jake, and Clark all acknowledged times when they internally reproduced the hegemonic man's messages. This was apparent to Graham in his feminist program where he resisted the urge to "do something." Jake struggled between his desire to be a good graduate student and his pride in "being different." Clark was perhaps the most descriptive of the in/externality of the hegemonic man, metaphorically describing the Poster Man as not just on the walls of his brain, but as a mold that had become part of their structure.

Hunter's hegemonic man was constructed all together differently than the other participants' hegemonic men. Rather than emerging from an external concern with social pressures or an internal reproduction of norms of masculinity, Hunter's hegemonic man served solely as a foil to his ideal man. Hunter explicitly rejected the hegemonic man by

devaluing his masculinity. Yet Hunter also made broad, naturalizing statements about men-in-general. And these statements could be seen to construct another kind of hegemonic man, one whose emersion Hunter neither addressed knowingly nor rejected.

The Hegemonic Man's Function

Most often the hegemonic man was seen to function as limiting, constraining, or dictating what it means to be a man. He was largely experienced as a form of social pressure and therefore generated some degree of resistance. This finding makes sense in light of Foucault (1980, 1997) and Butler (2004) who argue where we find dominance and norms we will always find resistance. As Foucault (1980) states, "there are no relations of power without resistances; the latter are all the more real and effective because they are formed right at the point where relations of power are exercised" (p. 142). Accordingly, all participants resisted their hegemonic man's norms to some degree. Hunter outright rejected the hegemonic man's insistence that men be providers for their families and successful professionals. Hunter believed giving into these proscriptions was a form of weakness and thereby devalued the hegemonic man using feminine adjectives. Graham was critical of the hegemonic man's proscriptions, but ultimately decided "that's cool;" that he was up to the task of being a man.

Franklin was similarly critical of the hegemonic man, but his criticality took on a different form. For Franklin, the hegemonic man was a social fiction and, named as such, was challenged by denying his purchase on material and social reality. If the category man was not inherent or natural then talking about him would run the risk of making him

that way. Therefore Franklin's hegemonic man functioned as an illusory pivot, the center point of a masculinity funnel, around which men can define themselves.

Clark and Jake both struggled with their hegemonic men. While they both desired to resist his proscriptives, they also acknowledged a simultaneous desire to meet them. For example, Clark sometimes wished he had a more muscular body and Jake desired to be more organized and efficient.

Only Jake explicitly described the hegemonic man as having a positive function. His take aligns with Foucault (1975/1995, 1976/1990) who argues that power is productive, creating who and what we can be. Jake argued the hegemonic man confers some advantages, things he appreciates. For example the hegemonic man's norms are what allow men to be heard when speaking in mixed-gender settings. They permit a style of conflict resolution that entails arguments are settled rather quickly and they permit men to be less concerned with their physical appearance. In this way the proscriptives of masculinity associated with the hegemonic man are viewed as permitting certain behaviors, rather than restricting them.

Finally, I've already noted the hegemonic man was resisted by Hunter. But this resistance wasn't based on experiencing of the hegemonic man's pressures. Indeed, it would be largely inaccurate to refer to Hunter's devaluation of the hegemonic man as an act of resistance. Doing so would entail acknowledging the hegemonic man's power in the first place, a perception Hunter denied and actively undermined. Therefore, rather than being seen as a form of pressure or permission, Hunter deliberately feminized the hegemonic man, creating him as a weak identity, othered to his ideal man.

Overall, the hegemonic man functioned as both a force of social restriction, necessitating resistance, and a force of social permissiveness, inviting acquiescence. And, per Hunter, typified a weak form of masculinity against which a more “macho” form could be constructed. Taken together, the differential accounts of the hegemonic man’s form and function have implications for how the hegemonic man is conceptualized and navigated. These implications are the concern of the following sections.

Hegemonic Masculinity as Multiple and Differentially Negotiated

It is difficult to say what masculine practices actually signify the/a hegemonic man. It would have been possible, even reasonable, to pull characteristics from the participants’ ideal men to further construct the hegemonic man. But my analysis sought to remain consistent with Connell’s (1995, 2005) understanding that hegemonic masculinity is a dominant form that requires all men to position themselves in relation to it. Therefore it follows the men constructed their hegemonic man when they spoke of social messages, pressures, or norms of masculinity (whether characterized as positive or negative). But what emerged from the subjectivity portrait analysis was seemingly more complicated than Connell’s (1995) delineated hierarchical plurality of masculinities.

The Hegemonic Man is not Necessarily Dominant

First, the hegemonic man was not necessarily assumed to be a dominant (in terms of a hierarchical understanding) form, as found in Hunter’s construction. Certainly, Connell (1995) could describe Hunter’s devaluation of the hegemonic man as a strategy of “protest masculinity” that in no way undermines, in fact may reify, the hegemonic

man's position at the top of a masculinity hierarchy (p. 109). But this interpretation would lock Hunter in a structural system of power, assuming any practice of masculinity counter to what is considered hegemonic invariably holds less social power. It would fail to account for the discursive power Hunter's rugged individual may affect over the hegemonic man, evidenced when Hunter stated, "I think the hegemonic man is kind of a pussy."

Connell addresses this critique from the standpoint of "agency." In a reformulation of the gender hierarchy that underpins the hegemonic man, Connell (2005) says hegemonic masculinity should recognize "the agency of subordinated groups as much as the power of dominant groups and the mutual conditioning of gender dynamics and other social dynamics" (p. 848). But this agency is that of an always already subordinated masculinity that "lacks the economic resources and institutional authority" (Connell, p. 848). Therefore Hunter's devaluation of the hegemonic man would be likened to that of a younger smaller brother, throwing stones at his stronger older brother, and then running away in fear of retaliation. But Hunter's estimation of the hegemonic man does not resonate this dynamic. He seems to feel sorry for the hegemonic man, as if the younger brother has realized his older brother is an invalid and hence physically incapable of retribution.

The Hegemonic Man is Multiple

It is Connell (1995) who first began to theorize masculinity as multiple. And certainly it is now commonplace to talk about varying forms of masculinity: masculinities of Latin American men (Gutmann & Vigoya, 2005), masculinities of

women (Halberstam, 2002), and masculinities of female-to-male transsexuals (Rubin, 2003), for example. Connell (1995, 2005) also makes clear that hegemonic masculinity is neither universal nor ahistorical but varies over time and social locations. Connell (2005) states, “Both at the local and a broad social level, the situations in which masculinities were formed change over time. These changes... result in redefinitions of socially admired masculinity” (p. 846).

But none of this accounts for the multiplicity of the hegemonic men constructed by the male graduate students. As discussed above, their hegemonic men did share some commonalities, but also differed in both their form and function. And some definitions outright contradicted one another. Is the hegemonic man concerned with his physical appearance or is he more likely to dress slovenly? If the current understanding of the hegemonic man were to be maintained, then one (or more) of three solutions would be necessary to resolve this contradiction.

The first would be to decide one of the participants is wrong. It could be determined, for example, that Hunter is mistaken in his account that the hegemonic man attends to his appearance. This concern for dress might be better associated with a “metrosexual” form of masculinity, for example. The problem with this solution is its unsatisfactory reliance on some “objective” standpoint that has access to the “reality” of the current historical and locally constructed hegemonic man. Given the multiplicity of masculinities, who decides the true characteristics of the hegemonic man and how is this decision made?

The second solution would involve a both/and position in which the hegemonic man could be creatively defined as both concerned with his dress and possessing the

freedom to be unconcerned with his dress. This solution is appealing, but it lacks preciseness and reduces the hegemonic man to a simple synonym for male power. If any masculine practice can be characterized as hegemonic, then what is meant by hegemonic masculinity? When “what appears to be a subordinated masculinity in one site always has the potential to be a hegemonic masculinity in another” (Whitehead, 2002, p.94), then hegemonic masculinity becomes omnipotent and omnipresent. It is therefore reduced to signifying a totality of male power.

The third solution would be to localize the hegemonic men of which the two participants speak. It is possible, for example, Hunter’s hegemonic man is constructed in the context of his work as an outdoor guide and he would see his ideal man’s dirty clothes as distasteful to the professional hegemonic man. Jake’s hegemonic man, on the other hand, might have been constructed in the context of his academic department where he sees his female peers dressing up when they teach and the males attending less to their clothing. This perspective too is tempting, but it runs into similar problems as the second solution above. If hegemonic masculinity is so local that two white male graduate students at the same university construct different hegemonic men, then at what point do we draw circles around localities? Connell (2005) addresses this critique somewhat by arguing the hegemonic man can be analyzed at the “local,” (family, organization, immediate community), “regional” (culture, nation-state), and “global” (transnational organizations) levels. But this begs the question, how is it decided which hegemonic man dominates and how is this dominance effected? The family’s hegemonic man, for example, may be quite different than the department’s hegemonic man. Once again it becomes apparent any practice of masculinity can be hegemonic in any locale and the

same critique follows. If hegemonic masculinity can be anything at any time then it is invariably reducable to male power.

It is through Clark's notion of thesaurisizing masculinity that a way of thinking about hegemonic masculinity presents itself that allows for the multiplicity of the hegemonic man's form and function. Indeed, Clark's desire to "thesaurize" masculinity depends on a multiple, contested, and negotiated account of the hegemonic man. The following section follows Clark's example and introduces a revised account of the hegemonic man as a point of individual negotiation.

Social Webs, Thesaurisizing, and M.C. Escher

I introduce the reconceptualization of the hegemonic man suggested by the participant's constructions by attending to the question of why it would be useful to maintain the hegemonic man concept in the first place. Given the criticisms above, would it not be wiser to follow Whitehead (2002) and do away with the hegemonic man all together? I want to be clear I find the *idea* of the hegemonic man compelling and of theoretical import *if the hegemonic man is taken to signify a discursive subject* men position themselves with and against, as Connell (2005) has argued. Therefore, counter Connell (1995, 2005), the hegemony of the hegemonic man is not a structural social hegemony (signifying male power), but rather embodies the assumed normalcy and power of a particular constructed masculinity within a network of subjectivities. In this way I align with Hall (1997) who argues hegemony can be reinterpreted closer to a circulatory and productive model of power that is more about negotiation than domination. And because he is negotiated, he is also performative. He is less of a

signifier of masculinity role privilege and more of an identity constituted by repetition. In other words, the hegemonic man is the construction of masculinity with which men most struggle, aspire, align, resist, reject, adopt, devalue, grapple, perform, and/or ignore. The hegemonic man is then, as Franklin described, the center of a funnel around which other subjectivities circulate. They are dependent upon his existence for their definition, but this does not necessarily mean he is the form that dominates (in the negative sense). In a different visual, that of a social web, the hegemonic man is represented by the key node. He is the subjectivity by which all other subjectivities come into being and were he to be extracted from this web of signification, the system would invariably collapse.

Clark's call to "thesaurisize" the hegemonic man implies this social web and suggests the hegemonic man as an important point of negotiation. Given the hegemonic man's presence is integral to the social web, there is no doing away with him. But he can be negotiated in ways that challenge his purchase to the category male. Thesaurisizing the hegemonic man means proliferating the number of masculinity nodes on the web, and, in effect, greasing and increasing their connections so they can be easily taken up, combined, removed, and reconstructed.

Returning to the painting metaphor, I am drawn to M.C. Escher's *Relativity* (1953) to summarize a *combined* image of all the participants' hegemonic men (see Figure 2).

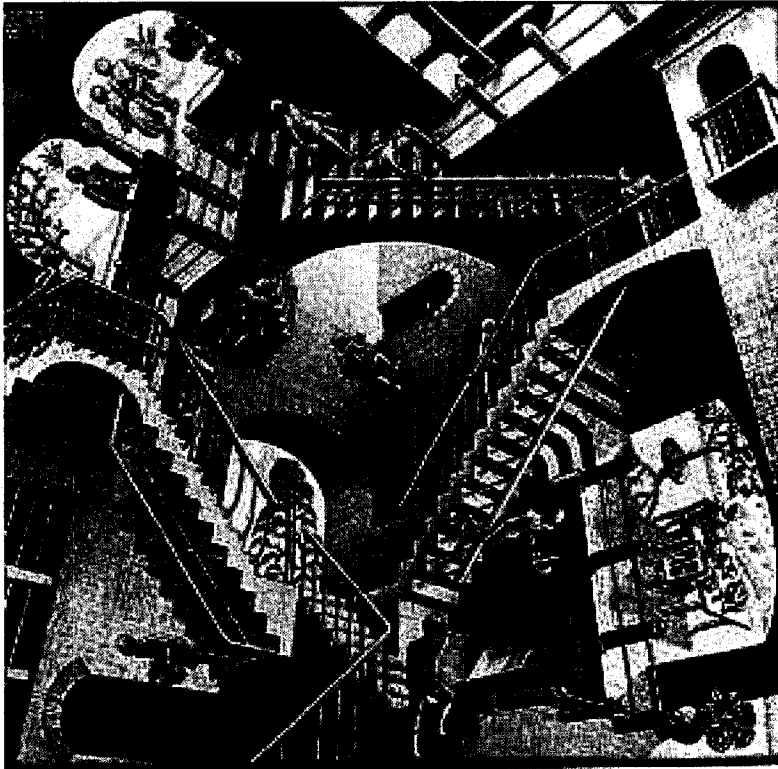


Figure 2

*Electronic Image of M.C. Escher's (1953) Relativity*¹²

This painting presents the viewer with a world in which the laws of gravity do not apply. Rather than containing one center of gravity, *Relativity* depicts three gravity wells inhabited by cloned figures. Similar to Franklin's funnel, these gravity wells represent the participants' constructions of their hegemonic men and the figures might be akin to the participant's attempt to navigate those wells. Yet M.C. Escher throws us another loop. Every figure has access to two of the three wells and here is where the hegemonic man's contextuality is best understood, something the social web metaphor couldn't quite capture without some creative reworking. The hegemonic man's productive power

¹²All M.C. Escher works (c) 2007 The M.C. Escher Company - the Netherlands. All rights reserved. Used by permission. www.mcescher.com

extends only within his own sphere of influence. Taken together, the hegemonic men represented by the gravity wells produce nonsense. Just as the M.C. Escher painting depicts an overall world that defies the laws of physics, this conceptualization of the hegemonic man defies the structural “laws” of hegemony. Power emerges only within, rather than between, the gravity wells. *Relativity* then is just that, a depiction of the relative productive power of the hegemonic man.

