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CONTEMPORARY MASCULINITIES IN THE FIRST PERSON

Isabel González Díaz, guest-editor

INTRODUCTION

Although the metaphor of invisibility has surrounded the topic of masculinities for many years now, at this point in the 21st century we would certainly agree that masculinities are not as invisible as Michael Kimmel paradoxically perceived them to be in the late 1980s (Kimmel and Messner xvi). Tim Edwards asserted in 2006 that "we are aware of masculinity in the twenty-first century as never before," although he admitted that it was "at once everywhere and yet nowhere, known and yet unknowable, had and yet un-*have*-able" (1). The process of gendering masculinities has proved fruitful, has contributed to expanding and enriching the scope of analysis of many disciplines and, according to Mac an Ghaill and Haywood, has shown that "[a]nalysing men as a politically gendered category removes it from its normative location as transparent, neutral and disembodied" (29). The quantity of academic works on the subject shows that more and more interest has been taken in approaching masculinities from different angles and from different fields, no doubt under the initial influence of feminism, which pushed forward the necessity of analyzing that other half of the binary which had always been taken for granted. Later poststructuralism helped to break and disperse the dichotomy, emphasizing that "the living of gender categories and divisions is more contradictory, fragmented, shifting and ambivalent than the dominant public definitions of these categories suggest" (Mac an Ghaill and Haywood 9). In my opinion, the gender paradigm has benefited from the poststructural debate, insofar as it has made us reflect on and rework the categories of gender and sexuality and it has continued delving into the paradoxes. The interdisciplinary and intersectional outlooks demonstrated by different scholars for more than thirty years now have shown that it is of the utmost importance to analyze the (re)presentations of masculinities and femininities from every field of knowledge in the humanities, in order to reveal how they are constructed and perceived, but also in order to conceive social change.

The present special issue, to which scholars from different disciplines have been invited to contribute, is intended to be a reflection on the work which is currently being done in the field of masculinities. Four of the essays deal with theoretical, conceptual, or empirical issues, studied from sociological and philosophical perspectives, whereas four others focus on the representation of masculinities in the works of different literary writers; an interview with sociologist Mike Messner on the recent publication of his memoir serves as a transitional bridge between both sections. The idea of the first person was proposed as a guiding, not a restrictive suggestion at the outset of this project. The contributors' responses reveal, in my opinion, the many possibilities that the study of masculinities in the first person

offers both theoretically and practically. Some of the participants have specifically reflected on masculinities in the first person, as initially suggested; some have used the first person in dealing with their subject matter—albeit it is taken for granted that scholars somehow reflect that first person in their work; some have made use of their ethnographic research, where the first person of the men interviewed can be heard; and others have used a variety of narratives, whether academic, autobiographical or fictitious to analyze representations of masculinities. The first person seems to be always there, whether singular or plural, whether outwardly spoken or hidden behind the words uttered. The analyses which compose this special issue also show, amongst other things, that new concepts and theories are being proposed and applied, that changes regarding homophobia have taken and are taking place, that masculinity is not only a matter of male, but also of female bodies, that the theories which attempt to dismantle the gender binary need to be thoroughly applied in order to avoid contradicting their basic premises, that emotions are important to men in their understanding of themselves, and that gender relations are affected by power relations, by displacement, by questions of class, race or national origin.

The overall impression at the outcome of the editing process is that it is important to make use of as many analytical tools as possible to further explore masculinities. In this obviously limited volume old concepts and theories are being used, revised or contested, and new ones are being proposed, defined, and discussed. This volume is specifically focused on north-western—mostly US and British—representations of masculinities, which does not mean that we are not aware of the important contributions and responses to gender studies that are coming from south-eastern cultures under the pivotal influence of postcolonial theories. As Mac an Ghaill and Haywood also asserted in 2007, there is still "much empirical and conceptual work to be done in exploring the gendering of men" (29).

I would like to take the opportunity to express my gratitude to the contributors and interviewee who have collaborated in the creation of this special issue on "Contemporary Masculinities in the First Person." I would like to thank them for their willingness to participate, as well as for their cordiality, generosity, and patience throughout the process of edition. Additionally, I would also like to thank my colleague and friend Dr. Ann MacLaren who, as always, has generously helped in the process of correction and edition of the present issue.

Isabel González Díaz

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ARTICLES

CONTRADICTORY MALE/MASCULINE/MEN'S "I"S: THE UNWRITING OF MEN, AND THE CONCEPT OF SEX

Jeff Hearn
University of Huddersfield

Abstract

May I start with two observations? First, men's relations to feminism are problematic—there is always a gap, a gap between men and feminism; second, the gendering of men and masculinities is now recognised. There are several challenges here. The *gender challenge* concerns how to move from the presumed "genderlessness" of men towards the gender-consciousness of being a man/men. Another challenge concerns the "public/private," the disruption of dominant narratives of "I" of men and the masculine "I." There is also a *temporal challenge*, of moving away from simple *linearity* of the "I." Together, these challenges can be seen as moving away from taken-for-granted "gender power-coherence" towards gender power-consciousness. To address these kinds of question means interrogating the uneven non-equivalences of what it means to be male, a man, masculine. This is not easily reduced to sex or gender. Rather gender/sex, or simply gex, helps to speak of such blurrings.

Key words: Contradictions, feminism, "the first person," gex, men, masculinities.

Resumen

¿Puedo empezar haciendo dos observaciones? La primera, que las relaciones que los hombres mantienen con el feminismo son problemáticas—siempre hay una brecha, una brecha entre los hombres y el feminismo; la segunda, que ya se reconoce a los hombres y las masculinidades dentro de los parámetros del género. Se presentan varios retos. El "reto de género" se ocupa de cómo pasar de la presunta "ausencia de género" de los hombres hacia la conciencia de género de ser hombre/s. Otro reto tiene que ver con lo "público/privado", la interferencia de las narrativas dominantes del "yo" de los hombres y del "yo" masculino. Además, existe un "reto temporal", que consiste en alejarse de la "linealidad" simple del "yo." En conjunto, estos retos parecen alejarse de la "coherencia del poder de género" que se da por supuesta y se acercan hacia una conciencia del poder de género. Hacer este tipo de preguntas implica interrogar las no-equivalencias dispares de lo que significa ser varón, hombre, masculino. Esto no es fácilmente reducible a sexo o género. Más bien viene a ser género/sexo, o simplemente gex, el término que ayuda a hablar de esas confusiones.

Palabras clave: contradicciones, feminismo, "la primera persona," gex, hombres, masculinidades.

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To talk of the male "I" can easily suggest a male essence; yet the "I" of men is diverse, with many different forms and meanings. I do not believe such notions as "*the* male voice" or "*the* male perspective" are useful, and certainly not in the singular. I feel suspicious of them, as I do of so-called "deep (psychological, even bodily) masculinity" that supposedly *only* men can know, and is presumed to be men's or males' special "property." On the other hand, there is another meaning of "male": that speaks to the specific social, political and bounded experience of men, the boundaries, leaky bodies, ambiguities, contradictions, lack of knowledges, and all embodied, material-discursive, socio-cultural. Though this makes more sense, I remain cautious of the word, "male"; it can so easily be misused out of context. This is partly why I often prefer the term, "men," rather than "male." The "I" of men can be seen in many ways: as sexed, gendered, (sex-) gendered, gender-sexed, simply as "gex." This last word refers to post-constructionist material-discursive theorising, which does not assume to proceed from sex to gender, and that recognises the problematic "non-equivalence" of male/masculinity/the masculine/men.

Locally and globally, gender injustice is rife, a source and site of discrimination, violence and much more. "Men" are a social political matter, indeed often a problem, and have more significant material effects than just as outcomes of text. Men, and particular groups and versions of men, as the dominant social category in gender relations, were and are in many ways a major, though not the only, problem, in most societies, most of the time. This is intolerable. All this takes many forms: just think of who does most of the world's killing, owns the most wealth, runs the international financial system, the military, and so on.

Gendering men is now established, critically (Kimmel et al.). Over the last thirty-five years there has been a major expansion of critical gender research on men and masculinities. Men are just as gendered as women. In this critical development a number of theoretical moves in studying men can be identified. Yet this may be more difficult than it appears—just as fish do not need to theorise water. Whilst the gendering of men and masculinities is recognised, men's relations to feminism are problematic—there is always a gap, a gap between men and feminism.

There are many places of departure and many aspects to these problematics, yet they have one element in common—the intertwining of personal, working, political, historical, spatial, and theoretical elements (Hearn, "The Personal Is"). Researching, analysing, working on, and theorizing men are similarly contradictory experiences. I have been continually stirred by the personal-political sense that current ways in which gender relations are organised is deeply disturbing materially; their unfairness is personally painful to me, even if, by virtue of "being a man," I benefit. These political concerns are in some ways clear and simple—male-dominated gender oppression continues; in other ways, they are of course extremely complex. There are also all sorts of ambiguities, ambivalences, contradictions, and paradoxes in the politics of men and on men (as in other politics): men's gender class combining with multiple practices of power interests. Such matters, silences and challenges are

part of unwriting men: moving from "pervasive taken-for-granted gender power" towards "gender power-consciousness and deconstruction."

However, these positions are still often not recognised by many researchers, especially men researchers. They raise special complexities, contradictions and challenges for the gendering of the "I" of me(n) and the masculine "I." Feminists, even with a clear focus on women's situations, have almost always been analysing men, implicitly or explicitly; they have had to do so, operating in a patriarchal world. There has always been a question of what to do with men. For men, one of the problems, and paradoxes, is how is it possible to speak differently, in relation to women and feminism, bearing in mind that men's voices have not been at all quiet, historically, politically, culturally. How to name men and critique men, without that making space for men to make more noise? To explore this further, for the remainder of this writing, I approach male/masculine/men's "I"s through the challenges of writing, unwriting, in (auto)biography.[1]

UNWRITING THE I

Personal biography, historical social structure, and their interrelations have long been recognised as at the centre of social critique (Mills). This connection has been part of critical scholarship on men and masculinities, even if often implicitly. For men to write accurately about men demands at least *some* reflexivity. Some relatively early reflective political writings on men (Bradley et al.; Snodgrass; Jackson *Unmasking*) emphasised the importance of autobiography, and in some national contexts biographical research has been a significant tradition for studying men's lives. Reflexive writing by men on academia has also been developed in some instances (Morgan; Connell). Others have explored the biographies of anti-sexist men (Christian), memory work with profeminist men (Pease), and ageing, autobiography and writing (Jackson, "Masculinity"; "Beyond").

Over many years I have periodically wanted or needed to write in a gendered, autobiographical way—on birth, children, childcare (Hearn, *Birth*), mothers and grandmothers ("Grans"), sexuality and sexual violence ("The Personal, the Political"), academia (Hearn, "Organization," "Personal Resistance"), nation and postcolonialism (Hearn, "Autobiography"), transnationalisation and emotions (Hearn, "Feeling"), political influences (Hearn, "The Personal Is"), and gender injustice and anger (Hearn, "Men"). In this, I have used memories, biography, critical life history, autoethnography, structured memory work, and more conventional methods. Some earlier debates on "unwriting" men include *Unbecoming Men* (Bradley et al.), *Refusing to Be a Man* (Stoltenberg), effeminism (Dansky et al.), subversion of men and gender traitorship (Hearn, *Men*). Men can be both the writers/subjects and objects

[1] For further discussion of male/masculine/men's (un)writing, see Hearn, "(Un)writing"; "Writing."

of writing, of (auto)biography, exemplifying wider questions of men theorising men (Hearn, "Theorizing").

I approach the challenges of (un)writing the "I" of men in three ways. First, there is the basic "gender challenge"—of gendering, of moving from the presumed "genderlessness" of men and towards the gender-consciousness of being a man/men. Specifically, this involves rethinking the genderlessness of dominant approaches; avoiding seeing men at the centre of things, as the centre of (auto) biography—deconstructing the dominant, making the One the Other(s) (Hearn, "Deconstructing"). Second is the "public/private challenge," of the disruption of dominant narratives, of men's (auto)biography. This lies in moving from heroic public achievement-orientation narrative, usually with a public domain focus, and often including marginalisation and avoiding the invisibilising of women, children and "the feminine," and towards the private and blurred public/private boundaries. Third, I address the "temporal challenge" in men's autobiography: of moving away from simple "linearity," avoiding a simplified linear approach. Together, these challenges can be seen as moving from taken-for-granted "gender power-coherence" towards gender power-consciousness and male/men/masculine non-equivalence. To name men in (auto)biography means explicit gendering, but in such a way that does not glorify men or place men at the centre of society and discourse.

THE GENDER CHALLENGE: FROM "GENDERLESSNESS" TO GENDER-CONSCIOUSNESS

The "gender challenge" concerns how to move from the presumed "genderlessness" of men towards the gender-consciousness of being a man/men—how simply to write the "I" of men explicitly about "being a man/men": to gender men, critically; how to have a clear consciousness of the "I" of the male/man, without reifying or glorifying that I.

My approach here argues for interdisciplinary Critical Studies on Men (Hearn, "Implications"), that is, "historical, cultural, relational, materialist, deconstructive, anti-essentialist" studies on men. There is no one formula for gendering men; rather there are many perspectives and methods. Gendering men is an aspiration, a project. Writing, rewriting, unwriting men's (auto)biography is not only a question of substantive gendering, but also a revaluation of experience and epistemology. (Auto)biographies are drenched in epistemology, in asserting knowledge from experience. Different epistemologies suggest different status for men's experience. For rationalists, innate ideas are not found in experience, but exist independently, from the structure of the mind or independently of mind, as in the "essence" of "deep masculinity," as promoted by the mythopoetics. It is difficult to prove or disprove such knowledge. In this, men, or women, "know" what men are like, even if evidence appears otherwise. In contrast, for empiricists, knowledge arises from learning based on perception. Here, men need to be studied by sense-perceptions, either one's own or systematic study of others'.

There are problems with both these epistemologies, certainly in any "pure" form. Many critical thinkers have developed syntheses between these positions. Many have developed forms of knowledge mixing elements of rationalism, empiricism and critical reflection, through emphasis on interpretation, or more socially grounded analysis of knowledge, as in the Hegelian-Marxist, feminist and other standpoint theories. Standpoint traditions inform (pro)feminist Critical Studies on Men. A contentious issue is whether men can develop a standpoint that is both non-profeminist and not contrary to feminist interests; I am unconvinced of the viability of a non-profeminist standpoint for men in producing scientific studies of men. Standpoint positions have in turn been challenged by postmodernist approaches, including postmodernist feminist positions. "Post"-approaches can themselves be more or less anti-foundational, producing multiple accounts and realities of and about men. After all, man/Man/men is a social category, just as is woman/women.

To understand, analyse, critique these category/ies, they have to be thoroughly de-naturalised and deconstructed, just as postcolonial theory deconstructs and de-naturalises the white subject. There is a danger, however, that in focusing primarily on masculinities that "we" de-naturalise masculinities, and yet in so doing re-naturalise "men." The category of men is used and operates in many different ways: as individual men, groups, all men, the gender of men, in state, medical, religious discourse, and other discursive or conversational ploys, as hegemonic (Hearn, "Hegemonic"). Challenges to men from feminism—the "Man Question"—have taken various shapes, immediately contradicting the genderlessness of "men," even in writing that is self-consciously socialist, Marxist or derived from Critical Theory.

Genderlessness of men, and genderlessness in writing men, can function contradictorily by way of either the "assertion" of the unproblematic, gender-absent I, a taken-for-granted male ego (Craib), or the "abstracted absence" of the I, in denial, an absent presence, through gender-absent discursive practices (Hearn, "Theorizing"). Gender can be often done by not doing gender, at least only implicitly, invisibly. In the first case, the male I is (over-)insistent, in the second absent.

Similarly, gender-consciousness can function, again contradictorily. It can be enacted by the claiming of the responsible gendered, gender-explicit I, or alternatively the deconstruction of such a (responsible) gendered I. It can function as the claiming of the responsible, gendered I, a self made explicit, upfront, or it may mean the deconstruction of the I, taking apart the (responsible) I as another fiction. Either way, this is not to make claims "as men," not to use this as the basis of "naming and claiming" knowledge and more privilege, when speaking "as a man." Stoltenberg has shown how reference to "as a man " is usually a means of reasserting male privilege. For men to (un)write men (auto)biographically differently, in different gendered ways, involves, on one hand, "naming men as men" (Hanmer; Collinson and Hearn), and/or, on the other, "deconstructing "men." How to write on being a man/men in a gender-conscious way, whilst not marginalising women and children, is a key challenge.

In seeking to understand possible moves towards deconstruction, even abolition, of men, there are many possibilities. Many texts show the limitations of

a view of gender as overly dichotomised or in a fixed relation to sex. These include historical and cross-societal analyses of "multiple gender ideologies" (Meigs) and "third sex/third gender" (Herdt), and approaches derived from historical dialectical transformation of men as a gender class. Another route derives from genderqueer, transgenderism, undoing gender, gender ambiguity (Epstein and Straub), gender pluralism (Monro), and non-hegemonic queer heterosexualities (Heasley).

Importantly, gender-consciousness can mean very many things: it can emphasise questioning male privilege or highlighting the costs of masculinity or making differences between men most central (Messner). Perhaps more confusingly, even with commitment to (pro)feminism amongst men, whether in academia or activism, there is still much room for divergence and disagreement. In analysing the question of men's gender-consciousness (Egeberg Holmgren and Hearn), I have found Judith Lorber's (*Gender*) way of analysing feminist political positions very helpful. She sets out three broad frameworks.

First, in gender reform feminism, gender equality might be seen as a matter of realising the potential of women and men equally, albeit within contexts of the gender order and social structures. The implication for men is that men can contribute positively towards, or can position themselves against, the "abolition of gender imbalance."

Second, Lorber continues with gender resistance feminists, who argue that the gender order cannot be made equal through "balance": men's dominance is too great. Gender equality *per se* is not feasible; it is likely to mean women becoming like men. More radical transformation is necessary, with women's voices and perspectives fundamentally reshaping the gendered social order, including the "abolition of patriarchy." Men's positionings here are less certain; men need to position themselves in relation to the project of abolishing patriarchy and patriarchal relations.

Third, gender rebellious feminists go further still, seeking to take apart the gendered social order, multiplying genders or doing away with them. Connections with social divisions, differences and oppressions are central, as are deconstructions of sex, sexuality, gender, and associated dualities. "Men" become an unstable, perhaps outdated, category. This seems the most radical conceptualisation. Men's relations to this project range from dismissal as irrelevant to immense uncertainty or humility, to a certain social paralysis for some men or renewed optimism of queer futures where gender is degendered, with the "abolition of the category of men."[2]

[2] For further discussion of abolition of the social category of men, see Hearn, "Materiality"; "Male."

THE PUBLIC/PRIVATE CHALLENGE: FROM PUBLIC HEROICS TO PUBLIC/PRIVATE CONTRADICTIONS

A second challenge concerns the "public/private," and the disruption of dominant narratives of "I" of men and the masculine "I." This entails moving from "heroic public achievement-orientation narrative," usually with a public domain focus, and specifically a public heroic narrative, of men's (auto)biography, often marginalising women, children and "the feminine," and towards blurred public/private boundaries. This challenge may lead to the deconstruction of the taken-for-granted dominance of men, public domain(s), and the unified male self. At the macro-level, the collective (male) subject, often assumed in socialist discourse, needs to be deconstructed.

Dominant forms of men's (auto)biography have traditionally focused on public heroic achievement-oriented narratives. This issue is explicitly addressed by David Jackson (*Unmasking*) in his "critical autobiography." In contrast to the autobiographies of the sportsman Geoff Boycott, the writer Roald Dahl, and the politician David Owen, Jackson uses his own life as a resource to theorise male selfhood and gendered constructions of boys and men. Rather than conventional public heroics, his key themes include "refusing the search for the true self," "the myth of unified identity," "refusing a split between the personal and the social." A major challenge is how to move from a public heroic focus towards the private and public/private boundary, from the marginalisation of women, children, "the feminine," towards their non-avoidance and recognition. In focusing on men's private/personal lives, and giving weight to the effects of men on women and children and to women's and children's own material actions, tensions are likely.

In the short, partly autobiographical, book, *Birth and Afterbirth*, I deliberately emphasised my (sexual) difference from women in writing about babies, childbirth and taking care of children ("childwork"). I wrote, with self-conscious irony, in the opening of the book:

> I never guessed babies would be this important. For a long time I thought they were things boring people had, that made women motherly and dim, that we [my then partner and I] wouldn't have or at least have for a while yet. (9)
> ...and after being at the birth of my third child...
> Next morning I found myself, lying in bed, knees up, getting rid of some wind by pushing down in the same way I had seen the previous night; then on the loo I had the very strange experience of momentarily believing/fantasising that the slime sticking to my anal hair was a "show." (15)

These were not meant as advocacy of biologism, rather commentary on (patriarchal) social relations of reproduction (O'Brien; Hearn, *Gender*) that prioritise public actions over those in private domains. On the other hand, this could be seen as a strategy for how I had "got it wrong" in the past "as a man," and how by implication I had now "got it right" in the (then) present. The focus on the private has implications for others, including ethical issues in relation to others.

When the UK anti-sexist magazine *Achilles Heel* did a special issue on mothers I found it was too difficult to write about my own mother, and decided instead to write on my grandmothers and one greatgrandmother—all long dead: to say the obvious, grandmothers are mothers too. I tried to focus on my relationship to them rather than them as separate people (Hearn, "Grans"). In so doing, I was concerned that my mother might be annoyed or hurt when I wrote that visiting her mother was sometimes boring for a young child; in the event she seemed surprisingly pleased, even delighted, with the writing. Another device in gendering me(n) is gendered use of the father, often by distancing, so establishing a hierarchical relation of superiority, either way.

Then there is sexuality. Hélène Cixous has written: "Men still have everything to say about their own sexuality" (qtd. Jardine 61). In *Birth and Afterbirth* I wrote about being "effeminate"—not a very good word. Later I wrote on my own complex sexualities, for example, sexual non-intercourse, relations of heterosexuality and gayness ("The Personal, the Political"). This can be located in coming out genres, without wishing to colonise specifically gay outs.

Moves to the private and personal, and blurring of the private/public are also matters of knowledge, as in the relation of the bodily to what is "known"—the epistemological. This approach is taken up by Jackson (*Unmasking*; "Masculinity"; "Beyond"), in terms of loss of bodily control and fragmentation of knowledge and narrative. Embodied knowledge is one form of knowledge. Accordingly, he writes of the need to re-integrate "my expelled selves with my present identities, particularly my fantasized feminine selves, my anti-homophobic selves, my softer and more tender, masculine selves" ("Masculinity" 115). He advocates: "Self-caring—gaining a more precise knowledge of my bodily limits and boundaries. Learning to recognise my body's specific, warning signs when I've been pushing myself too hard. An urgent need for gentleness towards my self" ("Masculinity" 115). In different ways these represent examples of deconstructing (auto)biography, the taken-for-granted dominance of the public domain(s) and the unified, rational male I-subject, and even men.

THE TEMPORAL CHALLENGE: FROM LINEARITY TO...

Gendering men, and blurring the private/public boundary, prompts a third challenge: to rethink "time," "the relationship between past and present," "challenging chronological, linear sequence" (Jackson, *Unmasking*). This "temporal challenge" involves moving away from the simple "linearity" of the narrated "I." The rationale for looking at the past lies in the present, specifically here the need to understand men's problematic power, identities and relations to the private/public...

> I became consciously interested in feminism, gender equality and sexuality politics in the 1970s. I usually begin this story in 1978; living with my then partner and three young children, I was very concerned about the many messages of feminism, particularly conscious of most men's avoidance of care for children. Indeed then

most men sympathetic to feminism seemed unconcerned about the labour of childcare. From this, I became involved in founding two groups centred on social change around gender power relations: a mixed-group campaigning for more provision for children under-five, their mothers and carers; and a men's group, broadly anti-sexist, focusing on consciousness-raising. These and similar personal-political initiatives became my political home; I have been involved in numerous anti-sexist, profeminist campaigns, groups and activities since.

In the 1980s I was very influenced, and still am, by radical feminisms and materialist feminisms. Annie Leclerc wrote "One must not wage war on men. That is his way of attaining value. Deny in order to affirm. Kill to love. One must simply deflate his values with the needle of ridicule"; Amanda Sebestyen wrote "I see men as my political enemies. I don't want to kill them, that's too conservative a solution. I want them to stop being men any more"; and Alice Jardine "we [feminists] do not want you [men] to mimic us ... What we want, I would say what we need, is your work." These statements are all still highly relevant to men's relations to feminism.

...all my childhood I lived in Charlton, then a working class area, known for its football team at The Valley, which in the 50s had the largest capacity outside Wembley, about 75,000? Seeing the men walking, converging, on the ground was truly exciting. The feeling doubled when I learnt Greenwich was home to the Meantime. My house was in-between these two landmarks.

I am three and I am being dressed as a girl by my sister.

In the late 1970s and early 1980s I realised my profeminist personal-political interests were very close to my (profeminist) academic and theoretical interests—except they were using different jargon.

In 1995 I met my partner, and soon after moved to Finland. I have since began working in Sweden, adding a third main country, with which I have major relations. All this makes for some fragmentation of experience, my biography, my self. Sweden figures as future (what is in store?), as present (partly where I work), and as past (the imagery is intense—for example, contradictorily the "fount" and "leader" of gender equality, and its 1960s "sexual" reputation).

...the apparent beginning point is perhaps a little arbitrary; I could begin the story when I was five or six or seven. At five I went to a mixed primary school; my best friends there were three girls—Judith, Gillian and Mavis. Two years later I left that school and went, as was usual then, to the local all-boys junior school; that's the last I saw or heard or them. I wasn't keen on the way the "big boys" played. Or I could begin by talking about my admiration for my Victorian-style great-grandmother, or doing my final degree exams in May '68 or reading the SCUM Manifesto on holiday in Wales in the early 1970s, or...

These non-chronological reflections, though personal, resonate with more general challenges and constructions of men, and the need to disrupt and deconstruct dominant, often taken-for-granted, mythic linear temporalities. Brian Roberts has discussed the complexities of variations in forms of time: how past, present and future are in multiple permutations in people's speaking about themselves, others and their "community " (for example, "PAST-past" ["Those days have gone"], PAST-present ["It was just the same then"], and FUTURE-past ["The lessons from the past will be needed"]). Individual memories are told in contexts of and interrelations with collective memories and forgettings (Connerton), with paradigm transformations in

political/interpretive approaches to memory, subjectivity and (oral) history. (Auto) biography does not inevitably build on simple past-to-present narratives; they can move back and forth, with inner contradictions; they can be unwritten in terms of changing work, domesticity, sexuality, violence, and so on.