But all this is not to say the hegemonic man’s power is solely productive in a positive sense. Certainly the participants pointed to instances of power as domination effected by their hegemonic men’s construction. The following section returns to the concept of “male dominance” in higher education by considering the ways the participants’ hegemonic men entailed oppressive power.

The Hegemonic Man and Instances of Domination

This section concerns two types of domination exercised by the construction of the hegemonic man. The first is *dominance over “Others”* as it plays out in the material actualities of gender inequality. It is the dominance of discursive identities where the privileging of dominant notions of masculinity results in the devaluation and oppression of women and gay men (for example). The second is dominance in the form of *subjugation*. This form of dominance refers to the power of hegemonic masculinity to insist on its own veracity and perpetuation and seek “to constrain the subject through the force of coercion” (Butler, 2002, p. 71). At the level of the individual this translates to instances when the hegemonic man dominates the individual’s social web and affects the individual’s subsequent *desire* to take up those norms as practices of self-signification.

In other words, the power of subjectification is found in the man's desire "to be" a man (Butler, 1997).

Male Dominance of "Others"

The analysis of male dominance over "Others" was conducted by examining the women and gay men that arose from the participants' constructions of their ideal men. It is important to remember the participants' ideal men reflected their ontological projects (Whitehead, 2002), signifying their desire to make masculine subjectivities real (Butler, 1997). To make man real entails a "process of 'othering'—marking groups as different and excluded" (Whitehead & Barrett, 2001, p. 22). The analysis suggested connecting the ideal man/person to norms of masculinity (often located within the hegemonic man) given within the heterosexual matrix had implications for the othering of gay men and women. While othering does not necessarily imply domination and oppression, as in the othering that constructs the teacher-student relationship, for example, this section specifically attends to the masculine discourses that were implicated in instances of domination.

Graham, for example, constructed an ideal man who is a natural leader. Within the proscriptions of the heterosexual matrix, this means women are invariably cast as "natural followers." In this way the oppression of women is affected by denying them access to leadership qualities and positions, especially in the public sphere. This is nowhere better evidenced than in the U.S. House of Representatives and Senate whose percent female is currently 17% and 16%, respectively. A quick glance at higher

education reveals a similar phenomenon: in 2006 women constituted only 23% of U.S. university presidents (American Council on Education, 2007).

Hunter's construction of the ideal man similarly revealed the oppressive power of dominant masculine discourses. Hunter's ideal man was valued for not needing to talk about personal or emotional issues. Women, who apparently have a natural desire to share their feelings, were thereby characterized as irrational and needy. Thus relegated to the private, emotional, and domestic sphere, it is no surprise women more readily gravitate to "female professions" including human development, teaching, and nursing (Twombly, 1998). This oppressive or regulatory impact of this discourse means undergraduate women in higher education constitute clear majorities in the "caring" disciplines of Education, Social Work, and Psychology, for example (Andres & Adamuti-Trache, 2006).

But Hunter's construction of the ideal man as silent about personal issues had implications for gay men too. When the gay man raises his voice to decry the social injustices he experiences, any power associated with this act of resistance was nullified by the dominant discourse of masculinity that associates personal disclosure with femininity. Only when the gay man remained silent was he allowed purchase to the so-called social power of normative masculinity. In *Academic Outlaws* Tierney (1997a) refers to this silencing as advancing an assimilationist agenda. He argues changes in higher education necessitate not only hearing queer voices, but involving queers in the process of dictating the rules by which voices are heard. He states:

We cannot simply wish to be included at the table; we must desire – demand – that we are equal partners at the table where we honor one another's differences. In effect, we not only get to the table, but we also have a say in what's on the menu. (p. 61)

Denying domination's inevitability. But it is important to note the dominant discourses of masculinity taken up by Graham and Hunter were neither totalizing nor socially determining in their oppression. Obviously women do occupy positions of power in governments and universities and Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender and Queer (LGBTQ) groups have, for example, successfully lobbied for anti-discrimination employment legislation federally (Executive Order 13087, 1998) and in 30 U.S. States (Myers, 2007). Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender and Queer groups on college campuses host gay pride rallies and marches and serve as advocates for LGBTQ identified students and faculty. Therefore any complete understanding of masculine domination in higher education must account for instances where it both succeeds and fails to assert itself. It should also account for the assumption of masculine domination's "masculinity." As Butler (1990) points out, that the strategies associated with male dominance can be taken up by other gendered subjects belies the assumed link between men and masculine discourses (and male dominance). The following section therefore turns to an account of power to maintain the link between men and masculine discourses; the power of subjectification.

Male Dominance as Subjectification

During an early interview, Graham said of being a man, "It's not necessarily something that you just go and try to pursue from the minute you're a little boy. It's something society says, 'You should do this.' You don't seek that." What Graham pointed to is the dominance of normative masculinity to construct the individual. This "positive" account introduces power as disciplinary and productive, diffused through the

social field, constituting and governing subjects, inducing conformity and obedience (Foucault, 1977, 1997, 2000). Butler (1997) takes up this account of power to explain why one would “desire the conditions of one’s own subordination” (p.9), what Hoy (2005) refers to as subjectification.

In this study the participants’ ideal men were analyzed as constructions that submitted to and/or resisted the proscriptions of hegemonic masculinity. The ideal men were revealed as the subjectivities that signified masculine ontological projects and *negotiated* the hegemonic man. To draw on earlier metaphors, analyzing the ideal men’s relationships to the hegemonic men addressed the gravitational pull of the hegemonic man on the ideal man. Understanding the ideal man’s position relative to the hegemonic was in constant flux and negotiation, the closer ideal men would indicate subjectification, further away would suggest resistance.

The analysis revealed all the participants constructed ideal men who, to some degree, resisted what they believed to be characteristics and behaviors associated with the hegemonic man. Graham’s ideal man, for example, was better than the hegemonic man in that he didn’t give into the pressures of being the nice and the tough guy. He stood outside and made decisions external to these social mandates. Yet Graham’s ideal man was remarkably similar to his hegemonic man, revealing his overall masculine ontological project as one predominately entailing subjectification. Graham’s ideal man therefore negotiated the hegemonic man by attempting to become him.

Clark’s ideal man, in contrast, employed multiple strategies when negotiating the hegemonic man. He impelled Clark to seek refuge from the hegemonic man by forming friendships with like-minded peers. He permitted Clark to “fit in” with the hegemonic

man in instances where the ideal man's resistance might cause Clark social pain. And finally the ideal man negotiated the hegemonic man through what might be termed open resistance, allowing Clark to mix gender codes and perform a masculinity at the boundaries of the heterosexual matrix. Clark's ideal man was therefore largely a construction that resisted subjectification.

Thinking about male dominance as subjectification permits an analysis of the continual process of (un)becoming a man. It contributes to an understanding of why and how both Franklin and Jake, for example, sought relief from the masculine ontological project (ironically through the privilege afforded the heterosexual male) by constructing their ideal persons as "gender neutral." These ideal persons were ultimately revealed to be constructions resonating dominate discourses of masculinity. Male dominance as subjectification informs us there is no outside gender; that "every human relation is to some degree a power relation. We move in a world of perpetual strategic relations" (Foucault, 1988b, p. 168). But this is not to deny the advent of male dominance as oppressive. The final section returns to the question of male dominance in higher education and proposes a new understanding from the exploration of hegemonic masculinity that combines both power as oppression and power as subjectification.

Rethinking Male Dominance in Higher Education

Allow me to briefly recap. This section began by examining the participants' constructions of the hegemonic man. The hegemonic man was seen to vary by participant in both form and function, suggesting his relative construction and influence within an identity network. Several metaphors, the social web, the funnel, and M.C.

Escher's *Relativity*, were employed to describe the hegemonic man's productive power, relative influence, and as negotiated.

Turning to the concept of male domination, this section then asked what could be learned from the participants' constructions of the hegemonic man in terms of "his" power. Firstly I considered a form of masculine power more akin to a juridico-discursive (Foucault, 1980, 1982) model associated with critical theory and discussed the hegemonic man as affecting "power over" other identity categories, namely gay men and women. Yet this power was neither accurately viewed as deterministic nor totalizing, suggesting power as dominance can be found in instantiations but not reflective of a universal condition. Secondly, I discussed masculine power as affected at the level of identity in the form of subjectification. The ideal man was introduced as a construction who negotiates the hegemonic man whose strategies were viewed as resistive and/or submissive.

This analysis certainly implies "male dominance" is more complicated than a critical theorist understanding that risks unproblematically linking male bodies and power and casting all marginalized "Others" as powerless victims. The power associated with male dominance in higher education was revealed to be not only oppressive, but also productive. But power's oppressiveness and production were all affected *at the level of identity construction*. It was not some global hegemonic man "out there" who oppressed all women and gay men. Rather, it was the local hegemonic and ideal men, constructed by the male participants while engaged in their masculine ontological projects, who drew on dominant masculine discourses and affected instances of oppression. In contrast, male

participants such as Clark were seen to construct ideal men who sometimes critically resisted the hegemonic man and his implication in oppressive practices.

Thus this study confirms theorists' arguments that male bodies should not be seen to directly imply domination and oppression (Butler, 1990, 1993, 2002; hooks, 1992; Whitehead, 2002, for example). Clearly males like Clark take up masculinity discourses that actively undermine the hegemonic man and deny his oppressive power. But it also does not follow that taking up of normative or "dominant" masculine discourses to construct masculine identity instantaneously affects oppression. What is required for power as dominance to occur is an instance, a particular social interaction in which two or more subjects negotiate meaning, bringing various identity and dominant and "non-dominant" discourses to bear on the situation. Graham's traditional male as leader discourse, for example, loses his oppressive power in the face of a feminist-oriented program in which he occupies the "powerless" status of graduate student. This finding aligns with the picture of the hegemonic man as associated with circulatory power, relative and perpetually shifting (Hall, 1997).

Negotiated-Male-Dominance

The above analyses and findings suggest modifying the concept of male dominance in higher education with the term "negotiation." Negotiated-male-dominance makes clear neither dominance over "Others" nor subjectification are inevitable conditions associated with male bodies or dominant discourses of masculinity. It also makes clear domination is neither ubiquitous nor deterministic, creating always-already oppressors and victims, but happens in particular social negotiations in which a certain

kind of hegemonic male is seen to “prevail.” This attention to how power is (only) affected at micro-levels aligns with Foucault’s (1978) understanding that “power is not something that is acquired, seized, or shared... power is exercised from innumerable points, in the interplay of nonegalitarian and mobile relations” (p. 94).

Negotiated-male-dominance directly intervenes with the noun-like nature of male dominance by linking it to a verb. In this way the necessary activity associated with performing masculinity (Butler, 1990) and affecting dominance are revealed. Similarly, hyphenating the terms implies male dominance is not something that stands on its own to be negotiated, but is affected in a process of negotiation. Negotiated-male-dominance also leaves wide open the possibility of resistance. Negotiation implies a host of possibilities of which submission and resistance are just two. Presented thusly, men and women in higher education may “choose,” not whether to negotiate, but *how* to negotiate discourses of masculinity that seek domination. They are simultaneously relieved of their relative positions implied by male dominance alone, those of oppressor and victim, but also shown how the genders they construct and the discourses they take up can create instances of domination and oppression. As negotiated, male dominance is revealed as a shifting, local, and “resistable” concept, and as such, a more ethical term for academics whose responsibility is to produce knowledge and assume responsibility for its impacts on local, regional, national, and global cultures.

Implications for Future Research

This section concluded that conceptualizing male dominance as negotiated renders the idea of male dominance affected in a binary gender order, among other things, more “resistable.” By resistable, I am referring to critical resistance, the resistance associated with desubjectification. Later, in the *Process* section, this dissertation will examine the link between critical reflection and critical resistance. This is important because in intervention work critical reflection is often assumed to have a causal relationship with critical resistance. I make a similar assertion above in arguing negotiated-male-dominance is more conducive of critical resistance than male dominance as hegemonic. This claim too warrants investigation. Future research projects could assess the features of a negotiated-male-dominance, how it is taken up, and what kinds of resistance and/or compliance it affects.

This study delimited its examination to masculinity and sexuality, asking questions around what it means to be a heterosexual man, and constructing the hegemonic man based on responses to those questions. This was in interest of focusing on “male” dominance and the gender order; Butler’s (1990, 1993) heterosexual matrix. But for all participants, delimiting the analysis to gender and sexuality yielded a not insignificant limitation. As Connell (1995) notes, men of color and lower classes are often relegated to subordinate positions relative to the hegemonic man, situating the hegemonic man as not just heterosexual, but also white, and middle (or upper) classed. And certainly race, class, gender, and sexuality cannot be easily separated in terms of identity negotiation. Graham’s analysis, for example, revealed racism as important to his construction of both the hegemonic and ideal man and his understanding of sexism.

While Graham's write-up did not ignore race, it can be seen to bracket racialized discourses in favor of an in depth analysis of gender and sexuality. I view this move as justified *only* in terms of the overall project's aim to deconstruct the heterosexual matrix.

What remains unexamined is how the hegemonic man is constructed and negotiated within multiple intersections of identity including ethnic, cultural, religious, national, and ability identities, for example. This is not to lock or fix those identities, but to explore (other) border territories; to examine how the hegemonic man as constructed by and negotiated within other identity discourses. Future research that examines how discourses of ethnicity (as othered to a normative "whiteness"), class, and culture are taken up to construct and negotiate hegemonic masculinity is needed. Certainly this research would be better positioned to more complexly theorize the hegemonic man as a discursive and negotiated subject by attending to the identity discourses of whiteness and economic privilege, for example, that are important in the construction the hegemonic man and his racialized and impoverished "Others."

This dissertation illuminated the "Others" implied by the men's responses to what it means to be a man and what it means to be a heterosexual. Women and gay men emerged as essential "Others" to the men's constructions of the hegemonic and ideal men. But the analysis, in most cases, had to infer the constructions of women and gay men from the hegemonic and ideal men. While this was reasonable given the aims of the study and the deconstruction analysis, richer information on the "Others" might have emerged had the interviews asked similar questions about femininity and homosexuality. Future studies of subjectivities might be enriched by asking participants to explicitly discuss both what they claim and claim not to be.

This section focusing on *Theory* concerned the hegemonic man and the implications of his construction in terms of form and function for theorizing male dominance in higher education. In the next section, *Practice*, I take a closer look at the participants' constructions of masculinity, most notably the hegemonic and ideal men, and ask how they came to be articulated. Specifically attending to the academic discourses taken up to construct masculinity, the *Practice* focus examines the links between the construction of masculinity and higher education.

Practice: The Production of Masculine Subjects in Graduate School

Still standing in the back of the gallery, holding my now half empty glass of Shiraz and a barely nibbled plate of cheese speared by multi-colored toothpicks, my gaze shifts from the paintings' foregrounds to backgrounds. No longer do I concentrate on the subjects portrayed in the paintings, but on the colors and shapes surrounding the figures. These backgrounds make the subjects' existences possible, and render distinct the difference between the figures and the figures and their surroundings.

"Interesting," I think to myself, "The discourses the participants drew on were like the backgrounds of these paintings. They served to make the participants' masculinities obvious and differentiable from other gendered subjects."

Taking a sip of my wine I look across the collection of portraits, examining the backgrounds, noting their similarities, dissimilarities, and how each functioned to shape the painted subjects.

The purpose of the *Practice* focus is to examine the academic discourses the participants drew on to construct masculinity. While the participants took up many

discourses to talk about masculinity in the interviews, this section specifically attends to those readily identifiable as academic; those often found circulating in specific academic disciplines or in higher education in general. For example, the discourse of social science that privileges concepts such as objectivity, causality, and linearity appeared throughout the participants' interviews to govern, broadly, the ways they talked about gender. Specifically this section asks what masculine subjects were produced (or producible) in the taking up of certain discourses and what these subjects were subsequently permitted and denied. However participants often drew on more than one academic discourse to construct masculinity. Therefore this section also compares the multiple discourses, attending to how they contradicted, complemented, and paralleled one another. The impact on the construction of masculinity in these discursive relationships is examined.

This section begins by describing how and why academic discourses were most often taken up by the participants, namely to theorize the nature of gender and of differences between men and women. Next I examine the discourses most commonly and/or saliently taken up across the participants: sociobiological, humanist, social science, (pro)feminist, and postmodern. How these discourses governed the way male subjects and their "Others" could be constructed and how they related to one another is discussed. Finally, the ways these discourses contradicted and coalesced is considered and the effects of engaging multiple discourses are discussed.

Academic Discourses: Explaining the Gender Order

To begin, the analysis yielded an important finding about academic discourses and the construction of masculinity. The discourses the men drew on did not, most often, function to construct their ideal or hegemonic men *characteristically*. The participants certainly drew on discourses of masculinity (men are natural leaders, for example) that described the characteristics of their hegemonic and ideal men, but the academic discourses served a more theoretical purpose. These discourses provided an understanding of gender that situated the participant's male subjectivities in relation to women and "Others." In this way the academic discourses were employed to explain gender and the gender order, as in the existence and nature of differences between men and women. This section examines the most prominent discourses taken up by the participants and what they allowed and prevented them from thinking.

Academic Discourses: Sociobiology and Evolutionary Psychology

Graham drew on sociobiological (Wilson, 1975) and evolutionary psychology (Barkow, Cosmides, & Tooby, 1992) discourses to account for apparent differences between men and women. Both discourses attempt to explain behavior, human or animal, in terms of evolutionary processes and principles (Vandermassen, 2005). As Petersen (1998) notes, "With the advent of Darwinism after 1859, competition and 'survival of the fittest' became dominant metaphors for thinking about categories of difference and how they develop" (p. 46).

Taken up by Graham, these discourses permitted the construction of males as characteristically oppositional to females. For him, men were better leaders than women,

who were more suited to following. These discourses also were employed to naturalize and normalize heterosexual behavior. If human behavior is governed by evolutionary principles, then heterosexual behavior would be more likely to promote the survival of species and their genes. Homosexuality is therefore inexplicable and “abnormal,” because its sexual behavior does not ensure the survival of the human species.

Alignment with other discourses. The sociobiology and evolutionary psychology discourses aligned well with other discourses Graham took up to construct a binary gender order. These included the yin and yang concept from Chinese philosophy and the bell curve from social science. Taken together, these discourses constituted for Graham a naturalized (as opposed to a socially based) heterosexual matrix (Butler, 1990) in which men and women were inherently different. But Graham also talked about men and women as having differential power. The sociobiological and evolutionary psychology discourses noted characteristic differences between men and women, but did not address the power injustice associated with those differences. Feminism therefore emerged as a potential challenge to the sociobiological and evolutionary psychology perspective.

Conflict with other discourses. Graham described himself as navigating two worlds, one of traditional masculinity and the other, of a feminist critique. Sociobiology and evolutionary psychology discourses can be seen to align with traditional masculinity in that they provide a theoretical framework for naturalizing gender behaviors and differences (Fausto-Sterling, 1992; Segal, 1999). Yet feminist discourse challenges the

power imbalance affected by assuming those differences. Graham's attempt to reconcile the conflict between these two discourses involved acknowledging men and women's power as differential, but suggesting different does not imply better or worse. Employing the yin and yang metaphor, Graham argued the kinds of power associated with women and men are equally important to maintain a balance between the genders. While men have economic and social power, women have biological and sexual power and Graham argued women should seek less to obtain men's power and learn to value more their own power. In Graham's account, the feminist critique could be attended by recouping sociobiological and evolutionary psychology discourses to naturalize the power differences between men and women. In this sense, the feminist critique served to strengthen Graham's construction of the heterosexual matrix by compelling a theory of gender difference that naturalized characteristic, behavioral, *and* power differences between males and females. As was argued in Graham's write-up, this reification of the heterosexual matrix is dangerous for women in that their natural association with sexual power makes them (at least partially) responsible for sexual harassment and assault.

The intent here is not to argue sociobiology and evolutionary psychology are inherently sexist scientific theories, although feminist critics certainly make this point (Fausto-Sterling, 1992; Segal, 1999), rather it is to note the way these discourses are taken up (interpreted rightly or wrongly) to naturalize gender differences and normalize heterosexuality. From this perspective, it is clear Graham adopted the perspectives allowed by these discourses to construct men as naturally different and having more economic and social power than women. While feminism challenges the justice of this power divide, it is by taking up sociobiology and evolutionary psychological discourses

that Graham could argue both genders (and their power differences) are necessary to create “harmony” in a binary gender order that insists on its own veracity.

Academic Discourses: Humanist

Both Franklin and Jake took up humanist discourses to construct an “ideal person” as opposed to an “ideal man.” I use the term “humanist” to refer to Franklin and Jake’s appeal to a universal human subject whose admirable qualities are (or should be) accessible to both men and women. My use of the term humanist is more akin to “liberal humanism,” which has come to denote a “unified, knowing, and autonomous” human being ensured of equality and liberty (Belsey, 1985, p. 8).

But it is important to note neither Franklin nor Jake came to the humanist position *qua* humanism. By this I mean both sought a humanist stance *in response* to a radical critique of inequality between the sexes. Franklin and Jake began with a (pro)feminist understanding of gender bias (Franklin) and patriarchy (Jake). They took up a humanist discourse to construct their “ideal person” as a gender neutral ideal because they feared talking about an ideal man would reify gender bias and patriarchal power. Franklin and Jake therefore took up humanist discourses to deny, rather than reify, differences between men and women.

The humanist discourse of gender neutrality permitted Franklin and Jake to construct the ideal person as a “gender free” subject. But Samuels (1999) critiques the humanist subject as shielded by a “veil of ignorance,” “ignorant of its sex, race, class, ethnicity, gender, etc.” (p. 94). Indeed, Franklin and Jake’s ideal persons were rendered blind to their own gender as when Franklin’s ideal person was faced with the “sexuality”

of feminine bodies in graduate school. While Franklin took up a humanist discourse of gender neutrality in order to challenge the binary gender system, the gender neutral ideal person wound up being non-functional in challenging sexism. Similarly, Jake's ideal person was rendered blind to the gendering of his ideal person. Both Jake and Franklin's ideal persons were largely revealed to resonate normative discourses of masculinity.

Alignment with other discourses. The humanist discourses aligned with Franklin's "anti-binary" stance and his appeal to an objective reality that positioned gender as a social fiction. It also aligned with discourses of masculinity associated with the Enlightenment, the autonomous self, taken up by Hunter to construct his rugged individual. And Jake's humanist discourse aligned with social science discourses that privilege objectivity, neutrality, Humean causality, and prediction (Polkinghorn, 1983). Indeed, Jake's write-up suggests the liberal humanist subject is largely taken to be the subject/object of social science.

Conflict with other discourses. Jake and Franklin both took up a humanist discourse to construct an ideal person as a challenge to an unequal gender order unveiled by a feminist critique. This is ironic given the historical conflict between humanist and feminist discourses. The radical second wave feminism critiqued the liberal first wave that called for "liberty" and "justice" for women, arguing liberty and justice would never happen when men and women had unequal access to social, economic, and political power (Echols, 1989). It is somewhat surprising, then, that both Jake and Franklin who generally drew on radical discourses would return to a humanist stance as an effective

means of advancing a radical agenda. Kimmel & Messner (1998) make clear why Franklin and Jake would not view their advocating of a gender neutral subject to be at odds with their feminist aims. They say:

...men often think of themselves as genderless, as if gender did not matter in the daily experiences of our lives... For example, we treat male scientists as if their being men had nothing to do with the organization of their experiments, the logic of scientific inquiry, or the questions posed by science itself. (p. xv)

It is therefore clear the discourses of science or social science returned Franklin and Jake to humanist constructions. Neither man had yet to turn the radical critique “inward” on their disciplines to examine how the discourses of science and social science privilege a masculine subject veiled as “human.”

Academic Discourses: Social Science

Jake most obviously drew on a social science discourse to construct the ideal person and to analyze the gender order. As described earlier, the discourse of social science is concerned with objectivity, neutrality, causality, objectivity, and, in Jake’s case, empirical research. It is through the social science discourse that Jake was permitted to value gender “neutrality” and construct the ideal person in lieu of the ideal man. It is also through the discourse of social science that Jake sought to understand the various impacts of gender in his graduate program. Via the metaphor of a regression equation, for example, Jake struggled to understand the extent to which gendered behavior is determined by biological, social or power based factors.

Taken up by Jake, the social science discourse simultaneously and ironically permitted the construction of an ideal gender neutral subject and insisted on the

association of masculinity with male subjects and femininity with female subjects. This association is enforced in social science research that sees, as Jake said, “masculinity as the sociopsychological variable of being a man.” While social science can advance a view of masculinity as multiple (Bem, 1981, 1993; Pleck, 1981) in alignment with Connell (1995), an analysis of Jake’s interviews suggests it continues to reify the heterosexual matrix that insists on defining male and female as real, discrete, measurable, and oppositional.

Alignment with other discourses. A social science discourse has already been shown to align with a (liberal) humanist discourse that touts a gender neutral subject. But, in Jake’s account, the discourse of social science was most often mobilized as a tool to investigate the veracity of his claims about gender. In this way the social science discourse functioned as a meta-discourse that policed other discourses and “truth statements” in order to ascertain and confer their veracity. Therefore Jake’s interviews were generally governed by the proscriptives of social science in that Jake sought causality; to mine the data of his past in order to explain why he thought the way he did about gender. In this way the social science discourse governed all other discourses and shaped the way Jake could make sense of his everyday life.

Conflict with other discourses. Similar to the humanist discourse, the social science discourse conflicted with critical discourses in *the construction of a gender neutral subject*. But, in Jake’s case, it is perhaps less accurate to describe these discourses as always in conflict and more accurate to say they sometimes coalesced in

ways that silenced or confused one another. For example, Jake's largely unquestioning adoption of social science's objectivity and neutrality muddled his ability to employ a critical gender critique of being a graduate student.