GEX AND GENDER POWER

Put together, these challenges can be seen as moving the I away from taken-for-granted "gender power-coherence" towards "gender power-consciousness and deconstruction." Conventional men's (auto)biography has typically ignored men's gendering, and instead often reproduced patriarchal social relations in its own practices. There is a characteristic silence on the gendered reflexivity of the author and constitution of that writing. Changing this involves problematising silences that have persisted on both the category of men and men's practices in (auto)biography. How can the silences that there are about men's reflexive gendered presence be countered, including silence on itself? How to reconstitute the silences around the relation of men and such writing?

To address these kinds of question means interrogating how contradictory male/masculine/men's "I"s are constructed. This is not easily reduced to sex or gender. Rather, gex helps to speak of such blurrings. The notion of gex takes seriously the complex intersections of gender, sex and sexuality, rather than assuming that gender is a cultural construction of pre-existing sex, in this context the male sex: an unfinished non-equivalence of male/masculinity/the masculine/men.

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THEORIZING MASCULINITIES FOR A NEW GENERATION

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Abstract

Foregrounding research among 16-21 year-old heterosexual male youth, this article provides an overview of the changing nature of masculinities in Anglo-American cultures. I suggest that cultural homophobia is rapidly decreasing among young men in these cultures, and that this has a profound impact on their gendered performances. I suggest that hegemonic masculinity theory is incapable of explaining these changes. Thus I introduce inclusive masculinity theory—and its principal heuristic concept, homohysteria—to make sense of the changing nature of young men's masculinities.

Key words: Masculinity, homophobia, homohysteria, inclusive masculinity, hegemonic masculinity.

Resumen

Apoyándose en investigaciones realizadas entre jóvenes varones heterosexuales con edades que oscilan entre los 16 y los 21 años, este artículo ofrece una visión general de la naturaleza cambiante de las masculinidades en las culturas angloamericanas. Mi propuesta es que la homofobia cultural está disminuyendo rápidamente entre los hombres jóvenes de estas culturas, y que esto tiene un profundo impacto en sus representaciones de género. Sugiero que la teoría de la masculinidad hegemónica es incapaz de explicar estos cambios. Así pues, introduzco la teoría de la masculinidad inclusiva—y su concepto heurístico principal, la homohisteria— para explicar la naturaleza cambiante de las masculinidades de los hombres jóvenes.

Palabras clave: masculinidad, homofobia, homohisteria, masculinidad inclusiva, masculinidad hegemónica.

INTRODUCTION

Words fail to capture the moments of tenderness and social inclusivity that I experience in interacting with 16-21 year-old heterosexual, male youth today. Whether it be through conducting ethnography in their high schools (McCormack and Anderson, "Just"), on their sports teams (Anderson and McGuire; Anderson,

McCormack and Lee), or just fishing 16-year-olds who have left school (Anderson, "Rise"), I find that young men today have redefined what it means to be masculine; and they embody something I call inclusive masculinities. I evidence this statement through multiple research projects, including ethnographic research, interviews and survey research (Anderson, *Inclusive*), and show a strong relationship between decreasing cultural homophobia and the softening of heterosexual masculinities in Western cultures.

In my research, I show that softer and more inclusive masculinities are proliferating among white teenage and undergraduate boys (both within and outside of formal education). Almost all of the youth that I study are distancing themselves from conservative forms of muscularity, hyperheterosexuality and masculinity. Data from my studies of heterosexual men, in both feminized and masculinized spaces, support this.

These findings have led to a new way of theorizing masculinities (Anderson, *Inclusive*). My theory argues that with decreasing stigma against homosexuality, there no longer exists a hierarchical stratification of masculinities. Instead, decreasing cultural homophobia permits various forms of masculinities to exist without hegemonic dominance of any one type.

In this article I first provide a snap-shot of what it is like to be a heterosexual 16 year-old in contemporary British culture. I then summarize my body of work among youth, showing what they do to be different, important, and positive compared to how young men constructed their masculinity two decades earlier. I provide a conceptual explanation for these events with my notion of homohysteria, placing it within theory of inclusive masculinities more broadly.

ON BEING 16 TODAY

Jake is a sixteen-year-old, heterosexual male. He lives in a somewhat impoverished neighborhood with his mother and sister in Bristol, England. Jake, however, has a rich network of friends, both male and female, to whom he is openly affectionate. For example, Jake expresses his love for his best mate, Tom on Facebook. Accordingly, his sentiment about his friend is made public to all on his friends list. Here, he expresses as much love for his best mate as much as his girlfriend. Jake speaks of Tom in similar terms, freely identifying his friendship to me as "love." This intimacy, oftentimes described as "bromance," simulates ancient notions of Greek and Roman brotherhood; a time in which men's homosocial bonds were culturally prized.

Jake is not alone in his outright expression of love for his friends. The florid language that Jake uses to describe Tom is not at all unusual in contemporary British youth culture. In research on English working and middle class, white, sixth-form students (McCormack and Anderson, "Just"), show that the style of men's masculinity most esteemed among these youths approximates what I call inclusive masculinities (Anderson, *Inclusive*). We show that a decrease in homophobia simultaneously permits an expansion of heteromasculine boundaries, so that boys are able

to express physical tactility and emotional intimacy without being homosexualized by their behaviors.

Illustrating this, Jake told me that he was preparing to go on a thirteen-day holiday to Spain with Tom. When I inquired as to whether he feared that they might fight being together this long, he answered, "No mate, we're too close for that." I responded, "Fair enough. And what does the girlfriend think of the fact that you're taking your best mate on holiday, and not her?" Jake answered, "She knows how close we are. She's gotta share me."

While Jake still lives in a heterosexist culture, it at least permits him to have the same level of emotional and physical intimacy with his best male friend as it does his female partner. For example, Jake tells me that he has a busy weekend coming up. He's spending Friday night with his girlfriend, including sex and cuddling. He will then be spending Saturday night with Tom, doing the same activities with the exception of sex. He informs me that he and Tom sleep in the same bed, where they normally cuddle—a regular practice for young men in England (Anderson, Adams, and Rivers). This is a finding confirmed by forthcoming research, where my research assistant and I find that twenty-nine of thirty undergraduate men (in one university class in England) have cuddled with another man. In fact, Jake spends as many nights in bed with Tom as he does with his girlfriend.

"Look at this message Tom sent me yesterday," Jake tells me with pride while fishing on an unusually warm spring day. Jake hands me his mobile phone and I read the message aloud, "Love you, this week has made me realise how weak I can be without you. And I don't like not being with you :/x." "Oh, your girlfriend is sweet," I tell him. "No, that's from Tom," he states matter-of-factly. "What did you respond?" I ask. Jake laughs, "I put "K." But a half hour later I sent him a message saying I was just kidding and that I appreciated his text and felt the same way."

What is interesting about Jake's story is that he is not alone in expressing this type of homosocial intimacy. Jake does not think his friendship any different than the friendships his peers share with their best male friends. For Jake, this type of emotional intimacy is commonplace, something McCormack (*Declining*) also finds, and Way documents amongst younger children. In Britain today, boys bond not just over talk of cars, girls, and video games, but also over disclosing secrets and building intimacy. They bond over intimacy the way men once used to over a century ago. This is just one aspect of how young men are redefining what it means to be masculine. Jake's story nicely captures many of the tenets of what it means to be a boy in contemporary British culture.

REDEFINING MASCULINITY

In studying young men in both the United States and the United Kingdom, I show that today's white, undergraduate men (particularly athletes) are eschewing the homophobic orthodox masculinity of the 1980s. Instead, men are establishing homosocial relationships based on (1) increased emotional intimacy (Adams, Mc-

Cormack "Hierarchy"), (2) increased physical tactility (McCormack, "Declining"), (3) eschewing violence (Anderson, "Inclusive"), and (4) and the social inclusion of gay male peers (Anderson and Adams; Bush, Anderson and Carr; McCormack, "Positive"). I assume that these practices will have some positive impact on sexism (Anderson, "Being"; "Maintenance"), although I have not systematically studied for this. I argue that these improving cultural conditions have been the result of decreasing homophobia among adolescent males, which results in further softening of masculinity—something McCormack calls a "virtuous circle of decreasing homophobia and expanded gendered behaviours" (*Declining* 63). Collectively, I call the various forms of masculinities embodied by these boys, 'inclusive masculinities.'

Increased Emotional Intimacy

The above section, about Jake, captures the type of emotionality common among young men in my various studies. Whether it be running with high school boys in California, fishing with 16 year-old leavers (those who chose to leave formal education) in Bristol, England, (observing) marijuana-smoking 17 year-olds in Southampton, England, or reflecting on men's attitudes in the National Football League (Anderson and Kian) one characteristic remains constant: support. In each of these three forthcoming ethnographies, boys provide peer support. This is fundamental to their socializing. Uniquely, this support does not permit a 'suck it up' mentality.

For example, when Tim was arrested for drug possession, his Facebook was loaded with messages of support. He received some light-hearted banter, of course, but there was also a sentiment that his friends cared about him and were worried for him. Conversely, when Ben entered a singing competition in Bristol, he received dozens of messages of support. McCormack's study of a British sixth form, where boys are esteemed for providing emotional support, provides detailed analysis of this ("Hierarchy").

Increased Physical Tactility

The emotional support that young men show for each other extends into acts of physical tactility; a manifestation of their affection. In addition to finding a great deal of hugging, caressing and cuddling (McCormack, *Declining*; McCormack and Anderson "Just"), in our research conducted on white, heterosexual undergraduate men in the UK, my colleagues and I (Anderson, Adams, and Rivers) show that (averaging) eighty-nine per cent (of those randomly or strategically selected for interview) have, at least once, briefly kissed another heterosexual male friend on the lips.

Our results did not include kissing one's father, kissing other men on the cheek (which also happens with great frequency today and is also culturally avowed), or kissing other men through athletic-team initiation rituals or hazing incidents.

Of course, the circumstances under which these behaviors occurred, the recipients, and the meanings associated with these kisses, were multiple and varied. However, informants' kissing narratives predominantly revolved around issues of homosocial bonding and admiration for a friend. In short, these men were not afraid to be thought gay for kissing their friends.

Eschewing Violence

In ethnographic work with 22 heterosexual players from a small, Catholic, university soccer team in the American Midwest, I show (Anderson, "Inclusive") that violence among these 22 players was less than one might expect for contact-sport athletes: only three reported having fought in high school (all occurred on the soccer field), and only one player has been in a fight since coming to university (again on the soccer field). Conversely, most of the men had never been in a fight. Similarly, McCormack finds no fights in two of the three sixth forms in which he collected data during the past year (*Declining*).

When we asked Tom about his fighting history, he said, "No. I have never been in a fight. Why would I?" John said, "Fighting is just stupid, it accomplishes nothing. It's not like after [the fight] two guys fight one goes," "Oh, I see things your way now." However, I was particularly struck by Clint's attitude toward fighting. While spitting tobacco into a cup, and with his baseball cap twisted backward, he told me of his abusive upbringing. "Until I was a junior in high school, my dad beat me," he said. But "outside of my dad, no. I've never been in a fight. There's just no reason to fight." Clint then said that rather than learning to solve problems through violence, being beaten actually taught him that violence was useless in solving problems.

All but one of the men agreed with Clint's attitude. Collectively, these men suggested that fighting is a useless activity without purpose or place in their lives. Steve, the dissenting voice, thought that fighting was sometimes necessary. "If a guy's being a real dickhead," he said, "Sometimes he just needs a beating to put him in place." Still, Steve said that he has never been in a fight himself.

This philosophy extends to defending one's ground, as well. For example, I hypothetically asked a number of the players if they would get violent with a guy who had sex with their girlfriends: None did. "I might like to pound him," Derren said, "but the reality is that if my girlfriend cheated with someone, it's her I should be mad at. Not him. I'm not going to be friends with him. And I'd certainly tell him how I felt, but I'd have to have more of a talk with my girlfriend than him."

These attitudinal positions were confirmed by my observations. I saw no instances of men enacting violence, or even posturing as being capable of such. For example, a spilled drink in a bar brought two men together in apologizing, instead of confrontation. I noted that the one who bumped the other, not only offered to buy him a new drink, but that the incident started a conversation that left the men talking for fifteen minutes.

In ethnographic work at 'Standard High' McCormack and I found that teenage boys stood firmly against homophobia ("Just"). When we raised the issue of homophobia in interviews, all informants positioned themselves against it. Although this is not in-and-of-itself proof of a homophobia-free culture, it is nonetheless noteworthy that no male student expressed homophobia in interview. Instead, homophobia was regarded as a sign of immaturity. Matt said that if someone was homophobic, he would be policed by his peers. "He wouldn't keep at it for long," he said, "It's just childish." Justin added, "When I was in middle school, some kids would say 'that's gay' around the playground, but they wouldn't get away with it anymore. We'd tell them it's not on." Sam agreed, "You might find that [homophobia] before [sixth form], but not here. It's just not acceptable anymore."

Supporting these statements, participant observation highlighted that the word 'gay' is not used to describe dissatisfaction by these young men. In fact, neither researcher heard any homophobic epithet in any social setting we investigated. Terms such as 'queer' and 'poof' were not used, while 'fag' was only used to refer to a cigarette. 'Gay' was only used in sensible discussions about gay identity and sexuality.

McCormack has provided further evidence of the inclusion of sexual minority students in an ethnography of a religious sixth form ("Positive"). He showcases the stories of one lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgendered student, drawing out the differences in their experiences, but nonetheless showing positive changes in their school experiences compared with research from previous decades (see also Ripley et al. "Decreasing").