Yet social science methods also complemented his feminist critique when he noticed men's "privilege" to be heard in group settings. Having learned men often dominate group conversations, Jake used social science logic to "study" the "dynamics between men and women." Therefore it is important to understand that social science discourses can be employed to study both gender neutral and gendered subjects. Jake's interviews suggest social science methods can achieve feminist aims if the subjects of feminism are defined as socially or biologically gendered. As argued previously, this assumption risks naturalizing gender and power differences between men and women (Butler, 1990, 1993; Mansfield, 2002).

Academic Discourses: (Pro)/Feminist

Almost every participant took up feminist discourses, but their reasons and the effects of doing so were considerably varied. For Graham, feminism was a worldview encountered in his graduate program that challenged his heretofore firmly held traditional masculine beliefs. This feminism was largely associated with radical second wave ideology, with the aim of liberating women from men's oppression (Nicholson, 1997; Roth, 2004), radically altering the gender status-quo (Nicholson, 1997), valuing social and psychological differences between men and women (Nicholson, 1997), and differentiating between a biological sex and a social gender (Tarrant, 2006). Similarly, Jake and Franklin took up radical (pro)feminist discourses to critique media and society's

gendered messages. Clark also took up a feminist discourse to critique gender, but his feminism more closely reflected that of feminism's third wave (Heywood & Drake, 1997). This discourse will be examined more closely in the following section on "Poststructural/Postmodern" academic discourses. For now I will attend to the radical feminist discourses taken up by Graham, Franklin, and Jake.

The feminist discourses permitted all three men to construct the hegemonic man in terms of social pressures. Masculinity was not taken-for-granted as natural, but seen to be, at least to some extent, socially produced and enforced. Similarly, Graham, Franklin, and Jake understood men as having more social, economic, and political power than women. This is in contrast to Hunter who neither employed a feminist discourse in his construction of the hegemonic and ideal men nor in his understanding of gender. Hunter's ideal man, therefore, completely aligned with Hunter's man-in-general hegemonic man. Hunter did critique the hegemonic man whom he associated with professionalism and family life, but this critique was economic and class based, rather than feminist.

The radical feminist discourse permitted another construction, most notably mentioned by Graham; that of the guilty, power-hungry, and violent man. It is not uncommon in the masculinity studies literature, mostly informed by second wave feminist thought, to decry the masculine subject radical feminism is seen to put forward. As Kilmartin (2007) notes, "The stereotype of men as socially and economically powerful does not fit the experience of most men" (p. 184). If the radical feminist discourse positions women as the victims of men, then Graham's account suggests he felt like a victim of discourse. Macnamara (2006) argues this effect is "a more sinister

element of feminism” that leaves no option for the individual man to form a positive identity (p. 37). To construct a positive way of being a man necessitates mobilizing a different discourse. Franklin and Jake’s taking up of a humanist discourse, for example, could be seen as a negotiation of hegemonic masculinity that unsuccessfully attempted to construct a positive way of being without relegating men to the oppressor position in the gender order.

Alignment with other discourses. While radical feminism is one of three “critical theories” (alongside critical race theory and Marxism), none of the participants took up critical race or Marxist discourses to construct the hegemonic or ideal man or the larger gender order. This makes sense given the study’s focus on gender and sexuality.

Conflict with other discourses. The radical feminist discourse most obviously conflicted with traditional discourses of masculinity. Graham made this conflict apparent in naming his struggle as being caught between two worlds. The radical feminist discourse was also seen to conflict with humanist (Belsey, 1985; Samuels, 1999) and (social) science discourses that tout “gender neutral” subjects (Keller, 1982). Radical feminists critique these academic discourses as making invisible the masculinity with which they are associated (Best & Kellner, 1991; Keller, 1982). Humanism, for example, hails rationality as a sacred human quality. Yet radical feminism notes how rationality is associated with masculinity and positioned in opposition in feminine emotionality (Boler, 1999).

Hunter's anti-dogma discourse similarly presented a challenge to radical feminism (and all critical theories). This discourse inherently devalued any so-called ideological claim, including feminism's claim women's oppression. Hunter partially associated this stance with a relativist lesson learned in graduate school where he had been "beaten down to the point where there is obviously no one right answer." Similarly, Hunter's construction of the rugged individual, who generally espouses an ironic, privileged working class masculinity, challenges radical feminism's naming of academia's masculine culture. But Hunter's was not a critical challenge. The position he constructed would argue academe is *not masculine enough*.

Academic Discourses: Poststructural

Clark most obviously drew on poststructural discourses to construct his hegemonic and ideal men and his understanding of the gender order. These discourses are exemplified by the theories that frame this dissertation, namely those that critique the gender order as reductively binary (Butler, 1990, 1993, 2004) and as relying on a juridico-discursive model of power (Foucault, 1980, 1982; Whitehead, 2002).

The poststructural discourses allowed Clark to talk about masculinity in terms of action, rather than a set of characteristics. Clark's ideal man, for example, was described as critical, resistive, wary, questioning, and able to have intellectual conversations and share his emotions. Indeed, Clark was the only participant who explicitly defined the ideal man (or person) as resistive. Taking up poststructural discourses, the male body was seen as cultural (Bordo, 1999); a site of gender performance and contestation. Clark's ideal man could mix gender codes and challenge the hegemonic man's ideals.

Yet the poststructural discourse also permitted Clark to construct the ideal man as a “masculine subject” both bounded by and productive of masculinity (Whitehead, 2002, p. 110).

The poststructural discourse permitted Clark to view the gay man as a veritable and enviable form of masculinity. Clark wished he had the gay man’s freedom to be emotional and physically intimate with other men. This is a far removal from radical accounts that position the gay man as a victim, or in Connell’s (1995) terms, as a marginalized form of masculinity. Similarly, Clark envied women’s ability to share their feelings and wear tight clothes. But because Clark drew on a poststructural discourse that views gender as a performance, he donned tight shorts and a t-shirt and grew a scraggly beard. His male body was transformed into a site of gender contestation that suggests a breakdown of the heterosexual matrix.

Alignment with other discourses. Here’s as good an opportunity as any to address the circularity of this (and every) dissertation. My study of masculinity is framed by the poststructural theories of Foucault and Butler and draws on the work of Whitehead (2002) and Hoy (2005) who similarly cite Foucault and Butler. While I employ Connell’s concept of the hegemonic man, I largely conclude he should be reinterpreted through a poststructural lens, rendering him a negotiated subject. Similarly, male dominance is reinterpreted as a negotiated phenomenon, rather than a universal condition of immutable gendered power.

Given my clear alignment with poststructural discourses Clark presents an interesting problematic. Noting his adoption of poststructural discourses I am tempted to

fill his write-up and this discussion with iconic smiley faces as in, “Yes, he’s got it right, folks! Couldn’t have said it better myself!” (As if I didn’t say it. As if I am not the painter). And here’s where I’ve got to be very wary of writing this dissertation’s findings and recommendations as anything but tentative and potentially useful truths, to be tried out, critiqued, modified, and ultimately (as all are) discarded for different truths. But mostly I’ve got to be wary of my attachment to Foucault and Butler whose worldviews with which I am so enamored nevertheless limit my thinking. As St. Pierre (2004) states, “I suspect that I can best honor Foucault by being wary of my attachment to him, by working to get free of the subject he has allowed me to think and be so that I might think and be a different subject” (p. 327). Ironical, isn’t it, that the best way to “be” a Foucauldian is to conduct a persistent critique that enables one to be something else? And yet I agree with St. Pierre (2004) that I must ask of my fondest attachment both what it permits me to think and what it prevents me from thinking. It is with this question in mind that I turn to examine the discourses that challenge those of poststructuralism.

Conflict with other discourses. For Clark, the radical feminist discourse most obviously challenged the poststructural discourse. While I’ve argued Clark took up poststructural discourses to construct his hegemonic and ideal man and to frame his understanding of gender as performance, it is important to note Clark also took up radical feminist discourses to critique instances of dominance. Clark noted the poststructural and radical feminist discourses were taken up in his department to create antagonistic camps in which, from Clark’s perspective, the poststructural position functioned to denigrate the radical feminist challenge. He wondered at the “coincidence” that young male professors

tended to adopt the poststructural position while older female professors identified as radical feminists. Clark said, “I don’t feel comfortable bashing female professors or their ideas with my male professors because it’s like, there’s something going on here. It’s more than just their ideas. You’re discrediting them as a person and as a female scholar.”

What Clark revealed is a kind of compatibility within the seemingly conflicting radical feminist and poststructural discourses. Or, more accurately, a productive tension and mutual engagement between the two discourses. The poststructural discourse would permit Clark to critique each group’s attachment to their way of thinking, as St. Pierre (2004) advocates, and the problematics associated with positioning these two discourses as binary opposites. It would, however, limit his ability to note how the poststructural discourse can wield power in a dominant way, in effect reproducing the heterosexual matrix. The radical feminist discourse allowed Clark to criticize the material impact of the poststructural versus radical division, noting the way it functions to devalue women.

There is nothing new about the positive impact of joining poststructural and radical feminist critiques. The term “poststructural feminist” has been around and negotiated for over 20 years after its most notable introduction in Weedon’s (1996) text, *Feminist Practice and Poststructural Theory*. But what Clark importantly suggests is the imperative of maintaining a persistent critique by continually taking up discourses and seeing what they can tell us and what they prevent us from knowing. It is with this in mind I conclude by examining the impacts of taking up multiple discourses.

Conclusion: Multi-Discursivity

To review, the *Practice* section discussed five salient academic discourses (sociobiology, humanism, social science, radical feminist, and poststructural) the male graduate students drew on to construct masculinity and describe the gender order. Given their graduate disciplines, these discourses were largely predictable, as most were readily available in the men's respective programs. The exception to this statement might be the computer scientist whose radical perspective he said came from his partner and humanities background. The sociobiology discourse permitted the construction of a largely essentialized and binary gender order that aligned well with traditional discourses of masculinity. The humanist and social science discourses permitted the construction of "gender neutral" subjects that were ultimately revealed to be masculine constructions. The radical feminist discourse permitted men to think about masculinity as produced and enforced and resulted in the construction of the hegemonic man. The radical feminist discourse also located power and masculinity in male bodies, creating the man-as-oppressor subject position. And the poststructural position permitted an understanding of gender as produced, performed, and negotiated, resulting in the construction of active subjects who mix gender codes.

For each participant these discourses combined and coalesced in different ways. Graham showed us the potential danger of taking up one discourse against another. Faced with a feminist critique of male power, Graham's retheorized the difference between men and women to include the concept of power. Through the lens of sociobiology, no longer were men and women just naturally different in their characteristics, they became naturally different in the power associated with their gender.

In contrast, Clark demonstrated the expansive potential of taking up multiple discourses. I believe the difference between Clark and Graham is the extent to which they desired the “truth” of their discourses. Graham was largely new to the feminist challenge. He was struggling with the implications of feminism and his traditional views of masculinity, experiencing what Butler (2002) refers to as a challenge to his sense of self.

Clark, on the other hand, never named himself a poststructuralist. To take up the discourses of critical theory therefore did not present a threat to his identity. Rather, he was able to maintain a (playful) level of distance between himself and the discourses that would identify him. It is this distancing that allowed Clark to ask the questions St. Pierre (2004) poses: What does this discourse allow me to think? What does this discourse prevent me from thinking? The ability to ask these questions, to seek Clark’s distance, is both emblematic of critical resistance and, as this dissertation argues, the telos and hallmark of academic inquiry. It is what Foucault (1989) would call the ethic of an intellectual: “to engage a type of knowledge and analysis that is taught and received in the university in a way so as to modify not only the thought of others, but of one’s own as well” (p. 303).

This discussion suggests academic discourses are far from benign ways of seeing the world, but function to govern the lives and the kinds of beings that can inhabit it. This finding aligns with feminists who critique academic discourses as male-oriented and (potentially) oppressive (Ellsworth, 1999; Harding, 1986, 1991; Keller, 1982, 1985; Leonard, 2001; Townsend, 1995, for example). Further, this finding aligns with Connell (2003) and others (Butler, 1990; Foucault, 1977, 1978) who note subjects are produced within institutions, including the academy (Leonard, 2001). Overall this dissertation

revealed how academic discourses are complicit in the production of gendered subjects, by being taken up to describe the nature of gender and the gender order.

Implications for Future Research

This dissertation examined academic discourses as they were taken up by male graduate students in higher education to construct masculinity and gender. The findings certainly suggested academic disciplines and their discourses are implicated in the production of masculinity and the gender order. But many questions remain unaddressed, potential topics for future research. For example, how do female graduate students take up academic discourses to construct masculinity, femininity, and the gender order? How do faculty, undergraduate students, and other university constituents take up academic discourses? And how are these discourses taken up in other settings such as businesses, families, governments, and religious institutions? This question gets at the idea that academic discourses do not confine themselves to the academy and more broadly examine the impact of higher education's knowledges on societies and institutions.

Lastly, it was found that some discourses, sociobiology, humanist, and social science, for example were implicated in the reproduction of a potentially oppressive and regulatory binary gender order. Given this finding, the "Now what?" question remains. I argued and will argue below that departments should include in their courses and supervisory relationships a discussion of discourse and gender. Future studies should attend to these discussions and examine their implications for how students and departments view gender. The academy as a site of knowledge production is well known, but the parallel process of the production of subjects examined in this dissertation is

relatively unexamined. And even less understood is how academic discourses amend themselves overtime given they come to see themselves as productive of subjects. Future studies that attend to how academic discourses have changed over time (and) as a result of considering their role in the production of subjects are certainly needed. This work advances what Foucault (1975/1995) introduces as “genealogy” in *Discipline and Punish*, where he examines the discourses of penal law and social sciences for how they jointly produce and govern subjects. The new question becomes, now that Foucault and other poststructural scholars permit an understanding of subjects as affected by academic discourses, (how) have academic discourses amended themselves?