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THEORIZING HOMOHYSTERIA

The type of masculinity exhibited by the youth that my colleagues and I study is starkly different than what the dominant paradigm suggests about young men. This maintains that they are homophobic, sexist, violent, emotionally repressed and afraid of physical contact with other males. And, the most important theoretical tool for understanding this social stratification of men and their masculinities since sex role theory has come through Connell's concept of hegemonic masculinity, which also embedded in it this 'man as jerk' archetype (*Gender*, "Iron," *Masculinities*).

Developed from a social constructionist perspective in the mid-1980s, hegemonic masculinity theory has articulated two social processes. The first concerns how all men benefit from patriarchy, however, it is the second social process that has been heavily adopted by the masculinities literature. Here, Connell's theoretical contribution has been particularly adopted for its conceptualization of the mechanisms by which an intra-masculine hierarchy is created and legitimized. It is only this aspect of her theory that I address here.

In conceptualizing intra-masculine domination, Connell argues that one hegemonic archetype of masculinity is esteemed above all other masculinity types, so that boys and men who most closely embody this one standard are accorded the

most social capital, relative to other boys and men. Some of the characteristics of hegemonic masculinity concern variables which are earned, like attitudinal depositions (including the disposition of homophobia) while other variables concern static traits (i.e. whiteness, heterosexuality, and youth). Connell argued, however, that regardless of body mass, age or even sporting accomplishments, gay men are at the bottom of this hierarchy. Furthermore, Connell maintained that straight men who behaved in ways that conflict with the dominant form of masculinity are also marginalized. It was for these reasons that I have argued homophobia has traditionally been an effective weapon to stratify men in deference to a hegemonic mode of heteromasculine dominance (Anderson, *Game*).

Connell theorized that the power of a hegemonic form of masculinity was that those subjugated by it nonetheless believed in the right (*Gender*; *Masculinities*). Instead of disputing their marginalized position, they revered those at the top. Accordingly, researchers found teamsport players generally controlled youth spaces (Plummer). Hegemonic masculinity theory was precise in its ability to predict masculine configurations in the 1980s, and it likely continued to be useful throughout the 1990s. However, the level of homophobia among youth peaked in 1988 (Anderson, *Inclusive*), mainly because of decreasing hysteria of HIV's association with gay men.

The high level of homophobia and hypermasculinity of the mid 1980s—something measured through General Social Survey data in the States alongside the *British Social Attitudes* survey data, had however serious implications for not only attitudes toward gay men, but also on how straight men performed their gender (Peterson and Anderson). Thus, hegemonic masculinity theory is historically contextualized within its own temporal moment. Specifically, it existed in a culture that I call "homohysteric" (Anderson, *Inclusive*).

Homohysteria describes men's fear of being homosexualized. It incorporates three variables: 1) cultural awareness that homosexuality exists as a sexual orientation; 2) high levels of homophobia within a culture, and 3) the conflation of feminine behaviors in men with same-sex desire. Varying combinations of these three cultural traits will determine unique outcomes for men's gendered behaviors. For example, in a highly religious theocracy, homosexuals are likely thought non-existent. While this culture would be considered highly homophobic it is not homohysteric because they don't readily believe that others are gay. Accordingly, men in many Islamic countries are permitted to engage in physical and emotional intimacy (not sex) without threat to their publicly perceived heterosexual identities—if homosexuality does not exist, one cannot be thought gay for holding another's hand.

Opposite to this, a homohysteric culture (like Jamaica) comes through a high measure of cultural homophobia alongside high awareness that homosexuality exists in significant numbers. This is in a culture that both loathes homosexuals but knows they lurk among us. Because homosexuality is mostly invisible, it means that in this culture, all men (of all sexual orientations) must distance themselves from anything coded as gay, otherwise they will be homosexualized and treated accordingly. In a homohysteric culture men therefore value the most extreme representations of masculinity and they equally maintain highly homophobic at-

titudes, all in attempt to distance themselves from being thought gay. Essentially in a homohysteric culture, men are attempting to escape social stigma by avoiding being perceived as gay.

The greater the homohysteria within a culture, the more effective homophobia is in limiting the gendered components of masculinity. Operating at both the behavioral and emotional level, it means that heterosexual men have had to avoid physical tactility with other men; that they must avoid certain clothing styles, colors, sports, entertainment choices and even foods. Emotionally, they have had to deny love for their male friends, fear, or sadness. In times of homohysteria, men must adhere to extremely rigid body language and must present themselves as heterosexual even as ages as young as eight (Pollack).

Although matters were never this bad in the West, homohysteria still operated at every level of men's lives. But, by the end of the first decade of the twentieth century, studies began reporting a rapidly decreasing level of homophobia in Anglo-American cultures. This was even true of men in competitive teamsports (Anderson, *Trailblazing*; "Openly"; *Game*; "Orthodox"; "Updating"; "Inclusive"; "Masculinities"; Adams; Kian and Anderson; McCormack and Anderson, "Re/production"; Southall et al.). For example, I interviewed 26 openly gay high school and university athletes throughout a spectrum of sports in the United States in 2002, showing gay athletes being partially accepted onto their teams. By 2011, I found that gay male athletes were fully accepted onto their teams; and that their teammates were even eroding at heteronormativity.

EXPLAINING THE THEORY

The collection of these findings, and the development of my heuristic concept of homohysteria, led me to the development of a new gendered theory of masculinity studies. Inclusive masculinity theory captures the social dynamics of men in non-homohysteric settings. The theory is simple: it maintains that as homohysteria decreases, men no longer need to position themselves as hypermasculine in order to be thought heterosexual. As homohysteria decreases the vertical stratification that Connell describes is no longer accurate, as it shifts to permit multiple types of masculinity without hegemony. Should cultural matters change, and homohysteria were to again rise in a culture, the ordering of men would likely return to the way Connell conceptualized.

Inclusive masculinity supersedes hegemonic masculinity theory because it is a more flexible theory that can be used to explain the social dynamics of settings with both high *and* low levels of homohysteria. When Connell devised hegemonic masculinity theory in the mid-1980s, there was no such thing as a Western culture low in homohysteria. But the significant changes that have occurred since then makes Connell's theory redundant in today's culture. Multiple other scholars are recognizing this, using my theory (i.e. Adams; Cleland and Cashmore, in press; McCormack, *Declining*; Peterson), and still more are just avoiding using Connell's framework (i.e. Kehler).

While it is not yet possible to tell whether inclusive masculinity theory will replace hegemonic masculinity theory among sociologists, its adoption by other scholars is evidence of the erosion of the dominance of hegemonic masculinity theory as scholars recognize it no longer applies.

Finally, I make inclusive masculinity theory very simplistic, intentionally. It was my desire to avoid inaccessible, and oftentimes vague, theorizing by grand theorist. To me a social theory should be simple, and have the ability to make a prediction. I shun academic-elitism. Thus, I have made an open invitation to other scholars to examine my theory and add to it (hoping they do so in accessible and practical ways).

McCormack is one scholar who has met this challenge ("Hierarchy"; "Declining"; "Mapping"; *Declining*). He recently contributed to inclusive masculinity theory by explicating how popularity is achieved in cultures where bullying and marginalization are not present. McCormack (who is also featured in this special edition) shows that what makes boys popular is not regulating others, but instead being inclusive and having charisma. Unique to a homohysteria free culture, he shows that males value the ability to socialize with boys from other groups, including gay youth. Thus, hegemony is replaced by heterogeneity.

DISCUSSION

In this overview of the research I have been conducting on gay and straight male youths over the previous decade, I have argued that inclusive masculinity theory (Anderson, *Inclusive*) supersedes hegemonic masculinity theory (Connell, *Gender*; *Masculinities*) because it explains the loss of a stratification of men alongside in times of lower homophobia. The theory was constructed to explain settings with low homohysteria; cultures in which young heterosexual men are no longer afraid to act or otherwise associate with symbols of homosexuality. Here, heterosexual boys are permitted to engage in an increasing range of behaviors that once led to homosexual suspicion, all without threat to their publicly perceived heterosexual identities.

In my various ethnographies, I have, for example, shown that fraternity members (Anderson, "Fraternal"), rugby players (Anderson and McGuire), school boys (McCormack and Anderson, "Just"), heterosexual cheerleaders (Anderson, "Being"), and even the men of a Catholic College soccer team in the Midwest (Anderson, "Inclusive") have all been shown to maintain close physical and emotional relationships with each other.

Collectively, these studies highlight that as cultural homophobia diminishes, it frees heterosexual men to act in more feminine ways without threat to their heterosexual identity. I suggest that in the United States, United Kingdom, Canada and Australia (and likely in other Anglo-American cultures) we have dropped out of homohysteria. Whereas homophobia used to be the chief policing mechanism of a hegemonic form of masculinity, there no longer remains a strident cultural force to approximate the mandates of one type of homophobic masculinity.

I do not, however, claim that inclusive masculinities are completely free of oppression and subordination. A diminished state of homohysteria is not to be mistaken as a gender utopia. Men categorized as belonging to one archetype of a set of inclusive masculinities might still reproduce heteronormativity (Ripley et al. "Heteronormativity"); they might still sexually objectify women (Anderson, "Used"); they might still value excessive risk taking (Adams, Anderson, and McCormack); and they might still use homophobic discourse without intent to wound (McCormack, "Mapping"). Furthermore, I have not analyzed race, religiosity, or other demographic variables (with the exception of class) as important variables of social stratification alongside my research into these new inclusive masculinities. So generalizations are necessarily limited.

My data do, however, indicate that in the process of proliferating inclusive masculinities, gender itself, as a constructed binary of opposites, may be somewhat eroding. I argue that the efforts of the first, second, and, now, third waves of feminism—combined with the gay liberationists and gay assimilationist efforts of the past four decades— are slowly withering at the gender binary (Anderson, *Inclusive*). Increasingly, gender is the business of decreasing polarization, at least for white undergraduate men.

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FRIENDSHIP DYNAMICS AND POPULARITY HIERARCHIES AMONG INCLUSIVE MEN

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Abstract

Previous research has demonstrated that aggression and marginalization are key components of maintaining popularity within male peer groups. However, more recent ethnographic studies have documented a significant shift in young men's attitudes and behaviours, with more inclusive masculinities flourishing. My previous research has examined friendship dynamics and popularity hierarchies among boys, showing that contemporary popularity is stratified by a boy's charisma, authenticity, emotional support, and social fluidity. In this article, I draw upon ethnographic research to provide an intersectional analysis of how adolescent masculinities are influenced by class, age and sexuality.

Key words: Friendship, homophobia, masculinity, heterosexuality, youth.

Resumen

Anteriores investigaciones han demostrado que la agresión y la marginación son componentes claves para mantener la popularidad dentro de los grupos de pares masculinos. Sin embargo, estudios etnográficos más recientes han documentado un cambio significativo en las actitudes y comportamientos de los hombres jóvenes, con un aumento de las masculinidades inclusivas. Mi investigación previa ha examinado las dinámicas de amistad y las jerarquías de popularidad entre chicos jóvenes, demostrando que la popularidad contemporánea se estratifica según el carisma, la autenticidad, el apoyo emocional y la fluidez social de cada chico. En este artículo recurro a la investigación etnográfica para proporcionar un análisis interseccional sobre la manera en que las masculinidades adolescentes se ven influenciadas por la clase, la edad y la sexualidad.

Palabras clave: amistad, homofobia, masculinidad, heterosexualidad, juventud.

Research into the peer dynamics of young heterosexual men has documented negative social characteristics such as aggression, homophobia and an absence of emotional openness (Frosh, Phoenix and Pattman; Stoudt). This has been attributed to cultural homophobia and the cultural conflation of gender and sexuality in Western societies (Anderson, *Inclusive*). This means that in order for boys to avoid the stigma of being socially perceived as gay, they have to behave in ways that are op-

positional to things culturally coded as feminine. Hence, boys espouse homophobia and get into fights to avoid any suspicion of maintaining same-sex desire (Derlega et al.). Anderson conceptualised this as "homohysteria"—the fear of being socially perceived as gay (*Inclusive*).

The centrality of homophobia to young men's friendship dynamics is significant not least because it means that as attitudes toward homosexuality change, so will the ways in which boys interact. And as homophobia decreases in Western cultures (McCormack, *Declining*; Savin-Williams; Weeks), a growing body of research is documenting this change (Anderson and McGuire; McCormack, "Hierarchy"; Roberts). For example, boys are more open about their emotions (Anderson, "Rise"), more tactile (McCormack and Anderson, "Just"), and more inclusive of LGBT students (Adams; McCormack, "Positive"). In this article, I will build on prior research (Anderson, McCormack and Lee; McCormack, "Hierarchy") to provide an intersectional analysis of how the changing dynamics of male friendships are influenced by class, age and sporting participation.

CONTEXTUALISING BOYS' FRIENDSHIPS

Male friendship groups play a central role in the organization of masculinity among teenage boys (O'Donnell and Sharpe), where boys seek to gain control of their lives and distribute privilege between their peer group (Corsaro and Eder). This complex negotiation of social stratification is manifest as popularity (Adler and Adler), and is achieved through a range of factors, traditionally including attractiveness and extrovert behaviours (Francis, Skelton and Read), the marginalization and bullying of weaker or less popular boys (Cillessen and Rose) and skill at sports and other activities coded as masculine (Jackson).

Scholars have highlighted that the most effective way masculinities are regulated is through the use of homophobia (Derlega et al.; Mac an Ghaill; Plummer), but there are a range of other social mechanisms that do this as well. Boys police each other so that individuals who behave in ways that are not socially condoned are brought back in line with the norms of that setting (Steinberg, Epstein and Johnson).