Returning to the purposes of this dissertation, the question of reflection and resistance remains to be examined. How male graduate students reflect on and resist the gendered subjects produced, in part, by taking up academic discourses is the topic of the final foci, *Process*. The *Process* section begins by reflecting on the interviews as locations of critical reflection and resistance. It asks to what extent critical reflection can be associated with resistance that is critical, according to Hoy (2005).

Process: Critical Reflection, Resistance and Male Graduate Student Supervision

Polishing off the Shiraz and popping the last piece of cheese in my mouth, I finally look away from the paintings and at the other gallery visitors. They are mostly my friends and family and dissertation committee members. I feel they are her to support me and my work. I smile, noting two of the participants are having a conversation in the corner. I wonder if they've told one another yet their portraits appear in the exhibit.

Making his way through the crowd, my partner, David, joins my side. He's come a little late because he works until five and rarely gets off work early.

"I'm so proud of you," he says, giving me a big hug.

"Thanks," I say, enjoying the comfort of being close to him.

Pulling back we lock hands and look around the room. He can tell I'm nervous and gives me a reassuring squeeze.

"What does it look like to you?" I ask, referring to the visitors filing past the paintings. Ever the astute observer, David describes how each person seems to be reacting to the paintings. Some are surprised, some confused, some smile in recognition, and some stare intently as if trying to understand how the paint reached the canvas in the first place. Together, these visitors are my closest friends and best critics.

Looking again at the paintings, I think about the important role of criticism, both in my life and work. In the initial stages I'd thought about my interviews as being spaces of critical reflection where participants could comfortably examine their masculinity. I'd hoped critical reflection might foster critical resistance, assuming a link between the processes of reflection and resistance. But during the interviews I learned this assumption warranted questioning. Responding to critical questions about masculinity, thinking deeply on the subject, seemed to produce different effects for each participant.

"I want to look at something," I say as I release David's hand and walk down the row of paintings. Attuned to the interview as a process of fostering critical reflection, I closely examine the participants' ideal and hegemonic men. What subjects did critical reflection produce?

This dissertation's final focus, *Process*, concerns the topics of critical reflection, the construction of subjects, and critical resistance. It asks what masculine subjects were produced when the participants were asked to critically reflect on their masculinities and to what extent critical reflection was engaged as critical resistance.

Examining critical reflection is important for two reasons. First, in the interventions with college men, one goal is to work with men to "challenge the current definitions of masculinity and begin to form new definitions" (Men Against Sexual Assault and Rape, 2007). Interventions with male undergraduates then function at the level of identity construction in which men are encouraged to replace old, traditional masculinities with new, socially just versions. As noted previously, this identity work relies on a unitary and essential understanding of the self, one that may fail to challenge a binary gender order on which dominance relies (Butler, 1990, 1993; Mansfield, 2002). Another problem with this aim is that it assumes (and reifies) the power of the hegemonic form. As I've argued above, the hegemonic man is best seen as a locally and contextually constructed point of negotiation, rather than signifying structural power. What is important to this part of the discussion is that interventions with college men largely assume changing men is *accomplished through critical reflection*. Colorado State University's (2007) Men's Project, for example, states its "participants will be engaged in a critical examination of gender socialization occurs [sic] throughout the training." It has become apparent this assumption needs to be interrogated and this dissertation begins the process of asking questions about the relationship between critical reflection and the subjects it produces.

Second, an alternative understanding of critical reflection associates it more with critical resistance in which critical reflection can be seen to affect desubjectification. In the *Methods and Analysis* Chapter, I described my interview method as an inquiry of discomfort. The alternative understanding of critical reflection aligns with the aims (to foster ambiguity and flexibility) and techniques (listening and bearing witness, eliciting beliefs and assumptions, questioning those beliefs and assumptions, pointing out inconsistencies, suggesting alternative ways the participants could believe, and asking questions that challenge taken-for-granted assumptions of what it means to be a man) of an inquiry of discomfort. These methods, combined with the participant selection criteria of a desire for critical reflection, were intended to create the interview space as one of ambiguity and disruption in which participants would, at the very least, come to see masculinity as (more) complex. The persistent aim of fostering ambiguity through critical reflection is precisely what Hoy (2005) would call “critical resistance,” given it is characterized as an active process that disrupts one’s sense of self (desubjectification). But similar to interventions with college men, there remains an underlying assumption of the connection between critical reflection and critical resistance. This dissertation interrogates this assumption by examining the relationship between critical reflection and critical resistance. It asks what features of critical reflection rendered it a form of critical resistance and considers the implications of these findings for an inquiry of discomfort.

The *Process* section begins with the topic of critical reflection, examining the various ways participants’ defined and engaged in critical reflection. It then turns to the subjects the participants constructed and the relationships between and with those subjects. What kinds of subjects did critical reflection allow and what types of resistance

or complacency did they suggest? Were the relationships indicative of desire, the participant's need to be recognized as a man, and/or distance, suggesting desubjectification? Throughout, the implications of these findings for intervening with college men and an inquiry of discomfort are discussed. The *Process* section concludes by considering these findings in light of supervision male graduate students.

Critical Reflection and Critical Resistance

The questions addressed in this section center around the hoped for outcomes of engaging in critical reflection (creation of profeminist masculinities and critical resistance). Until now this dissertation has drawn on a specific understanding of critical reflection whose definition and processes are described in detail by Brookfield (1987, 1998). However, in this section, I use the term more generally to refer to the ideas and processes behind similar concepts such as "self-reflection," "self-critique," and "reflexivity." In general, these concepts suggest a process of focusing on and questioning the self (however theorized) that broadly yields some positive social aim. My reason for broadening and loosening the definition of critical reflection is to create a space to analyze the men's definitions of critical reflection. Before describing the subjects and outcomes of critical reflection, the following section considers the participants' understandings and aims of engaging in critical reflection.

Various Meanings of Critical Reflection

Each participant brought with him a unique understanding of what critical reflection meant and what it would affect in the interviews. While all participants associated critical reflection with the notion of “understanding,” that reflection would yield some degree of self-knowledge, the participants’ academic discourses for example, mediated their understandings of what critical reflection would entail.

Graham came to the interviews caught between two worlds: one of traditional masculinity and the other of radical feminism. Graham sought to reflect on his struggle and what it might mean for his understanding of masculinity. For Graham, critical reflection was associated positively with challenge and would assist him to create a new understanding.

Hunter, on the other hand, was perhaps the least “critically reflective” of all the participants. He brought to the interviews a genuine curiosity about masculinity, but never described himself as struggling. His anti-ideological stance ostensibly nullified a critique associated with power such that Hunter could be described as reflective about masculinity, but without an element of criticism.

Franklin came to the interviews with a “feminist consciousness,” and sought ways to put his beliefs into action. The aim of critical reflection for him was to discover answers to the question, “What am I going to do about it?”

Clark came to the interviews to pursue his own definition of what it means to be a man. In his program Clark had been exposed to both radical and postmodern gender theory and from these studies, Clark sought to figure things out for himself. For Clark,

critical reflection meant to discover what he thinks about masculinity and to construct a masculinity of his own.

Jake viewed critical reflection as closely associated with self-analysis. He sought to “mine the data” of his past and present to understand how he’d become the man he is now. Through critically reflection, Jake hoped to come to some positive conclusions or gain useful knowledge to assist him in making future life decisions.

One important lesson to be learned from observing the varied definitions of critical reflection is that, despite a program or study’s best efforts to make clear their concepts, meaning is always socially negotiated. I had defined critical reflection in a certain way, based on Brookfield’s (1987, 1998) theorizing and potentially yielding Boler’s (1999) and Hoy’s (2005) aims (critical resistance). This understanding guided my interview practice, but the meaning of my actions, questions, and challenges were taken up differentially by the participants. The participants’ (academic) discursive environments, for example, mediated their understandings of critical reflection, just as mine had. From a social science discipline, for example, it is no surprise Jake associated critical reflection with the concept of self-analysis. This finding aligns with Taylor’s (2007) review of 41 empirical studies on transformative learning that found critical reflection to be differentially conceptualized across the studies. Taylor expressed a concern that these multiple understandings constituted a “lack of discrimination when identifying critical reflection among study participants and assuming that all forms of reflection are equally significant” (p. 186). Programs that seek to work with college men to critically reflect on masculinity certainly need to be clear about and evaluate the “levels” of critical reflection among their participants.

But, regardless of a program's clarity of its process terms, meaning cannot be guaranteed. The differential definitions of critical reflection can therefore also be seen to align with both Mac An Ghail (1994) and Riseborough (1985) whose studies concluded "students are active overt and hidden curriculum makers" (Mac An Ghail, 1994, p.179). As Riseborough (1985) argues:

...the lesson does not belong to the teacher, children can and do make it their own... They make a major contribution to the social construction of classroom knowledge. Children actively select, organize and evaluate knowledge in schools. (p. 209)

What this suggests is both an inquiry of discomfort and programs that intervene with college men should not take for granted the meanings behind concepts such as critical reflection.

An interesting application of this idea is in the concept of "cognitive validity" advocated by a group of researchers at the University of Michigan who developed a system for interrogating the intended and interpreted meaning of survey research questions (Karabenick & Woolley, 2006). They argue:

...a survey item can be said to have cognitive validity if most respondents in a targeted population interpret the item as intended, recall relevant thoughts, feelings, beliefs, and experiences to the item, and choose an answer option that accurately reflects those recollections. (p. 6)

Their procedure for interrogating cognitive validity involves asking survey recipients to describe what they think each question is asking and how they went about answering the question. Assessing student motivation instruments, these researchers have found participants attribute differential meaning to the same questions and these meanings can be very dissimilar to those the survey researchers intended (Blazevski, DeGroot, Friedel,

& Musu, 2006). While this is conceptualized as a problem of validity in most (post)positivist research (Phillips & Burbules, 2000), it is of less concern to narrative and other forms of research that seek to understand how meaning is negotiated. Yet it can be understood as a problem when only some meaning is assumed to be negotiated and other kinds of meanings are taken to be understood. This presents a problem for an inquiry of discomfort.

While the inquiry of discomfort gave much attention to the participants' meanings of masculinity, it neglected the meaning of the processes (of which critical reflection is one). Prior to the study, I failed to realize the impossibility of assuming an inquiry of discomfort's methods (listening, questioning, challenging assumptions and beliefs, pointing out paradoxes) would eventuate in ambiguity. Despite their varied definitions, almost all the participants associated critical reflection with eventuating in some kind of "solid" understanding. The aim of an inquiry of discomfort is largely at odds with this definition, seeking to constantly trouble understanding. While the dynamic may have "worked" for other reasons, this differential defining of the outcome of critical reflection makes complicated the ethics of conducting an inquiry of discomfort. It was essential I attended to the participants' reactions to my questioning and ceased any challenges that appeared combative or hurtful. This is not to say the inquiry of discomfort should be given up, but it is to argue an inquiry of discomfort needs to be conducted with utmost care. It should not only include an explanation of its processes and aims (which I did), but also a systematic interrogation of what those processes mean to the participants (which I did not).

Second, interventions with college men should similarly make explicit their processes and include in their programming discussions of what those processes might mean. How do the participants' understandings of critical reflection align with and counter the aims of the program? In this way, interventions with college men could benefit from working explicitly with men to intentionally co-construct definitions of critical reflection that more closely align with the aims of the intervention.

Critical Reflection's Subjects: Interventions with College Men

It is perhaps obvious by now the process of critical reflection (however variably defined) did not necessarily entail the construction of (pro)feminist male subjects, even among the men who took up feminist discourses and identified as "gender savvy." Hunter's ideal man was constructed as "more masculine" than the hegemonic man. While Hunter allowed women could be masculine, they were only valued when they were masculine, revealing Hunter's subjects as reifying of "male dominance." Similarly, Franklin and Jake's ideal persons were shown to be men in disguise, reifying the norms of masculinity by naming their constructions "neutral." But Franklin and Jake also took up feminist discourses and both sought to challenge gender "bias" and oppression.

Mistake of the resistive subject. Similar to the varied definitions of critical reflection, the subjects that emerge from a process of discussing and challenging masculinity cannot be assumed to be uniformly (pro)feminist. Indeed, none of the participants identified their ideal men as (pro)feminists. Jake's ideal man was the closest; part of what made him ideal was a commitment to social justice. But the point is none of

the participants could be described as having engaged in a process of identity work that created masculine subjects committed to a feminist ideology.

This finding generally aligns with Connell's (1995) study of men involved in the "environmental movement" (p. 121). Having been exposed to "feminism," these men were launched "on a project of reform. The project was to separate themselves from the mainstream masculinity with which they were familiar, and to reconstruct personality to produce a new, non-sexist self" (p. 130). But Connell (1995) found these "new, non-sexist" selves were not embodied. They were characterized by confusion and incoherence. Similar to the participants in this study, when Connell's participants attempted to resist a traditional and construct a resistive masculinity their speech was "unpunctuated with questions, unstructured by chronology, pursuing themes and associations in no obvious order, with ideas, events, and commentary tumbling out together" (p. 135). While Connell (1995) attributes this "gender vertigo" to a psychoanalytical separation of the subject and object, in my study this ambiguity and confusion signaled critical reflection. Whether gender vertigo or critical reflection, neither was necessarily associated with a "move towards social transformation" (Connell, 1995, p. 142.). As Connell stated, "The problem is that a degendering practice in a still-patriarchal society can be demobilizing as well as progressive" (p. 142).

This finding suggests interventions with college men that characterize their aim as one of transformation, getting men to adopt new identities, may be "failing" to meet their own goals. Their participants, similar to mine, may not leave their programs having taken up the (pro)feminist man as the telos of their masculine ontological projects. Yet both Jake and Franklin did engage in "feminist" practices that negotiated male dominance

on a local level. Jake's hat is a prime example. How then can Jake be understood as both reifying and resisting oppressive power?

The "answer," I believe, is found not in the process of critical reflection, but in the theorizing of its outcomes. Most accounts of critical reflection hold that, after a period of struggle and ambiguity (or "gender vertigo" [Connell, 1995]), the critical reflector is meant to construct a new and improved identity (Brookfield, 1987; Clare, 2007; Harris, 2006). In the literature review I discussed the problems of associating subjectivities and power with structures and bodies. Locating power in male bodies and masculine structures suggests a system of power that will always validate itself and can never be resisted except by replacing one set of ideals for another (as in the desire to make hegemonic a (pro)feminist masculinity). In the same way it is a mistake to locate resistance in structures and bodies. Claiming a feminist identity, for example, no more guarantees one will challenge sexism (Schacht & Ewing, 2004) than being a man guarantees one will drink beer and watch sports, to draw on a crude and stereotypical discourse of masculinity. Similar to power, instances of resistance can be identified, and it is fostering resistance that seems most important for programs that intervene with college men. As Connell (1995) astutely points out, "Broadly speaking, anti-sexist politics must be a source of disunity among men, not a source of solidarity" (p. 236). The resistance to which Connell (1995) alludes is a kind of critical resistance in which men actively seek "gender vertigo." Therefore, instead of subjugating men to a (pro)feminist masculinity, the aim would be critical resistance's desubjectification. But the assumption that critical reflection yields critical resistance similarly remains unaddressed. Therefore

the next section turns to the topic of critical resistance and examines its relationship to critical reflection.

Critical Reflection and Critical Resistance

Similar to the findings above, engaging in critical reflection did not necessarily entail critical resistance. Hunter's ideal man was very much a subject Hunter desired to be. Indeed, Hunter outright stated he was, "pretty much", the ideal man. Jake and Franklin both desired to be identified as the ideal person, and hence, as men. But it is important to note both Graham and Clark's critical reflection was suggestive of critical resistance.

Clark's ideal man emerged as enabling critical resistance, allowing Clark a "freedom to" choose which masculine discourses to pick up. The ideal man was further seen as affecting critical resistance because he functioned almost exclusively as a negotiating subject, rather than as containing a set of characteristics to which Clark aspired. Rather than seeking to be the ideal man, Clark's ideal man permitted him to play with gender, sometimes drawing on discourses that allowed him to fit in, and other times mixing gender codes to challenge the binary gender order.

Graham's critical resistance was perhaps less obvious, if not certainly less intentional and desired. It did not manifest itself in Graham's construction of the ideal man, for example, but was found in his current inability "to be" any one of his constructions. Caught between two worlds, Graham was not quite the hegemonic man and not quite a (pro)feminist man. He was experiencing Connell's (1995) "gender vertigo" (p. 137). Certainly Graham sought to be the ideal man, but he also allowed

himself the freedom to fall short of the ideal man's proscriptions. Graham's struggle was one of constant questioning and challenging of beliefs. There is evidence Graham valued being challenged as he associated critical honesty with close friendships. Graham's current situation, being the not-quite ideal, not-quite-traditional, not-quite-feminist man, revealed a form of critical resistance found in his inability to name and therefore desire the subject he currently embodied. Were Graham to come to value this subject, to mark his inability to be any one thing as an act of resistance, then Graham could be noted as engaging in critical resistance.

It is not surprising, given the varied definitions of critical reflection and the academic discourses from which the men drew, that critical reflection did not necessitate critical resistance. Only Clark drew on poststructural discourses to construct his ideal man and presumably this would make him the participant most likely to adopt my study's understanding of critical resistance. Both in an inquiry of discomfort and interventions with college males this suggests the importance of discussing different discourses and the ways of thinking about reflection, resistance, and gender they permit. In other words, the meanings that underlie an inquiry of discomfort and a masculinity intervention program's processes, outcomes, and assumptions should be brought to light and discussed in terms of how they are intended and how they are interpreted and mediated through other discourses.

But, for both an inquiry of discomfort and interventions with college men, it ultimately has to be "okay" that participants choose not only to maintain their desire to be men, but also to tout traditional or normative definitions of masculinity. This is not a theoretical, but an ethical statement. As Boler (1999) says:

My minimal hope is that students examine their values, and analyze how they come to hold those values. If, following such collective self-reflection, they assert: “I am not changing,” my work may be done: I have encouraged them to come to an understanding of their educational philosophy... But at a certain point, out of pragmatic and ethical respect – as well as a concern for the resilience of the educator – one must recognize that the revolution (however envisioned) will not be accomplished by educators per se. (p. 199)

Yet for those participants and students who are open to being challenged, who seek ambiguity and critical resistance, these findings suggest ways for working with men that foster critical resistance.

Implications for Future Research

While the recommendations appear in the following section in the form of “Lessons Learned,” future research is needed to examine the impact of working with male graduate students to foster critical resistance. What supervisory relationships currently work with men to critically reflect on their masculinity and what are the outcomes of these relationships?

Similarly, while this section considered the implications for conducting an inquiry of discomfort, the analysis did not directly examine the impact of interviewing in this way. Future studies that employ this interview method should consider asking questions about its impact and examine how the method was employed. The proceeding section, for example, generally assumes I employed what I referred to as an inquiry of discomfort with all participants in a similar manner. This is highly unlikely given some participants may have received a “double dose” of discomfort while others received little. In this respect, the inquiry of discomfort is viewed as much a method as it is an intervention and

future studies should attend to the “fidelity” of the interview as an intervention¹³. How are participants and researchers impacted by the interview method? How does the interview method change depending upon who is being interviewed and in what settings? What are the potential impacts of these changes on the data elicited?

But viewing the interview methods as inextricable from the findings is only part of the picture. Something, perhaps less obvious, happens when researchers invite participants to tell their stories. Selves emerge in these dialogues, not uncovered or discovered selves, but those produced in “relations of dependency” (Butler, 2008, p. 29). Indeed, Butler’s (2004, 2005, 2008) more recent work is increasingly concerned with the intersubjective nature of the self; the “I’s” who emerge “only in address to you” (Butler, 2005, p. 82). She says:

I might try to tell a story about what I am feeling, but it would have to be a story in which the every “I” who seeks to tell the story is stopped in the midst of the telling. The very “I” is called into question by its relation to the one to whom I address myself. This relation to the Other does not precisely ruin my story or reduce me to speechlessness, but it does, invariably, clutter my speech with signs of its undoing.... And so when we speak about my sexuality or my gender, as we do (and as we must) we mean something complicated by it. Neither of these is precisely a possession, but both are to be understood as modes of being dispossessed, ways of being for another, or, indeed, by virtue of another. (Butler, 2004, p. 19)

An ethic of intersubjectivity had me attending to these selves; the (heterosexual) woman I was and could be in relation to the men I interviewed. Hunter’s interviews serve as an illustration. During the interviews, I struggled with the kind of woman

¹³ Conceptualizing the interview, especially the narrative interview, as an intervention is most common among counseling researchers who attend to the therapeutic benefits (and risks) of life story interviewing (e.g., Bakan, 1996; Bar-On, 1996; Josselson, 1995; Rosenthal, 2003; Wiersma, 1992). An inquiry of discomfort advances this understanding by suggesting much qualitative interviewing should be thought of as intervening in some way. The researcher is therefore ethically responsible to attend to the subjects produced in interview contexts. This means making explicit the theory, processes, and outcomes of the interview and analyzing the processes as co-extensive with the study’s findings.

Hunter's speech implied I could be: a) The overworked, stressed out graduate student who takes things too seriously, b) The fluffy, smell good girl, or c) The burly woman. I identified with none of these women, yet I found myself approximating the burly woman in part to win Hunter's approval; to be as Butler (2004) would say, intelligible or recognizable to Hunter.

The point is the kinds of subjects that emerged in these interviews were not just socially constructed and discursive, but intersubjective, necessarily reliant on another for their emergence. This dissertation illuminated the former processes, bringing to light the masculine and academic norms "that preceed and exceed the subject," (Butler, 2008, p. 27) making the construction of the masculine subject (and his "Others") possible. But it did not attend to what Butler (2008) enumerates as the second kind of "inquiry for an ethical philosophy:"

The first is, What are these norms to which my very being is given over, that have the power to install me, or, indeed, to disinstall me as a recognizable subject? Second, Where and who is this "other," and can the notion of the other comprise the frame of reference and normative horizon that holds and confers my potential for becoming a recognizable subject? (pp. 30-31)

To more fully understand the production of masculinity in higher education, future research should follow Butler's shifting focus toward intersubjectivity, attending to the academy (and research) as a "dyadic scene of self and other" (Butler, 2008, p. 31). Who are, for example, the recognized gendered selves and others found in supervisory relationships? What selves and others are unrecognized and how does this failure call into question the norms that confer recognition? Butler's (2008) "social theory of recognition" suggests a different, but not incompatible way, of conceptualizing critical resistance. If critical resistance is about risking oneself, then this very risk may be

affected by the desire either for recognition or to recognize another *in the face of unrecognizability*. Following this line of thinking, critical resistance could be rethought and examined as the continual process of seeking the unrecognized/able self and other.

Having reached the end of the discussion, the conclusion weaves the implications of the *Theory, Practice, and Process* foci in an examination of how graduate supervisors can work with male graduate to examine and critique masculinity.

Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to examine male graduate students' constructions of masculinity in order to understand the link between higher education and the production of male subjects. The discussion considered the participants' findings in terms of the dissertation's three foci: *Theory, Practice and Process*. Theoretically, a new understanding of male dominance was proposed, one that redefined male dominance as negotiated. In practice, academic discourses were found to be taken-up to construct masculinity and make sense of the gender order. And the process of engaging in critical reflection was found not to necessarily entail the construction of resistive subjects or critical reflection. What remains to be examined is how these three foci weave together to inform supervisors' work with male graduate students. The following section considers the major "lessons learned" from this study and the practices they suggest for fostering critical resistance with male graduate students.

Lessons Learned: Facilitating Critical Resistance

First, I want to point out a single study of five male graduate students is certainly not a singularly sufficient source for creating a complete set of supervisory practices for

working with male graduate students. But more importantly, in line with the poststructural theorists on which I draw, the implications for practice I delineate below are not intended to be final or proscriptive. They are to be read instead as challenges to a current (dominant) way of thinking about graduate education, as possible avenues of resistance, and/or as tentative ideas to be engaged. Before turning to the lessons learned, the following section makes a quick return to the arguments for engaging college men in critical resistance presented in the Literature Review.

A Quick Return to Male Graduate Students

In the Literature Review chapter I argued departmental faculties are responsible for the socialization of graduate students into disciplines (Weidman & Stein, 2003; Weidman, Twale, & Stein, 2001). It is through this socialization process that students are introduced to and engage academic discourses that can be taken up to produce masculine subjects. And, therefore, it stands to reason that it is through the same faculty students should learn to critique and resist these gendered subjects. Indeed, research on critical reflection suggests it is best fostered in relationships (Taylor, 2007). Engaging students in critical reflection resistance means supervisory relationships ought not to be concerned solely with producing psychologists, engineers, scientists, or even professors, but with promoting critical intellectuals “permanently capable of self detachment” (Foucault, 1989, p. 303).

Yet this is not to deny the material realities of dominance. Male subjectivities are largely privileged in the academy such that to be identifiable as a male graduate student is to be always already associated with success. In the interest of opening up the academy

to a variety of subject positions, especially those othered to men, it would seem important for identifiable men to actively challenge their “identifiability.” Clearly there are other compelling reasons for engaging in critical resistance some of which include the freedom to resist the hegemonic man’s proscriptives that are generally associated with binge drinking, sexual assault, poor health, and early death (Courtenay, McCreary, & Merighi, 2002; Davis & Laker, 2004). But the point here is that academic disciplines and their graduate programs produce masculinity as normative and sometimes dominant and they stand to benefit in terms of allowable “diversity” by fostering critical resistance of masculinity. The following five lessons learned are examined in terms of supervisory work with male graduate students to foster critical resistance. They are discussed based on the assumption that is the supervisor’s role to challenge their students. As Leonard (2001) says, supervisors “should stretch you – get you thinking in ways outside your initial mindset” (p. 175).

Lesson #1: Male Dominance as Negotiated

The analysis of the participants’ hegemonic men revealed they were multiply constructed and not necessarily signifiers of dominance. That they were negotiated suggested male dominance is also better thought of as a negotiated phenomenon. This has implications for professors whose work with male graduate students aims to foster critical resistance.

As negotiated, male dominance becomes a shifting, local, and “resistable” concept. It simultaneously acknowledges power as oppressive and productive. In working with male graduate students, this understanding of male dominance may prove

crucial. First, it does not make the mistake of conflating male bodies with male dominance, recreating the oppressor-victim dynamic. Graham, for example, struggled with the linkage of power and oppression with male bodies that emerges from radical feminist discourse saying he sometimes felt like a “perpetrator” in his graduate program. Emphasizing male dominance as negotiated would permit Graham to take up discourses of masculinity that resist reproducing instances of dominance. These discourses include (pro)feminist, queer, protest, and other “alternative” versions of masculinity. But this is not to return to Connell’s (1995) notion of multiple masculinities. The second important component of understanding male dominance as negotiated is its conceptualization of power as a process of subjectification. With this understanding supervisors would work with male graduate students to critique their desire *to be* men, fostering desubjectification.