This ordering of friendships among men has been understood through hegemonic masculinity theory (Connell). Adapting hegemony theory to understand the vertical hierarchies of boys and men, it recognizes that in addition to the policing of masculinities, boys associate themselves with students who are more popular than they are in order to consolidate their masculine standing. Anderson argues that this is most evident in non-sporty boys who admire more athletic boys and support sports teams in order to gain social standing even when they do not have the physical capabilities to participate in the sport (*Game*).

This set of powerful regulatory tools means that boys' friendships have been characterized by a limited range of behaviours and a damaging social dynamic. Mac an Ghaill describes boys' legitimate interests as being restricted to "football, fighting and fucking" (56), and Francis highlights that male peer groups appear

preoccupied with damaging behaviours including alcohol consumption, disruptive behaviour and the objectification of women.

These damaging behaviours have tended to emerge in late adolescence. Way documents how working class, ethnic minority young boys have deep, meaningful friendships, where they speak about "circles of love," "spilling your heart out to somebody,"...and "feeling lost" without their male best friends (91). Yet Way documents that as these boys get older, these friendships dissipate and older teenage boys feel socially isolated and long for the friendships of their youth.

However, it may be that Way's findings are limited to working class youth, or that her findings are historically situated, as she collected data for her book over the past twenty years. This is because recent research has documented the kind of friendships Way finds with young boys occurring among middle class teenagers, in both Britain and the United States (Anderson, *Inclusive*; McCormack, "Positive").

THEORIZING SOCIAL CHANGE

Attitudes toward homosexuality are rapidly changing in American and British cultures, with decreasing homophobia being a progressive and growing trend (Anderson, *Inclusive*; Loftus; Weeks). Recent research by Keleher and Smith documents growing support for gay and lesbian equality, attributing this to a cohort effect of older, less accepting Americans dying and being replaced by more inclusive youth, but also to changing attitudes throughout American society. Similarly, Curtice and Ormston find significantly more inclusive attitudes in the U.K.

These quantitative studies support a large body of qualitative research documenting a decrease in homophobia. Anderson finds openly gay athletes in U.S. college teams being socially included by their peers, suffering little or no harassment ("Updating")—a marked improvement from his earlier research (Anderson, "Openly"). Netzley finds increasing positive representation of gay men in the media, while over 5,000 gay-straight alliances offer safe spaces for LGBT students in American schools (Miceli).

Research documents an even greater transformation in the U.K., where homophobic attitudes were never as entrenched as in the United States (Anderson, *Inclusive*). My research has documented that LGBT students are included in even conservative school cultures (McCormack, "Positive"), and that heterosexual men espouse support of gay rights (McCormack, *Declining*; McCormack and Anderson, "Re-production"). Furthermore, Cashmore and Cleland find that 93 per cent of football fans would accept an openly gay player on their team.

Anderson theorizes how these changes in cultural attitudes toward homosexuality influence the social hierarchy of masculinities, devising "inclusive masculinity theory" to argue that the gendered behaviours of boys and men is radically different in cultural contexts where homophobia has diminished (*Inclusive*). In order to explicate his theory, Anderson developed the concept "homohysteria" to understand when homophobia regulates gendered behaviours. Defined as the cultural

fear of being socially perceived as gay, two key factors affect how homohysteric a culture is: The awareness that anyone can be gay in that culture, and the level of homophobia. Anderson argues that it is these factors that determine whether there is a "need for men to publicly align their social identities with heterosexuality in order to avoid homosexual suspicion" ((*Inclusive* 8). Inclusive masculinity theory posits that as homohysteria decreases, homophobia ceases to be a policing mechanism of boys and men's gendered behaviours and that this will have a profound effect on the social dynamics of their interactions.

A growing body of work supports this theorizing (e.g. Adams; Cavalier; Cashmore and Cleland; Dashper; Flood; Gottzén and Kremer-Sadlik; Kehler; Roberts), yet the social dynamics of friendship has received less attention in this literature (Anderson, Adams, and Rivers; McCormack, "Hierarchy")—and it focuses primarily on white, middle class men. In this article, I will draw on my research studies to explore various components of male friendship in cultures of decreased homophobia; adding an intersectional analysis to inclusive masculinity theory.

Intersectionality developed as a concept from the critique of gender -and race- based research that failed to recognize that there are many modes of oppression that structure an individual's identity, and that these ordering principles are mutually reinforcing (Anderson and McCormack, "Intersectionality"; Crenshaw). While perhaps most developed by black feminist scholars (e.g. Collins), there is a broader recognition that it is vital to understand the multiple factors that influence the social dynamics of any culture—and in this article I will address how class, age and sport influence the social dynamics of male friendship groups.

METHODOLOGICAL NOTE

In this article, I draw on three studies that examined the dynamics of male peer groups in the United Kingdom. The first study (McCormack, "Positive") involved ethnographic data collection in three sixth forms in the south of England, where I spent over a year interacting with male students to understand "what it means to be a guy in school"; the schools were purposively selected to find three distinct types of school (one a middle class school I call "Standard High"; one a Christian college I call "Religious High"; and one for disaffected youth I call "Fallback High"). The participant observations were supplemented by 44 in-depth interviews, as well as conversations with members of staff in the schools.

The second study was ethnographic research undertaken with a university rugby team at an elite university in the south of England (McCormack and Anderson, "Just"). Undertaken with men aged 18-23, it offers an insight into the friendship practices of an older group of men in a very specific social (sporting) context. I also draw on research on the hazing activities of two different sport teams from the same university to support this (Anderson, McCormack and Lee). Detailed discussion of the methods used are found in the articles cited.

RESULTS: THE SOCIAL DYNAMICS OF MASCULINITY IN INCLUSIVE SETTINGS

In my research on the masculinities of sixth form students in the U.K., the boys in these schools espoused pro-gay attitudes and condemned homophobia (McCormack, *Declining*). In addition to this, they had openly gay friends, and some even critiqued their school for a lack of openly gay role models. This inclusive culture has led to teenage boys redefining masculinity, and what made a boy popular was markedly different from what one might expect (McCormack, "Hierarchy").

The first thing to note about these students' conceptions of friendship, is that they have not abandoned all the components related to friendship previously. Just like with more traditional forms of masculinity, "fun-loving" acts of extroversion are important when friends enter. For example, one week in the common room entertainment was provided by boys using a skateboard. They performed tricks, trying to outperform their friends. The success of the trick, however, was less important than the exuberance with which it was performed. The most popular performances were the funniest and the most physical, and boys who could do this best received the most praise.

This idea of charisma raising popularity was also supported by interviews with students. For example, Alex, a quiet student who plays in a rock band, commented, "The bigger the character you are, the higher up you are." But contrary to the charisma of aggressive and macho boys, students argued that charisma raised the spirits of all students. As Ian said, "Say it's a wet and rainy day and everyone's down, you can always rely on someone doing something, just to make everyone laugh again, and feel a bit better."

It used to be the case that those boys who did not engage in extroverted behaviors were socially marginalized as nerdy or gay (Mac an Ghaill). However, at Standard High more introverted students can be popular if their behaviors are deemed to be part of "who you really are." One of the popular students, Ian, said, "Take Sam, he's a bit different. But I got to know him, and he's really cool. I like his individuality." As Jack said, "It's ultimately about comfortability with yourself." This was demonstrated through the clothes that the boys wore. That is, a wide variety of clothing styles were on display at Standard High, and while clothing was important, what mattered was not the style of clothes you wore, but that it "fit" with your personality.

One of the heartening and perhaps surprising aspects of what constituted popularity at Standard High was that the giving of emotional support was an ordinary and valued way of life for boys at this school. Indeed, boys spoke of their close friendship openly; as Matt said, "I love my friends, and I could rely on them if I needed to." I frequently observed this kind of support between male friends. However, boys also provided reassurance during public events as well. One example of this came during the election of "student officers." Here, students had to give a speech as to why they should be elected to one of the various available positions. Each candidate had to give a three-minute speech in assembly, and each was ap-

plauded before and after they did so. However, Simon was rather awkward during his speech, and spoke rather hesitantly. Despite not being particularly popular, he was equally applauded by his peers. Furthermore, later walking past a group of the most popular students, Matt called out, "Well done, Simon," and Ian added, "Yeah, it's not easy to do." There was no heckling, and the boys praised Simon's willingness to take part.

The final element of popularity at Standard High complements both inclusivity and support. Here, social fluidity recognizes how boys befriend a broad range of peers. Contrary to what earlier research has shown, boys are not part of antagonistic cliques and value the ability to move between social groups at Standard High. Indeed, there are no real cliques at Standard High—just groups of friends. Alex described this well by saying, "When you enter the common room and your friends aren't there, you can just talk to other people."

The boys value this sociability, and this was most powerfully demonstrated by how they decided to celebrate the end of the school year. In the last week of the summer term, approximately two-thirds of the students organized a five-day holiday together to the same seaside resort. One of the key components of this trip was that everyone stayed together. As Matt said, "It's important we go as a group, so we can all celebrate the end of the year together." At Standard High, popularity is achieved by including peers, not excluding them.

MIDDLE CLASS BOYS' CONCEPTIONS OF FRIENDSHIP

While boys' friendship groups were less insular than the cliques documented in earlier research (Jackson), they still placed a great deal of importance on close friendships, and were open about this. For example, Jack had been overseas for the weekend and on return was catching up with his peers. He saw his best friend, Tim, enter the common room, and shouted out, "Timmo!" Running across the room, and flinging his satchel onto one of the nearby chairs, Tim embraced Jack. Grasping him around the waist, Tim lifted Jack off the ground. Jack shouted, "Timmo, where were you all weekend, I missed ya!," as he exuberantly kissed Tim on the top of his head. As the boys calmed down after their initial greeting, they talked excitedly about their experiences over the weekend.

More frequent than this kind of boisterous demonstration of friendship, though, were the touching behaviors that occurred during quiet conversations. Here, boys used physical touch as a sign of friendship. Ben and Eli, for example, were stood in a corner of the common room, casually holding hands as they spoke—their fingers gently touching the other's palm. Halfway through the exchange, Ben changed his embrace, placing an arm around Eli's waist and a hand on his stomach. This kind of tactility was commonplace among the majority of boys at these schools. Indeed, hugging was a routine form of greeting in these schools.

Boys also openly recognized the closeness of their friendships. For example, Phil and Dan would regularly address each other as "lover" or "boyfriend,"

particularly when planning social activities. Proclaiming close friends as boyfriends was understood as a way of demonstrating emotional intimacy. Phil said, "Yeah, I call him boyfriend and stuff, but that's just a way of saying he's my best mate." Similarly, Dave commented, "I'll sometimes call my best mates "lover" or something similar. It's just a way of saying, "I love you,' really." It is evident that the dynamics of masculinity has changed in these settings, but so has the way these boys value their friends.

THE INTERSECTION WITH CLASS

In my earlier research, I focussed on the friendship dynamics of the boys in the middle class school. However, my ethnography at Fallback High—a school primarily consisting of working class youth—enables me to examine some differences in how working class youth behaved.

The boys at Fallback High also openly valued friendship. For example, Jamie said, "my best mates work now [instead of attending sixth form], and I miss just being around them. Your friends are important." Providing a similar perspective, Joe said:

> My best mates here are Dave and Dan. I enjoy hanging out with them, going down the pub and sometimes when we get drunk, we talk about emotional stuff, you know? But then other times we just chat shit. Both are good!

There were just two boys who did not openly value or express their friendship in any significant form. Charlie and Aiden were seemingly good friends who spent a lot of time together, yet I never heard them refer to each other as friends. When I asked Aiden about his friendship with Charlie, he looked uncomfortable, saying "He's a mate. You know, we hang out." Similarly, when I asked Charlie about friends, he said "I hang out with [Aiden], we're mates." The defensive tone adopted by Aiden and Charlie was in opposition to that of the other male students who all spoke in open terms about their friendships.

I have argued elsewhere the working class discourses that prevail in Fallback College act as a buffer on the development of inclusive attitudes and behaviours; restricting but not prohibiting them (McCormack under review). Clearly, this has also impacted on their friendships; as just two of the boys at Fallback High exhibited anything similar to the deep emotional bonds that were normalised at Standard High. While this may partly be attributable to the length of time the friendships have lasted, the middle class boys were much more at ease in discussing their friendships and happy for them to be openly celebrated. This class divide is also supported by Way's work, which finds working class male teenagers unable to relate to each other.

THE INTERSECTION WITH SPORT

Intersectionality theory often focuses on key demographic factors, such as age, class, race and sexuality. Yet other contextual conditions also influence the way friendships, and masculinities more broadly, are organized. Traditionally, sport has been a socially conservative institution that promotes a macho and stoic form of masculinity (Anderson, *Inclusive*)—yet research I have conducted finds changes here to, albeit with friendships contoured differently from my research in schools. Some of this may also be attributable to the men being slightly older, but being part of a sport team influences friendship dynamics.

On ethnographic research with a rugby team (McCormack and Anderson, "Re-production"), we found that friendship involved lots of "flirting with gayness"—jokingly pretending to be gay as a way of entertaining each other. For example, when Graham is greeted accordingly, he smiles and points suggestively to his butt, playing-up to the suggestion that he is gay. Similarly, Mike, aged 20, greets Colin, aged 22, with, "hey homo," and Colin replies, "Yeah, sister. Good weekend?" that this type of gay banter is understood as indicative of close friendship. When asked if he would banter with someone on the team he disliked, he responds, "No. Of course not! You only banter with those you like." Accordingly, participants' assert that gay banter is used only among friends, a finding supported through multiple interviews and observations.