The question yet unaddressed is what this looks like within a supervisory relationship. I can offer my vision, guided by my experiences interviewing male graduate students, as a graduate student myself, and from the literature on graduate student supervision. The latter examines the graduate student-supervisor relationship from a variety of theoretical perspectives and angles and puts forward a variety of recommendations. Sumprer and Walfish (2001), for example, advance a theory of learned helplessness, arguing the sooner graduate students “accept the conditions of powerlessness as reality and the status quo,” the better their dissertation experience will be. In contrast, feminist scholars argue supervisory relationships should seek to undermine or problematize the traditional power imbalance between student and advisor (McGuire & Reger, 2003; Ropers-Huilman, 2000). Moving from supervisory and

traditional mentorship models where the faculty person is always, at least symbolically, taken to yield all knowledge/power, more recent work advocates feminist co-mentorship as a model for graduate student supervision (McGuire & Reger, 2003; Wolgemuth & Harbour, in press). In feminist co-mentoring relationships, each person “has the opportunity to occupy the role of teacher and learner, with the assumption being that both individuals have something to offer and gain in the relationship” (McGuire & Reger, 2003, p. 55). But to date no one has proposed the relationship be directed toward a desired outcome or telos. For supervisors who work with male graduate students in co-mentorship(like) relationships, the discussion below advocates critical resistance as an ethical aim of their work together.

In the context of a co-mentoring or mutual learning relationship where the boundaries of teacher and student are sometimes blurred, I imagine the first step would be to introduce negotiated-male-dominance. The pair would engage in discussions of the male graduate students’ experiences and definitions of masculinity within (and “without”) the graduate program. The supervisor would share his/her own definitions and impressions of masculinity in the department/field. The supervisor and graduate student would work together to identify and challenge instances of oppression within the department and field. Second, they would engage their own definitions of masculinity, seeking to challenge and critique the instances of oppression they engender and their own desires to identify and/or be identifiable as men. The aim would be to foster a distance, desubjectification, between the social categories of masculinity and individual men. The ability to maintain, or more aptly, to continually struggle to maintain this distance is what

Foucault (1989) refers to as the “ethics of the intellectual” (p. 303). His quote bears repeating as it neatly sums up the aim of desubjectification considered in this section:

What can the ethics of an intellectual be... if not... to render oneself permanently capable of self detachment? To be at the same time an academic and an intellectual is to try to engage a type of knowledge and analysis that is taught and received in the university in a way so as to modify not only the thought of others, but of one’s own as well. (p. 303)

Applying this ethic to masculinity involves graduate programs, faculty, and students in an analysis of how their disciplines govern gender and create instances of domination.

Overall *negotiated-male-dominance* emerges as a term that allows academics, whose role is to produce knowledge (that creates gendered subjects), to assume responsibility for the impacts of their theories on local, regional, national, and global cultures. The following lesson considers how supervisors can work with male graduate students to challenge the knowledge(s) they produce.

Lesson #2: Identifying and Challenging Academic Discourses

The findings showed the male graduate students took up academic discourses to construct masculinity and explain the gender order. The implication of academic discourses in the social construction of gender has serious ethical implications. First, it suggests disciplines should be attentive to and responsible for the ideas and theories they put forward. They should be aware and critical of the dominant discourses in their fields and their implications for the production of gendered subjects. Second, graduate education, as the process of socializing bodies into disciplines, should involve an interrogation of the kinds of subjects and thinking *different* discourses allow and prevent. This involves the ethical obligation of *interdisciplinary instruction* that would expose

graduate students to a variety of complementary and contradictory academic discourses. But, as we've seen with Graham, simple exposure is not enough when we understand disciplines as ethically responsible for the subjects they produce. Therefore disciplines also have an ethical obligation of what I'm calling *philosophical interrogation*. Graduate supervision should involve students in critiquing the discourses of their disciplines, asking what truths, realities, and subjects they allow and prevent. The point is not to locate a right, true, or better discourse, but to engage students in critical resistance; in a perpetual critique that resists the temptation to too strongly entrench oneself in any one academic discourse.

Lesson #3: Discuss the Ideal Graduate Student

Jake and Franklin's interviews both discussed the "successful" graduate student or scientist. Jake was especially concerned with the definition of success as he expressed feelings of failure for not being organized, efficient, and completing his program on time. Jake critiqued this model of success as based on normative standards of masculinity, a critique that aligns with Leonard's (2001) assertion that:

...the very concept of 'being an academic' (or a 'professional' or a 'research student') is gendered and classed: they are built around a number of divisions of labour and attributes associated with middle class masculinity, which construct femininity and working classness as 'other,' but which actually require and use the labour of women and the lower classes (p. 7).

Understanding the "ideal" or "successful" graduate student is presumed male and afforded supposed masculine qualities would seem an important in a critically resistant supervisory relationship.

Certainly the features of the successful graduate student will vary by department and college. Indeed, one constraint of this study is its focus on a particular kind of university: a land grant, state based, research one university in the US. Had I interviewed male graduate students at an Ivy League university, for example, the ideal graduate student would likely have differed. While likely still a “he,” this ideal student might have been younger, from a highly economically and socially privileged background, and better positioned to contribute intellectually to his field, for example.

This variation in definitions of success and their link to a potentially oppressive masculinity suggests graduate supervisors should work with male graduate students to examine the assumptions surrounding “success” in their department and field. Three questions can be discussed. First, does the male graduate student “fit in” with this model of success? Are there other models of success that might better suit his aims? Second, how is the successful graduate student gendered and how might this gendering entail instances of oppression? And third, what would be the gender implications of subjecting oneself to being a successful graduate student? How could the graduate student work to critically resist an oppressive and gendered model of success?

Lesson #4: Keep the “Critical” in Critical Reflection

More so than any of the other participants Hunter showed how one can be reflective about masculinity without necessarily being critical. Hunter reflected on, but rarely challenged, his construction of the ideal man. This had implications for how Hunter’s resistance could be understood. His ideal man was certainly resistive of the hegemonic man, but this resistance was generally reactive. Hoy’s (2005) project, to

theorize critical resistance, seeks a distinction between resistance that is “merely reactive” and resistance to domination. Hoy (2005) argues, “Critique is what makes it possible to distinguish emancipatory resistance from resistance that has been co-opted by oppressive forces” (p. 2). A close analysis of Hunter’s interviews revealed he reinforced a binary gender order by feminizing what he desired to devalue. In this way Hunter’s feminization of the hegemonic man emerged as a resistance co-opted by an oppressive gender order.

Therefore, Hunter’s interviews expose the importance of keeping the “critical” in critical reflection. It is not enough to simply name one’s gender and describe its features. Supervisors, in their work with male graduate students, should encourage thinking that challenges the assumptions, subjects, and instances of oppression potentially affected by masculine and academic discourses. As has been argued, critical reflection does not necessarily yield critical resistance, but criticality is a central feature to both processes if they seek not just to name, but to challenge, oppression. The final lesson considers one way supervisors can work with male graduate students to explicitly encourage critical resistance as an outcome of critical reflection.

Lesson #5: Value the Subject in Process

A common theme across almost all the participants’ interviews was the notion of struggle. Graham struggled between two worlds, Franklin struggled to act on his (pro)feminist beliefs, Clark struggled with the proscriptions of the Poster Man, and Jake struggled between his desire to work for social justice and to be a “good” student. All these struggles contained some element of unsettling, ambiguity, and confusion. Best

seen in Graham's analysis, the subjects the men currently embodied were largely unnamed. They were not-quite ideal, not-quite active, not-quite resistive, and not-quite successful. And, while none of the participants directly made the claim, by default they were all not-quite men. They all inhabited spaces of ambiguity and uncertainty, but it was only Clark who explicitly valued and constructed a subject who inhabited this space of perpetual critique. This is why only Clark was named as engaging in a project of critical resistance.

The lesson to be learned is one of valuation. Graduate students and their programs can come to value, indeed celebrate, struggles like Graham's and Clark's mixing of gender codes. While the "telos" of this work is important, it is the process of "getting to it" that constructs us as we are now. In this case the process is one of self-exploration, critique, and challenge. And it is this process of becoming that warrants valuing, modeling, and supporting in graduate school. In working with students, Boler (1999) says the "goal is greater clarity of our emotional investments and the ability to account historically for our values and their effects of others" (p. 199). Ultimately, students may opt not to change (although the extent to which change is conscious or controllable can be questioned) their "cherished beliefs and assumptions" (Boler, p. 199). Regardless, the "self" found in this process is one with an "increased capacity to shift... positionality" (Boler, p. 197). Graduate programs, especially those espousing critical orientations, would well serve their male (and female) graduate students by valuing this ability to shift discursive positions, what Boler (1999) refers to as "learning to inhabit ambiguous selves" (p. 196). Given this view, Graham could come to value his struggle and conceptualize it as a veritable form of masculinity.

Critical resistance necessitates a commitment to its aims as well as its processes (indeed, they are largely one in the same). Critical reflection becomes critical resistance when it is valued and employed perpetually. With this understanding, supervisors can invite their male graduate students engaged in critical reflection to understand the importance of the process, sharing the ethics and aesthetics of living a life committed to critique and destabilization. To view the self as always in process, decentered and ambiguous, certainly takes courage. To resist one's attachment to being a man or woman is to risk oneself, one's place in the social world, and one's carefully constructed understanding of how the world functions. Supervisors will be called upon to support male graduate students experiencing "gender vertigo" (Connell, 1995, p. 137). While it will never be comfortable living "at the edges of our skins" (Pratt, 1984, p. 18), learning to do so is the ethic of an academic; it holds us accountable for the knowledge we create.

The Closing

Looking up from the last of the five paintings I see the show is almost over. The only people who remain, clustered in groups and conversing, are friends, family, and, of course, my committee members. As is true of most endings, my thoughts are pulled backward to the beginning and how I got from there to this gallery.

Who was the woman who decided to study masculinity? I remember she was fed up with the woman she was supposed to be – the wife, the woman of feminism, and the woman of higher education, in that order. As a wife she'd found herself, much to her dismay, overly concerned with matching hand towels and maintaining a conscripted happy relationship. Per feminism, she was a victim, forever oppressed by men and the

masculine world. But she didn't feel like a victim; most of the time she felt strong. And in higher education her tears, vulnerability, and concern for relationships simultaneously conferred and affirmed her femininity and denied and devalued her academic self. The benchmark to all of these was some kind of masculinity. She wondered if men too were fed up with the subjects they were supposed to be. Weary of studying the "Other" side of the heterosexual matrix, she sought to trouble the side presumed normal and the framework that confers its sidedness. That was how she came to study men and, returning to the present, I hope this dissertation contributed to the body of (pro)feminist and queer literature that problematizes both masculinity's normalcy and the binary gender order on which it relies.

But interviewing men also brought to light the material (embodied) realities of gender. And with this understanding I also hope this work showed the importance of studying how academic discourses are taken up to produce gendered subjects. These subjects and discourses can wield power oppressively, but they can also be negotiated and resisted. And ultimately I hope supervisors will work with male graduate students to first become aware of themselves as gendered, the university as privileging their genders, but ultimately to foster critical resistance to the men the university and its discourses would have them be. This is not just the ethic of the intellectual, but an ethical imperative of the university. It holds men, academics, and universities responsible for the knowledge(s) and subjects they produce.

EPILOGUE: ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I know the acknowledgements typically appear at the beginning of the dissertation, but as I look around the room, tears begin to fill my eyes. I am moved to end this dissertation not on a theoretical or empirical note, but with gratitude for the people who have loved and supported me.

Across the room, finishing off the cheese plate is my dad, Hiram. Our eyes meet and he gives me a big, warm smile. I know I am lucky to always have had my dad's unconditional love and support. I could not have asked for a more loving and proud father.

Next to me is my mom, Mary. She's ready to go home, tired from all the socializing, but I know she'll stay on until the end and help me clean up. Looking at her I am reminded of the good that can come from adversity; the deep vulnerability of pain that brought her and me closer together. My mom was my friend, editor, caregiver, and advisor. Now she is also my best friend.

David, my "legal" life partner, stands next to me. Through comps, late nights, early and late mornings, weekend vacations to the library, and numerous conversations about gender he has supported me as I worked and pretended to work on my dissertation. Many relationships fail during the doctoral process, but David and I joked (half-seriously) that my dissertation was what made our relationship so successful. As I said to him when we exchanged our vows, I am looking forward to continuing to discover what our love means.

Other friends fill the room. Ryan, Chris, Phillip and Dave were always available for a good critical analysis of gender and/or a much needed hike/beer/movie/coffee.

Eric's humor and beers at the Ramskeller got me through the program and Lisa got me through my divorce. Becky laughed with me about "giving voice" and reminded me the findings would "emerge." Late nights of Bukowski poetry and wine with John and classes with Lynn got me started on this whole masculinity thing. Ellyn, Jim, Rose, Tim, Shelby and Kay, my R&D Center friends, I couldn't have asked for better colleagues. And of course the members of my dissertation support group are here – and although confidentiality means I cannot name them – over the last year we've become invaluablely close, sharing our sorrows and celebrating our accomplishments.