In this setting, "don't be gay" is also used (although less frequently). This phrase, heard once a week, is normally expressed between friends as a way of debating the merits of a standpoint. For example, Mike tries to persuade Colin about the quality of a television show. Colin responds, "Don't be gay, man. That programme's shit." But when interviewed, Colin insists he does not mean this to insult about sexuality, but about Mike's standpoint instead. He does not desire to stigmatise gay men in the process. "I was just expressing my dislike of the programme. It has nothing to do with sexuality at all."

In research on university teams' hazing activities (Anderson, McCormack and Lee), we also found that the heterosexual male athletes (aged between 18 and 23) were proud of their friendships and would often demonstrate this through drunkenly kissing each other. Even so, they also provided "support" as they encouraged their friends to drink dangerous levels of alcohol on nights out. While more open about expressing emotion, these sporting men tended to display these behaviours in situations that were more stereotypically masculine.

CONCLUSION

This article has discussed the changing nature of male friendships in cultures of decreased homophobia—settings which are becoming increasingly prevalent in British and American cultures. Finding that middle class white teenagers espouse social inclusivity and giving emotional support when needed, I show that these male adolescents are proud of their deep and meaningful friendships. However, I add to

these findings by exploring how these dynamics intersect with class, age and the social context of sport; showing that the effects of decreasing homophobia on the social dynamics of male peer groups is not homogenous and will differ according to various intersecting factors. This highlights the need for further research into how the changing nature of masculinities intersects with a range of other social factors, including race, geography, religiosity and level of education.

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ABSENCES THAT MATTER: PERFORMATIVITY AND FEMALE MASCULINITIES

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Abstract

The theoretical and rhetorical apparatus that Halberstam deploys in *Female Masculinity* reflects an understanding of masculinity and of its relation with gender performativity that seems to be at odds with the most recognizable political objectives of his work. Given the importance of his work and, especially, of the rethinking of gender binarism, I will try to highlight what I see as a problematic subtext of *Female Masculinity.*

Key words: Female masculinity, performativity, citationality, performance.

Resumen

El aparato teórico y retórico que emplea Halberstam en *Female Masculinity* refleja una concepción de la masculinidad y de su relación con la performatividad de género que parece entrar en conflicto con los objetivos políticos más evidentes de su trabajo. Dada la importancia del mismo y, en especial, del replanteamiento crítico del binarismo genérico, trataré aquí de resaltar lo que veo como un subtexto problemático de *Female Masculinity*.

Palabras clave: masculinidad femenina, performatividad, citacionalidad, performance.

Judith (Jack) Halberstam did not write *Female Masculinity* in order to answer the question "What is masculinity?" From the very beginning of his book, he states clearly that he has not "any definitive answer to this question" (1). Therefore, if we had to identify the actual purpose of his essay, we would have to look for it elsewhere. The easiest way to do it would be in negative terms: *Female Masculinity,* rather than producing new answers, is written to question and problematize our quotidian and academic understanding of masculinity. And that may well be the most productive effect of reading it, that is, the most powerful political effect of his groundbreaking work in the field of gender and queer studies.

Considered by itself, the critical task of exposing and dismantling historical prejudices in the understanding of masculinity is no novelty for the so called "mas-

culinity studies." We could consider it as the inaugural goal of this field of academic inquiry. As the sociologist Michael Kimmel explains, masculinity, as an object of study, has enjoyed a very particular form of historical invisibility paradoxically linked to its omnipresence. It has always been there, implicit in all forms of cultural production but, paradoxically, it has not become visible until the very recent past:

> Masculinity Studies were equivalent to the study of Literature, Philosophy, History or Political Science, etc., fields where women had been virtually excluded.
> We did not start labelling them as "Masculinity Studies," that is, to talk about masculinity as a factor, until very recently, at the beginning of the eighties, when academics trained in feminism started realizing that the gender system had been ignored in the analysis of men. (15)

The key role feminism has played in this process can hardly be overemphasized. Actually, for many,[1] the so called "masculinity studies" are nothing but a part of gender studies and, in this sense, of feminist thought. But when we think about Halberstam and his analysis of masculinity, this relationship becomes, if that is possible, more intimate. In fact, what he is interested in is not male masculinity but masculinity as it is lived, inhabited and embodied by women, that is, female masculinity.

Given this premise, Halberstam's essay could be considered by some as a study on alternative masculinities with no more than a tangential interest, in the best of cases, for the study of masculinity as such. That is not, of course, the way Halberstam conceives his own approach to the question. Rather, this kind of strategic displacement of the target may well be the best, if not the only way, to really grasp masculinity: on the one hand, he tells us, because "masculinity must not and cannot and should not reduce down to the male body and its effects" (1); on the other, and this is the crucial epistemological point of his argument, because masculinity cannot be made intelligible unless it is separated from the male privilege inherent to white and middle class male bodies:

> Masculinity in this society inevitably conjures up notions of power and legitimacy and privilege; it often symbolically refers to the power of the state and to uneven distributions of wealth. Masculinity seems to extend outward into patriarchy and inward into the family; masculinity represents the power of inheritance, the consequences of the traffic in women, and the promise of social privilege. But, obviously, many other lines of identification traverse the terrain of masculinity, dividing its power into complicated differentials of class, race, sexuality, and gender. If what we call "dominant masculinity" appears to be a naturalized relation between maleness and power, then it makes little sense to examine men for the contours of that masculinity's social construction. *Masculinity, this book will claim,*

[1] As Carolyn Dinshaw explains in "Perspectivas queer" (81-95).

becomes legible as masculinity where and when it leaves the white male middle-class body.[2] (24; italics added)

What Halberstam offers us, therefore, is a very patient analysis of a wide range of queer masculinities which is, at the same time, a study of masculinity *per se* and an exercise in critical thinking about the violence that masculine women face. A violence coming from what Wittig called the "heterosexual mind," whether it is found on the outside or on the inside of feminist theories and practices. It is worth noticing that fighting the transgenderphobia that some women—but not only women—are exposed to is, or at least should be, as much a feminist concern as is fighting transphobia and homophobia, especially when these forms of violence are frequently undistinguishable from one another. Of course, this gathering of interests is not an unusual one in the theoretical space of what is sometimes referred to as queer feminism.[3] Halberstam, for his part, considers the task to which he is committed as an important contribution to, simultaneously, "gender studies, cultural studies, queer studies and the classic debates on gender" (2).

FROM IMPENETRABILITY TO NONPERFORMATIVITY

To begin with, it is important to acknowledge that Halberstam's point of departure is a distinction between dominant masculinity of white middle-class males and subordinated masculinities, a distinction that was already established in masculinity studies.[4] However, Halberstam rethinks significantly this distinction

[2] The reference to "dominant"—or hegemonic—masculinities is a very common one in the field of masculinity studies. It was introduced for the first time during the eighties (Kessler et al; Connell, "Class"; Connell, *Which*). In order to understand masculinity it was necessary, in Connell's terms, to take into account the distinction between hegemonic and subaltern masculinities (Connell, "Politics" 140). The cultural production of these two forms of hierarchical masculinity would be part of the game through which masculinity is socially constructed. In this sense, white middle-class masculinity could not be understood, nor exist, independently of the exclusionary process of distinguishing itself from subaltern forms of masculinity. In Connell's work, this implied the oppression of the whole range of masculinities all along the axis of race, class and sexuality (Connell, "Politics" 143) that Halberstam also refers to. There is, however, an important distinction to make in the epistemological privilege Halberstam associates with the study of masculinities not embodied by white males. In his view, it would not be in the relations of hierarchical subordination as such that masculinity would become properly intelligible but, rather, in specific forms of queer masculinity—that is, in masculinity completely isolated from its privileges.

[3] Although it has been a very contested one in the history of feminism, as exemplified by the proliferation of feminist cissexist authors who condemn transsexual F2M communities for diverse reasons. Halberstam reminds us, for example, of the way in which Janice Raymond and Mary Daly "and other feminists in the 1970s and 1980s saw male-to-female transsexuals as phallocratic agents who were trying to infiltrate women-only space" (Halberstam 149).

[4] See especiallly R. Connell, *Masculinities* 79, 81, 191, and 242.

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when he upholds the role masculine women have played in the construction of hegemonic or "heroic" masculinities:

> Many of these "heroic masculinities" depend absolutely on the subordination of alternative masculinities. I claim in this book that far from being an imitation of maleness, female masculinity actually affords us a glimpse of how masculinity is constructed as masculinity. (1)

The way this construction is conceived is indeed different from the dependency, on the part of dominant masculinities, on the constitutive exclusion of subaltern masculinities, that is, of its exclusionary relegation to a constitutive outside.[5] The examples offered by Halberstam show an interesting perspective upon the construction of heroic masculinity by both male and female bodies:

> This book seeks Elvis only in the female impersonators Elvis Herselvis; it searches for the political contours of masculine privilege not in men but in the lives of aristocratic European cross-dressing women in the 1920s; it describes the details of masculine difference by comparing not men and women but butch lesbians and female-to-male transsexuals; it examines masculinity's iconicity not in the male matinee idol but in a history of butches in cinema; it finds, ultimately, that the shapes and forms of modern masculinity are best showcased within female masculinity. (3)

Indeed, the book explores many of these silenced forms of female masculinities, not only in lesbian contexts. Some of the most interesting conclusions about masculinity are achieved by Halberstam around zones of indeterminacy between lesbians, transgenders and FTM transsexual identities and practices. Among them, we will focus on a figure of female masculinity that holds a privileged position in

[5] It is interesting to note that the kind of epistemological advantage attributed to non normative genders -although not in so direct a relation to masculinity- can also be found in Judith Butler's work. One of the best known theoretical moves of *Gender Trouble* refers to the way incoherent embodiment of genders can produce—besides several forms of political resistance—a critical transformation of our understanding of gender. Butler conceives the performance of the drag queen, that is, hyperbolic femininity embodied by men in the theatrical contexts of performance, as an opportunity to unveil the way in which gender is constructed through mimesis and citationality. The incoherence between biological sex and the gender performed would favour the highlighting of the performative character of gender, exposing it not as something we *are* but as something we *do*. Furthermore, Butler also established a certain *continuum* between the gender subversion of the drag queen and that of the butch, in the following terms: "The notion of an original or primary gender identity is often parodied within the cultural practices of drag, cross-dressing, and the sexual stylization of butch/femme identities. Within feminist theory, such parodic identities have been understood to be either degrading to women, in the case of drag and cross-dressing, or an uncritical appropriation of sex-role stereotyping from within the practice of heterosexuality, especially in the case of butch/femme lesbian identities. But the relation between the "imitation" and the "original" is, I think, more complicated than that critique generally allows" (Butler, *Gender* 175).

Halberstam's study: the stone butch[6]—an especially masculine lesbian that Halberstam describes as a "dyke body placed somewhere on the boundary between female masculinity and transgender subjectivity" (124).

This queer limit of female masculinity holds a particular relation between the order of gender and that of sexual practices. Specifically, Halberstam explains, the stone is defined by the sexual practices that she does not perform: in the words of Merril Mushrrom, a "stone butch" is "a butch who does not let her partner touch her sexually" (qtd. Halberstam 120); in Halberstam, "the "stone" in stone butch refers to a kind of impenetrability" (123). An impenetrability easily comparable—Halberstam is very aware of it—to the typical impenetrability involved in the construction of male's normative heterosexuality (149).[7] However, in the case of the stone, her impenetrability has been a common target for normalizing discourses on the sexual practices associated with a "healthy sexuality":

> [the stone butch] seems to provoke unwarranted outrage not only from a gender-conformist society that cannot comprehend stone butch gender or stone butch desire but also from within the dyke subculture, where the stone tends to be read as frigid, dysphoric, misogynist, repressed, or simply pretranssexual. (124)

In his denouncement of this kind of pathologisation, Halberstam describes the relations between the masculinity and the sexuality of the stone. In doing so he moves away from Butler's theory of performativity, given that it would be unable to take into account certain forms of generic identification that tend to what he defines as "nonperformativity." A negative version of performativity that he associates not only with the stone but with all forms of dominant masculinity. Now, what kind of nonperformativity is this one, and what relation does it maintain with gender performativity?

ABSENCES THAT MATTER

Halberstam presents nonperformativity in relation to the stone's impenetrability in the following terms:

[6] It is, however, necessary to clarify that Halberstam rejects the linearity of a gender model that polarizes masculinities between the limit of androgyny and FTM in a linear axis such as "Androginy-Soft butch-Butch-Stone butch-Transgender butch-FTM" (151). The main problem of such a continuum, according to Halberstam (in agreement with Jordy Jone´s "catalogue of transgender variety") is its inability to understand the potential ubiquity of transsexual identities all along the axis, in addition to "make gender dysphoria the exclusive property of transsexual bodies or to surmise that the greater the gender dysphoria, the likelier a transsexual identification" (151).

[7] On this topic, see Javier Sáez and Sejo Carrascosa: a reflection on the relations between the construction of masculinities and anal politics.

> [It] oddly references the nonperformative aspects of this butch's sexual identity. The stone butch has the dubious distinction of being possibly the only sexual identity defined almost solely in terms of what practices she does *not* engage in. Is there another sexual identity, we might ask, defined by what a person will not do? What does it mean to define a sexual identity and a set of sexual practices that coalesce around that identity within a negative register? What are the implications of a negative performativity for theorizing sexual subjectivities? Furthermore, could we even imagine designating male sexual identities in terms of nonperformance? (126)

The slippage between the references to performativity ("nonperformative," "negative performativity") with the references to performance ("nonperformance") should be stressed, especially when the conflation between the theatrical dimensions of performance and the related but also broader concept of gender performativity has already been a repeated source of confusion in the reception of Butler's positions.[8] Moreover, in the following paragraph Halberstam reproduces, in my opinion, a good motive to insist in such distinction, when he argues that the fact that the stone is defined by practices she does not engage in somehow "challenges" the theory of performativity:

> The stone butch again *challenges even this complicated theory of performativity* because her *performance* is embedded within a *nonperformance* [italics added]: stone butchness, in other words, performs both female masculinity and a rejection of enforced anatomical femininity. Nonperformance, in this formulation, signifies as heavily as performance and reveals the ways in which performativity itself is as much a record of what a body will not do as what it might do. (151)

While it seems clear that the repetition of gender performatives that is involved in the process of subjection for any generic position depends as much on what the subject actually does, repeats or performs, as it does on everything that the subject avoids doing, repeating or performing, we may also wonder if, in the case of the stone, by a simple inversion of perspective, we might consider that her sexual practices are not in fact also defined—this time, in terms of an active or positive performance—by the access to the body of her sexual partner.[9] From such a perspective, the fact that this access is not a reciprocal one would not re-

[8] I will come back later to this point, given the importance of distinguishing performativity from a strictly theatrical model of gender that may overemphasize the intentional control over gender performatives. As Sara Salih puts it "Crucially, Butler is *not* suggesting that gender identity is a performance, since that would presuppose the existence of a subject or an actor who is *doing* that performance. Butler refutes this notion by claiming that the performance pre-exists the performer, and this counter-intuitive, apparently impossible argument, has led many readers to confuse performativity with performance" (10-11).

[9] Inversion of the terms which has also a place in the final chapter of Halberstam's essay, where the stone butch is referred to as "the partner who wanted to be "*doing all the doing*" (italics added, 276).

strict the identity of the stone to the practices that she does not perform, and we could thus simply state that the impenetrability of the stone is, as in the case of the traditional impenetrability of the heterosexual male, just the reverse of a set of practices in which the stone involves herself in a fully active way, even in the terms provided by a theory of performance. Actually, it may well be that there is no form of "nonperformance" that cannot be re-described by attending to the active part that the subject takes in the considered practice, however passive or negative it apparently may be.

Furthermore, outside the limits of performance, all forms of performativity are constitutively so compromised with everything they recite, as they are with all that is excluded from the act of recitation. This exclusion has, in fact, been an integral part of the concept of performativity since Austin introduced it in his speech act theory. Specifically, he considered diverse "masqueraded" forms of the performative that did not need any explicit grammatical or verbal articulation to exert its performative force (Austin 4).[10]

Through the "translation" of the theory of performativity to the field of gender studies, such silences, exclusions and "absences that matter" or, hence, everything that the body does not say or simply refuses to perform was situated at the centre of the performative articulation of gender identities. Butler defends that:

> The redescription of intrapsychic processes in terms of the surface politics of the body implies a corollary redescription of gender as the disciplinary production of the figures of fantasy through *the play of presence and absence* on the body's surface, the construction of the gendered body through *a series of exclusions and denials, signifying absences*.[11] (*Gender* 172; italics added)

It does not seem easy to understand these signifying absences as a peculiar characteristic of the stone butch in the terms suggested, nor that the "nonperformances" considered by Halberstam actually challenge the limits of the theory of performativity. Rather, the conflation of performativity into performance appears to be linked to the project of complementing the performative description of gender identities with the introduction of a negative or "nonperformative" performativity. The slippage of one category into the other would be an effect of forgetting—whether

[10] Eve Kosovsky Sedgwick similarly reflects on the constitutive role played by silence with respect to performativity: "But, in the vicinity of the closet, even what *counts* as a speech act is problematized on a perfectly routine basis. As Foucault says: there is no binary division to be made between what one says and what one does not say; we must try to determine the different ways of not saying such things... There is not one but many silences, and they are an integral part of the strategies that underlie and permeate discourses. 'Closetedness' is itself a performance initiated as such by the speech act of a silence-not a particular silence, but a silence that acrrues by fits and starts, in relation to the discourse that surrounds and differentially constitutes it" (3).

[11] See also *Excitable Speech*, where Butler assumed that "even a silent bearing would qualify as a linguistic performative to the extent that we understand silence as a constitutive dimension of speech" (175).

it is a momentary or a strategical act—that restriction is always already a constitutive part of any conceivable relation between gender and performativity. Otherwise it could not be widely assumed that the theory of performativity overcame the debate between essentialism and constructivism, and Butler's positions would be, once again, caricatured as a form of constructivist voluntarism.

The fact that it is also Halberstam, at the same time, who reminds us that Butler's description of the performative construction of identities cannot be reduced to any form of voluntarism (119) means that it is important to be cautious with the way he deals with the same kind of conceptual reduction. The consequences of this reduction are in a certain sense subtle throughout his text, but they are related to aspects important enough for the theorizing of masculinities to be, at least, highlighted.

For a better understanding of the way restriction, performance and performativity relate to each other—the constitutive presence of all that is excluded, not recited, all that which the body does not do—the following precision that Butler introduces can be very useful:

> it is not only that there are constraints to performativity; rather, constraint calls to be rethought as the very condition of performativity. Performativity is neither free play nor theatrical self-presentation; nor can it be simply equated with performance. Moreover, constraint is not necessarily that which sets a limit to performativity; constraint is, rather, that which impels and sustains performativity. (*Bodies* 95)

If a reduction of performativity to performance is in fact operating here, what are its consequences for the conceptualization of masculinities in Halberstam's text? In relation with the stone butch, the answer seems clear. A certain form of butch masculinity—and not just anyone, but precisely that which is recognized by its hypermasculinity—is characterized by a negative relation with performativity that somehow "challenges" the theory of performativity. The implicit risk is that refusing the performative conceptual frame in this way (in this move towards non-performativity) implies the loss of the links between masculinity—at least, of certain forms of masculinity—and gender performatives as such. In the absence of these links and, together with them, of the whole question of performative citationality of gender, would not the link between these masculinities and the idea of gender as something that we *are* not, but as something that we *do* also be lost? Would it imply a detachment of the constructed, imitative, citational character of gender with the result that it is somehow—in the most improbable of places, an essay on the historical construction of masculinity[12]—renaturalized?

[12] One that clearly deepens, as very few have, our comprehension of the fact that "masculinity, of course, is what we make of it" (Halberstam 144). What I look for in his theoretical turn is, so to speak, a theoretical subtext that interferes and even contradicts, to some extent, the overall aim of his work.

KINGING

In the chapter explicitly devoted to "Drag Kings: Masculinity and Performance" (231-267) Halberstam does not seem to go that far. Rather, he questions with ethnographical rigour the "tendency" of masculinity to "present itself as nonperformative" (236). This tendency is discussed in relation to theatrical representations of masculinity in the context of drag-king culture (a set of theatrical practices, developed within certain lesbian countercultures, devoted to the scenic representation of masculinity). As opposed to "drag queen culture," drag kings face the fact that hegemonic masculinity offers, as Halberstam puts it, a low theatrical profile. For Halberstam, it is precisely the necessity to deal with the insidious naturalization of masculinity typical of popular culture that would have led drag kings to develop particular forms of performing masculinity. As a result, the performances of a masculinity which tends to present itself as not theatrical would have renounced the camp humour[13] usually associated with drag queens. That is the reason why Halberstam introduces a new category of analysis specific to the drag king scene, which he baptises "kinging":

> Performances of masculinity seem to demand a different genre of humour and performance. It is difficult to make masculinity the target of camp precisely because, as we have noted, masculinity tends to manifest as nonperformative. When drag king performances are campy, it is generally because the actor allows her femininity to inform and inflect the masculinity she performs. Performances of humorous masculinity demand another term, not only to distinguish them from the camp humour of femininity but also to avoid, as Newton warns, the conflation of drag and camp with butch-femme. I want to propose the term "kinging" for drag humour associated with masculinity, not because this is a word used by drag kings themselves but because I think that a new term is the only way to avoid always collapsing lesbian history and social practice associated with drag into gay male histories and practices. (238)

The complexities of kinging are explored in a detailed discussion of the Hershe Bar Drag King contests, which were organized by categories (in a comparable manner to the *ball culture* of Harlem in the mid 80s, documented in Jennie Livingston's film *Paris Is Burning*). Of those, the most closely associated to kinging is "butch realness," a category usually preferred by butches who perform her own masculinity in a minimally dramatized way. As an explanatory example, Halberstam remembers the performance by virtue of which a drag king won the first price for this category:

[13] Characteristic of gay culture—and drag queen culture—which Esther Newton famously introduced in gender studies in 1979.

> The butch who won was a very muscular black woman wearing a basketball shirt and shorts. In her "sports drag" and with her display of flexed muscles, the contestant could easily have passed as a male, and this made her "convincing." This contestant won through her display of *an authentic or unadorned and unperformed masculinity*. (246; italics added)

Halberstam contrasts vigorously this kind of performance with another category of the contest, the "femme pretender." In this case, in a significant theatrical vein—flexing and exhibiting muscles are for some reason out of the scope of deliberate theatricality—the femme-pretender performs recognizably camp routines, typical of drag queen culture, superimposing masculine and feminine elements. Indeed, the camp aspect of her performance would be the result of the drag king's express will to display her own femininity in her performance of masculinity:

> One or two femme pretenders would appear in every drag king contest, and their performances often revolved around a consolidation of femininity rather than a disruption of dominant masculinity. The femme pretender actually dresses up butch or male only to show how thoroughly her femininity saturates her performance—she performs the failure of her own masculinity as a convincing spectacle. These performances *tend to be far more performative* [italics added]than butch realness ones, but possibly less interesting for the following reasons: first, the femme drag king has not really altered the structure of drag as it emerged within male contexts as camp; second, the femme pretender offers a reassurance that female masculinity is just an act and will not carry over into everyday life. (249-250)

It is somehow hard to understand Halberstam in his conviction that the femme pretender dresses and characterizes herself as a man as a way to consolidate her femininity. If we move from the doubtfully comprehensible order of intentions to consider the effects of her performance, it is quite possible that the mix of masculine characteristics (as king) and feminine ones (as femme) results in a destabilization of the binary structure of gender: if the femme pretender actually confuses the limits of masculinity and femininity, there seems to be no reason to consider that the way she cuts across gendered space performance "tends to reassert a stable binary definition of gender" (250). Halberstam's statement that this category "has not really altered the structure of drag as it emerged within gay male contexts as camp" (250) turns out to be also problematic, and it raises the question of whether the femme pretender is like the drag queen because the drag queen has also the parallel objective of reinforcing her own masculinity—of showing to what extent she fails in her attempt to be feminine—or any other comparison that could be made between the more performative character of the femme pretender in opposition to kinging.

It is quite clear, though, that Halberstam considers, oddly enough, that the femme pretender transition through different genders—between the stage and quotidian life—tends to consolidate gender binarism, and that this mixture is for some reason "less interesting" than the pure masculinity proper of kinging.

However, it should be noted that, all through his analysis of kinging, Halberstam talks of a "tendency to present as," rather than of some kind of privileged access of masculinity to any form of the "order of nature." His proposal on kinging could thus fit, without further complications, in the general purpose of his essay, that is, to denounce the farce by virtue of which masculinity would have become the exclusive preserve of men.

We cannot overlook, though, the questionable distinction between the way men "tend" to present themselves as "natural" masculine men and the more obvious artificiality associated with feminine performativity—in relation to a normative femininity which, in contrast, would not tend to present itself as not theatrical, as well as in relation to camp, which would not have, in principle, to deal with that obstacle. This approach would fail to take into account the way in which all generic normativity depends on the tendency of the subject to perform gender as a natural and spontaneous fact, nonperformative and, thus, not theatrical. The readability of the subject as a real and authentic gendered subject depends, for its success, on offering itself to the other's gaze under the guise of naturality, as if gender was nothing but the expression of an internal essence of the subject. From the point of view of Butler's theory of performativity, social intelligibility of all genders also depends on their success in hiding the artificial nature of all cultural constructions of gender. A point of view that considers all gendered stylizations of the body equally oriented towards the production of the illusion of a nonperformative naturalness, without theoretically productive distinctions between masculinity and femininity:

> Consider that a sedimentation of gender norms produces the peculiar phenomenon of a "natural sex" or "real woman" or any number of prevalent and compelling social fictions, and that this is a sedimentation that over time has produced a set of corporeal styles which, in reified form, appear as the natural configuration of bodies into sexes existing in a binary relation to one another. If these styles are enacted, and if they produce the coherent gendered subjects who pose as their originators, what kind of performance might reveal this ostensible "cause" to be an effect? (Butler, *Gender* 178)

To point out that certain forms of masculinity tend to a nonperformative performance—in order to come to conclusions such as the difference between camp and kinging, among others—does not fully resolve the questions that we posed previously regarding the stone butch's masculinity. More likely, it makes us confront them at a different theoretical level. Because, in the end, what kind of relation is that which links masculinity with the non-constructed and the non-theatrical in such a way that any particular relation between masculinity and nonperformativity can be considered?

GENDER AND PEDAGOGY: FEMININITY AS A RISKY PROSTHESIS

Halberstam offers some final reflections on the "pedagogy of gender" that, despite their presumable ironic quality, confirm finally his tendency to oppose masculinity and femininity in the exposed terms, towards a very particular but still problematic form of naturalization—not only of masculinity, whether it is the case that we refer to masculine masculinity or feminine masculinity or to generic binarism in a broader sense.