Julie and Richard, my lifelong friends who know me (and still, amazingly, love me) better than anyone; I cannot imagine my life without them. To Julie I owe the debt of mental health, how many times would I have crumbled without her support and love? To Richard I owe the debt of solutions, how many times would I have wondered "what to do" without his help?

I look up and notice my committee walking toward me. My heart skips a beat, wondering if this is the moment they'll welcome me as a fellow Ph.D.. I am grateful to Roe who joined my committee at the last minute, even with so much on her plate. Cliff always provided thoughtful feedback as we worked to construct a "feminist co-mentoring relationship." Barbara is my methodologist – but truly my dissertation advisor. What other methodologist would let you stay at her house for a week having never met? Barbara pushed my thinking forward when it got stale, suggested alternative avenues of interpretation when I felt stuck, pointed out holes to which I was blind, and cheered on when I'd got something "right." I owe her "quite" a debt I plan to repay another graduate student later in my career. I hope for now my sincere thanks will be sufficient.

And leading the group is Brian, my advisor in the truest sense of the word. From my decision to enter the Ph.D. program to contract work after I defend, Brian has always opened doors for me and been the champion of my career. His support is reliable and consistent, even when my dissertation grew from 200 to 300 to 400 pages. I could not have asked for a better advisor.

As Brian says, "Congratulations, Dr. Wolgemuth," I think about how my committee members have all modeled the kind of advisor I hope to be.

Tears now flowing freely I look back at the five portraits. I am so grateful to the men behind Graham, Hunter, Franklin, Jake, and Clark who were willing to share their lives, stories, and struggles with me. I thank them for making me a part of their conversation about masculinity for a brief time. I wish them all the best as they continue to explore and challenge what it means "to be" men.

May we all risk clinging a little less tightly to ourselves.

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APPENDIX A
CONSENT FORM AND RECRUITMENT LETTERS

Consent to Participate in a Research Study Colorado State University

TITLE OF STUDY: INTELLECT, INTER(DIS)COURSE AND IDENTITY: STORIES OF LEARNING (AND) MASCULINE HETEROSEXUAL SUBJECTIVITY IN GRADUATE EDUCATION

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR: Brian Cobb, bcobb@cahs.colostate.edu, 491-6835

CO-PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR: Jennifer Wolgemuth, jennifer.wolgemuth@colostate.edu, 491-3168

WHY AM I BEING INVITED TO TAKE PART IN THIS RESEARCH? You are being asked to participate in this study because you are a heterosexual male graduate student attending Colorado State University. I am studying what it means to be men in different graduate disciplines. Your story about what it means to you to be a man will be used to understand how masculinity is experienced in graduate schools.

WHO IS DOING THE STUDY? This study is being conducted by Jennifer R. Wolgemuth, a Ph.D. candidate at Colorado State University. She will do the interviewing and conduct the storytelling analysis.

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THIS STUDY? The purpose of this study is to collect, analyze, and tell men's stories of masculinity in general and in graduate school. I am interested in knowing what ways of being men are most and least encouraged in your life and graduate program and what that means to you.

WHERE IS THE STUDY GOING TO TAKE PLACE AND HOW LONG WILL IT LAST? The study will take place in the Education Building on the Colorado State University campus. The initial interview will last up to one hour. You may be asked to participate in up to 5 additional in-depth interviews, also lasting up to one hour each, over the course of the spring semester. With your permission, all interviews will be audio-taped. These tapes will be destroyed at the end of the study. Before each interview, you may be asked to review the transcripts from previous sessions in order that you may check what I have written and make changes/additions to your responses.

HOW WILL I BE SELECTED AND WHAT WILL I BE ASKED TO DO? An initial interview will be used to screen participants. You will be asked why you chose to participate in this study and what you expect to get out of participating. You will be selected to participate based on four criteria: 1. You identify as a heterosexual male, 2. You are currently enrolled in a graduate program, 3. You are between the ages of 24 and 39, and 4. You desire to talk and think critically about your masculinity. If you participate in the in-depth interviews, you will be asked to tell me what it has and currently means to you to be a man and a heterosexual and what kind of heterosexual male you are in your graduate program. You will be asked to think critically about your definition(s), evaluating what you like and do not like about them.

ARE THERE REASONS WHY I SHOULD NOT TAKE PART IN THIS STUDY? If you are not comfortable speaking openly with me about your gender or sexuality you may not want to participate in this study. If you are not currently enrolled in a graduate program or you identify as a woman or bi-/homosexual, you will not be able to participate in this study.

Page 1 of 3 Participant's initials _____ Date _____

WHAT ARE THE POSSIBLE RISKS AND DISCOMFORTS? There are two potential risks associated with this study. The first is loss of confidentiality. Your identity may be revealed because of the level of detail in your stories and the disclosure of your graduate discipline. To minimize this risk, you will supply a pseudonym to help hide your identity. Generic graduate disciplines, such as biology and engineering, will be used to classify your academic areas, rather than your specific graduate programs. If you are from the School of Education, it is more likely your peers or professors will attend my dissertation defense or read my dissertation. The second risk is that you may disclose information that distresses you psychologically or emotionally. If this occurs, Dr. B. Dominic Brewer, a senior staff counselor specializing in Men's Issues, at the Colorado State University Counseling Center is aware of this study and has agreed to talk with you. He can be reached at: Barry.Brewer@colostate.edu, 491-5780. It is not possible to identify all potential risks in research procedures, but the researcher(s) have taken reasonable safeguards to minimize any known and potential, but unknown, risks.

WILL I BENEFIT FROM TAKING PART IN THIS STUDY? There are no known benefits to participating in this study, but I hope you will gain more personal knowledge about yourself and your masculinity.

DO I HAVE TO TAKE PART IN THE STUDY? Your participation in this research is voluntary. If you decide to participate in the study, you may withdraw your consent and stop participating at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled.

WHAT WILL IT COST ME TO PARTICIPATE? I do not expect this study to cost you anything.

WHO WILL SEE THE INFORMATION THAT I GIVE? We will keep private all research records that identify you, to the extent allowed by law. At the onset of the study you will select a pseudonym, which will be used to disguise your identity. This pseudonym will be used in all interview transcripts (replacing your real name). You will have the opportunity to review and edit the interview transcripts. All written products (my dissertation and subsequent publications) will use only your pseudonym. We will make every effort to prevent anyone who is not on the research team from knowing that you gave us information, or what that information is. For example, your name will be kept separate from your research records (with your pseudonym) and these two things will be stored in different places under lock and key.

CAN MY TAKING PART IN THE STUDY END EARLY? You may be asked to leave this study if you are unwilling or unable to talk about your gender and sexual orientation during the interviews.

WILL I RECEIVE ANY COMPENSATION FOR TAKING PART IN THIS STUDY? No compensation will be given to you for taking part in this study.

WHAT HAPPENS IF I AM INJURED BECAUSE OF THE RESEARCH? The Colorado Governmental Immunity Act determines and may limit Colorado State University's legal responsibility if an injury happens because of this study. Claims against the University must be filed within 180 days of the injury.

WHAT IF I HAVE QUESTIONS? Before you decide whether to take part in this study, please ask any questions that might come to mind now. Later, if you have questions about the study, you can contact the co-investigator, Jennifer Wolgemuth at 491-3168 or 720-841-6345. If you have any questions about your rights as a volunteer in this research, contact Janell Meldrem, HRC Administrator, at 970-491-1655. I will give you a copy of this consent form to take with you.

Page 2 of 3 Participant's initials _____ Date _____

WHAT ELSE DO I NEED TO KNOW? Your signature acknowledges that you have read the information stated and willingly sign this consent form. Your signature also acknowledges that you have received, on the date signed, a copy of this document containing 2 pages.

Signature of person agreeing to take part in the study

Date

Printed name of person agreeing to take part in the study

Name of person providing information to participant

Date

Signature of Research Staff

Page 3 of 3 Participant's initials _____ Date _____

Graduate Student FYI Announcement

MALE GRADUATE STUDENTS who identify as HETEROSEXUAL are wanted to participate in a RESEARCH study on masculinity in graduate school. Male graduate students will participate in 1 to 7, 1-hour interviews during the Spring 2006 semester. They will be asked what it means to them to be men in their lives and in their graduate programs. They will also be encouraged to think critically about their masculinity and to talk about what they perceive to be the benefits and costs of being men.

If you identify as male and heterosexual and are currently enrolled in a masters or doctoral level graduate program at Colorado State University please consider participating in this study. To volunteer or learn more, please contact **Jennifer** at masculinitystudy@gmail.com.

Participation in this study is strictly voluntary and participants can leave the study at any point. There is no compensation for participation.

Risks of participating in this study include loss of confidentiality and emotional or psychological distress. Mens' identities may be revealed because of the level of detail in your stories and the disclosure of your graduate discipline. To minimize this risk, men will supply a pseudonym to help hide their identities. Generic graduate disciplines, such as biology and engineering, will be used to classify academic areas, rather than specific graduate programs. The second risk is that men may disclose information that distresses them psychologically or emotionally. If this occurs, a counselor specializing in Men's Issues, at the Colorado State University Counseling Center is aware of this study and has agreed to talk with participants. It is not possible to identify all potential risks in research procedures, but the researcher(s) have taken reasonable safeguards to minimize any known and potential, but unknown, risks.

The Principal Investigator (dissertation advisor) for this study is Dr. Brian Cobb.

E-mail Letter to Recruit Men Recommended by Ryan Barone

My name is Jenni Wolgemuth and I am a doctoral student in the School of Education. I am conducting a dissertation study on masculinity in graduate schools. Your name was given to me by Ryan Barone as someone who might be interested in participating in my study.

I am seeking male graduate students, who identify as male and heterosexual, to participate in 1 to 7, 1-hour interviews during the Spring 2006 semester. You will be asked what it means to you to be a man in your life and in your graduate program. You will also be encouraged to think critically about your masculinity and to talk about what you perceive to be the benefits and costs of being a man.

If you are interested in participating or would like to know more about my study, please don't hesitate to contact me: jennifer.wolgemuth@colostate.edu or 970-491-3168.

Thank you for your time and consideration!

Jenni Wolgemuth

APPENDIX B

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE, FOCUS, AND QUESTIONS

Table 1

Type of Interview, Focus, and Questions Asked

Interview	Focus	Questions
Screening Interview	To determine whether the participants met the selection criteria	Why do you want to participate in this study? What do you hope to get out of participation?
Life Story Interview(s)	To obtain the participants' life stories as they related masculinity and heterosexuality	Tell me your life story, starting from your earliest childhood memory on up to the present. Feel free to include important events you feel inform what it means to be a heterosexual man.
Masculinity Interview(s)	To elicit men's constructions of masculinity	What are the characteristics of an ideal man? How do you meet and not meet this ideal? What do you like most about being a man? What do you like the least about being a man? If you could change society's definition of the "ideal man" in any way you wanted, what changes would you make?
Heterosexuality Interview(s)	To elicit men's constructions of heterosexuality	What does it mean to you to be a heterosexual? How do you know you are a heterosexual? When did you first know you were a heterosexual? What experiences made your sexuality clear to you? What pressures do you experience as a heterosexual?
Graduate School Interview(s)	To elicit men's constructions of masculinity and heterosexuality in graduate school	How are you a man/heterosexual in your graduate program? Did being a man influence your decision to pursue a graduate degree in your area? How? Who most exemplifies what it means to be a man in your discipline? Why? How does the kind of man you are change (or not change) when you are in school?
Wrap-Up Interview	To elicit what the men felt about and gained from the interview process	What did participating in the study mean to you? What have you learned and/or gained? What changes, if any, in your attitudes or behavior have you made in the last three months? How did my being a woman influence our conversations? How would you define our relationship?

APPENDIX C

PARTICIPANTS' RESPONSES TO WRITE-UPS

Hunter

Whoa. i do not envy your task of writing - but you have done well thus far. I like it - I got lost in some parts but I dont do this stuff anymore so I guess thats to be expected. I especially liked the conclusions, although I might have some feedback with the "graduate survival" part - though I might need to read the whole thing again. Otherwise - I enjoyed the intro the most. still very accurate description

As I type this I am wearing (although new) an equally clay stained pair of clam diggers and the same wool hat. I gave away my bike (the sweaky turtle) when I moved but have recently traded pots for a schwinn aptly named "blue" and am in negotiation for an old tandum townie which i would like to decorate with a role of fuzzy pink glitter fabric I found in a dumpster.

My new town is rad - to use a term for the 80's. It is like Fort Collins except a little townier? I am throwing pots and woodfiring them - wood-firing is sexy.

I think you have done a good job - if you want some feedback please feel free to give me a call- otherwise I would just go with what you have. I hope everything is going well and you still have time for the swing set and a hard run - if you need "push" in any of these areas let me know however you might have to come here.

Peace,

Hunter

P.S. - Oh i still have the shirt - if I email you a formal response with a picture of me wearing the shirt would you have to include it in the appendix?

Franklin

Hi Jenni,

I must admit I haven't read through the material you sent my way; too many things on my plate all at once. If you are still interested in feedback on my reading, then can we schedule a meeting? perhaps over a long lunch or coffee?

Franklin

Clark

This response is a bit later than I had hoped. I love the way you incorporated the data. Excellent format! I think the chapter looks great. I enjoy reading it.

I still promise to send an extremely lengthy email updating you on my status here.

Hahaha!

Going to see Morrissey tonight.

Clark

Jake

Jake and I communicated about his write-up over the phone. He asked that we think of something other than the purple sweatshirt to signify his daily challenging of masculinity. We decided a hat with an embroidered rainbow on it better reflected Jake's actual object.