The conflation between performance and performativity arises one more time in the pedagogical recommendations that Halberstam suggests in relation to infancy and the development of gender. These adopt a form that, in my opinion, has to be understood as supporting the idea that masculinity is, or should be, associated with a healthier and more natural development of the subject (both in the case of girls and boys), thus characterizing femininity as a prosthetic cultural complement that could be added at a later stage:

> While much of this book has concentrated on the masculinity in women that is most often associated with sexual variance, I also think the general concept of female masculinity has its uses for heterosexual women. After all, the excessive conventional femininity often associated with female heterosexuality can be bad for your health. Scholars have long pointed out that femininity tends to be associated with passivity and inactivity, with various forms of unhealthy body manipulations from anorexia to high-heeled shoes. It seems to me that at least early on in life, girls should avoid femininity. Perhaps femininity and its accessories should be chosen later on, like a sex toy or a hairstyle. In recent years, I believe that society has altered its conceptions of the appropriate way to raise girls; indeed, a plethora of girl problems, from eating disorders to teenage pregnancy to low intellectual ambitions, leave many parents attempting to hold femininity at bay for their young girls. Cultivating femininity in girls at a very early age also has the unfortunate effect of sexualizing them and even inducing seductive mannerisms in preteen girls. [...]
>
> If masculinity were a kind of default category for children, surely we would have more girls running around and playing sports and experimenting with chemistry sets and building things and fixing things and learning about finances and so on. (268-269)

The strategical or, to some extent, ironic points that can be detected in this proposal are not enough to neutralize, from my point of view, the problems implied in the introduction of a strong distinction between femininity and masculinity on the basis of the weaker ties that would link masculinity to the question of theatricality, or with the assumption that masculinity looks "healthier" when we consider the restrictions frequently imposed on the corporal activities that a certain gender normativity considers proper of the feminine gender.

It is hard to overlook the importance of these final considerations on the development of boys' and girls' masculinities and the suggestion that femininity could be just added, later on, as an optional supplement. It is clearly shown here

that masculinity's "tendency to present as nonperformative" relies in a certain way on its more original character: the tendency to non-theatricality and nonperformativity would not be just another farce of gender normativity; it would be, rather, an intrinsic part of a masculinity that becomes, thus, the healthy support to which later on, occasionally, could be added the attributes of femininity.

Therefore, even though the grounding of this difference in the order of mere biology (or any other explanation we can offer to conceptualize the privileged access of male bodies to masculinity) may have been overcome, Halberstam's proposal presents a sort of theoretical commitment with the idea that masculinity escapes the order of performance and, in the same theoretical movement, of performativity. Nonperformativity, associated by Halberstam with the hypermasculinity of the stone, the rigid separation between camp and kinging (which includes a rejection of generic confusion as a "less interesting" gender performance) or the consideration of femininity as an optional complement which is healthier when it is added at a certain stage to the process of acquisition of gender, confirm, taken as a whole, a set of conceptualizations of masculinity that exert a difficult to ignore exclusionary force upon theatricality, camp humour and, finally, femininity as a risky optional prosthesis for child development that resonates, in a very special way, with the history of the category of performativity.

THE UNDECIDABLE: RECITING MASCULINITIES OR RESIGNIFYING FEMININITIES?

It is convenient to remember that performativity was introduced into philosophy of language in a book in which Austin devoted part of his theoretical efforts to the issue of delimiting what he called "serious" uses of performative utterances—and their corresponding contexts—persistently excluding from his arguments those related, precisely, with any form of theatrical performance (among other "parasite" uses of true performativity):

> a performative utterance will, for example, be *in a peculiar way* hollow or void if said by an actor on the stage, or if introduced in a poem, or spoken soliloquy (...) language in such circumstances is in special ways—intelligibly—used not seriously, but in ways *parasitic* upon its normal use-ways which fail under the doctrine of the *etiolations* of language. All this we are *excluding* from consideration. (Austin 22; italics added)

It was only through the Derridean critique of these exclusions that performativity was able to reveal itself as a category of critical interest for gender studies, primarily by virtue of the citational character that Derrida attributed to all performative expressions—the very same citationality that Butler situated at the centre of her formulation of gender performativity. Both Derridean and Butlerian critiques of performativity proposed that performativity was an unavoidable part of all significative utterances, thus extending its importance far beyond the con-

stative/performative distinction,[14] at the same time that the importance given to citationality undermined the serious/non serious opposition so cherished by Austin. Considering this, it may not be so surprising that once performativity had extended its theoretical influence over any kind of gender traits this opposition between serious and non serious uses has found a way to reformulate itself—typically, in the theoretical space usually known as queer theory. After all, it is so deeply rooted in western philosophy that we could easily trace it back to Plato's treatment of poetry. Interestingly, once performance and performativity overlap or simply collapse into each other, it is performativity as a category that is at a certain extent "challenged" for its lack of seriousness, while nonperformativity is privileged because of the very same lack of theatricality that Austin considered essential in order to find, paradoxically, true performatives.

It can be useful, when dealing with these kinds of conceptualizations of gender, to have in mind that Derridean introduction of citationality implied criticism of the concept of "context" (Derrida 320-321), which implied that the context where we find any performative—in relation to which we could try to distinguish between "serious" and "not serious" uses of language— is always impossible to delimit in any definitive way—hence making the distinction, at the end, undecidable.

Following Derrida, we can consider that, in the same manner, any taxonomy of masculinities or, for that matter, of different femininities and masculinities considered by its stronger or weaker relation with theatricality will always be doomed to failure, partly because there is not any useful criteria that permits us to sustain that it is less theatrical to pick out a pose that heightens muscles, wearing sports clothing or not, than to wiggle the hips; no way to measure the "tendency" of heels being offered as non-theatrical as compared to ties; no theoretical way to come to any conclusion as to whether casting a hard gaze while tensing the jaw is more or less performative than smiling openly and sweetening the expression. Overall, there is no stable context that allows us to decide in advance if, at the end of the day, any of the cited gender performative should be considered masculine or feminine.

What we overlook when we choose not to pay attention to this kind of intrinsic undecidability of gender attributes is, ultimately, everything which links generic variability to resignification. Halberstam chooses, for many reasons, female masculinity as a strategic position in order to resist binary and oppositional gender norms. The problem is that, in spite of the diversity of bodies and genders taken into account, he overlooks the fact that some of the girls and boys who choose, let's say, to get involved in intense sporting activity are not consequently opting for masculinity, nor rejecting femininity. It may well be that they are just producing forms of femininity that resignify the norm of what is expected and what is sanctioned "within" femininity.

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[14] As Butler puts it, "the constative claim is always to some degree performative" (*Bodies* 18).

This considered, we can come to the conclusion that there is an always unsolvable distance, contextually and strategically variable, among, at least, three different dimensions: female masculinity, reinvention of femininity and the production of new genders. To ignore this distance would imply the assumption of a rigid division between masculine and feminine attributes, between masculine and feminine performative. As a result, the binary and oppositional norm that we were trying to fight could be, in fact, being restrengthened. Otherwise, in relation to what norm can the failure of a femme pretender in her attempt to perform masculinity, or the lack of interest in her recombination of gender attributes, be judged?

In a very interesting article in which she carefully analyses the use of the category in the works of C.J. Pascoe and Adrienne Harris, Judith Kegan points out a similar concern about the use of the concept of "female masculinity": "The very category of 'female masculinity' then, may reinforce the tendency even for feminist analysis to remain only within the gender binary and to valorize masculinity over femininity" (631). Against this tendency, Kegan suggests that at least some of the gender practices that are being labelled as "female masculinities" should be acknowledged as alternative femininities or "of new, less gender-saturated categories" (632). Although I do not know what might qualify as a less "gender saturated category," I definitely agree that "female masculinity," despite all its subversive potential, can become an umbrella term that minimizes the destabilizing effects that the production of new femininities can have over gender binarism.

Even the political significance of the tomboy could be lost if we were to postulate it (or, in fact, any given form of embodying gender) as a "standard" option for girls, especially if we ignore the coexistence, the unavoidable confusion and indiscernibility, between female masculinities—which resignify masculinity, expropriating it from male bodies—and all those femininities that reinvent femininity while producing—whether it is "for" it or even "departing from" it—unexpected attributes.

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MEMORIES THAT TURN INTO TALL TALES OF MAGIC RINGS AND MEN CARING FOR ONE ANOTHER: AN INTERVIEW WITH MICHAEL MESSNER

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Michael Messner needs no introduction to those who are involved in Gender and Masculinity Studies. Professor Messner has been teaching for more than twenty years now at the University of Southern California, and his manifold sociological works on men and sports and on gender-based violence have been widely read and discussed by all who are interested in his fields of research. Yet, it is not his strictly academic work that is focused on in this interview, but the publication of his memoir, *King of the Wild Suburb: A Memoir of Fathers, Sons and Guns* (2011). With a different tone and style to his academic works, Messner continues reflecting on manhood in his book, where he presents alternative views to the corseted models of masculinities offered by mainstream culture. Both in his book and in this interview, Messner deals with the many ambivalences a man like him has had to face regarding the social and family models of manhood that surround him, and it is in the coming to terms with, and acceptance of, ambivalence that his work becomes especially inspiring.

In an interview given to *The Huffington Post* after the publication of his memoir, Messner recounted an anecdote about his grandfather; when he was at

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graduate school he had commented, one day at dinner, on a book by a historian which spoke of the positive reactions of young men participating in World War I, as it proved a good way of upholding their baggy masculinity: "My story done, he peeked up from under his visor and made brief eye contact with me, glanced down momentarily at his fork as though carefully choosing his words, looked up again and barked at me, mouth still full of food, 'I was drafted!' Face reburied in his plate, he muttered disparagingly, 'Masculinity!—kinda' crap they teaching you up at that university!?'"[1] *King of the Wild Suburb* proves that neither those early, albeit dubious, attempts at discussing masculinity nor Gramp and Dad's teachings, were any kind of "crap." In reflecting on his relationship with his grandfather and father and wondering about the future that awaits his two sons, Messner clearly shows how his academic work is engaged with his personal life: how the personal, for him, is political. And I think that is worth all the contradictions that the "king of the wild suburb" has had to confront.

IG: *Your memoir is obviously written as a homage to your grandfather and father and as a legacy to your sons. Is this the only reason why you decided to "write your life"?*

MM: My hope to connect with my grandfather and father—both of whom died many years ago—and my two sons was a key impulse, to be sure. But the book is also a personal exploration of my own lifelong ambivalence about the heroic, mid-twentieth century masculinity embodied by my dad and grandfather.

IG: *Albeit it is obvious that you wove your memories with the intention of highlighting your relationship with the men in your family and the women remain in the background/against the light, the figure of your mother stands out with a special light. There is no doubt for those of us who follow your work that you are a feminist man in academia—and that there is no oxymoron in that definition: Is it possible that the second-wave feminist idea that the personal is political also motivated your writing the book?*

MM: There is no question about that. Like many men of my generation who came to define themselves as feminists, I was inspired in the 1970s by women in my life who were in feminist consciousness-raising groups, exploring deeply personal issues and collectively building feminist theory and action from those discussions. Since then, it has always been crucial in my teaching and research to be reflexive about both the privileges accorded to me as a man, and about the emotional limitations that often accompany those privileges. The memoir is an exercise in this sort of personal/political reflexivity. And yes, I do continue to be inspired by my mom—now 88 years old. I wrote a book focused mostly on the men in my life, but I consciously tried not

[1] Jackson Katz, "Men's Emotional Connection to Guns: An Interview with Michael Messner (Part 2)." *The Huffington Post* (November 18, 2012). 15 Nov 2012 <http://www.huffingtonpost.com/jackson-katz/mens-emotional-connection_b_1079042.html?ref=fb&src=sp&comm_ref=false>.

to fall in to the trap of writing my mom out of my story, as many male memoirists have done in the past.

IG: *Could you comment about the actual process of collecting your memoirs? Photographs must have been helpful, but you especially mention the meetings with your memoir writing group. Has any part of the process been especially difficult or painful?*

MM: The year after my dad died, I started graduate school and moved in with my grandparents, for what would be the last two years of my grandfather's life. Following my grandfather's death, I collected a good number of artifacts: furniture from his den, photographs, letters from World War I and World War II. These objects became touchstones that stimulated my own memories, as did a handful of photos and of my childhood. The stories in my book—of hunting with Gramps and Dad, of time spent playing in Gramps' den with his guns and fantasizing the heroics of war—spun in my mind for years, and I jotted notes that became fragments of stories. In 2008, during a sabbatical from university teaching, I took a memoir-writing class at a local bookstore. My four classmates and I formed a writing group that continues to this day. I can't over-state the importance of this group to my project. I had already written several books, but not a memoir, and I was frankly lacking in confidence that I could shift to such a different, more literary voice. In our group, we write short pieces, distribute them in advance to each other, then meet to read aloud and discuss the work, both in terms of form, content, and emotional impact. It really helped for me that none of the four women in my writing group are academics; they kept me honest any time I strayed too close to academese in my writing. But even more important, they helped me to believe that my story was relevant and interesting to others. One of them even claims to have fallen in love with my Gramps!

IG: *You certainly show self-awareness as a life writer, admitting that your memories finally became tall tales. In doing that, you root yourself in the most typically American oral tradition, but can it also be interpreted as a warning to your readers about the veracity of your words? Could you tell us something about that?*

MM: I've read other memoirs, and also critical writings about memoirs. And the issue of "what is truth?" is often central to these works. How does the reader really know to trust the veracity of the author's memory? How, indeed, can the writer even trust the accuracy of his or her own memory? After all, memory is always partial, always re-constructed in light of what we currently know, value, or believe. So I consciously played with the concept of tall tales in my memoir—partly because it was an important part of drawing the character of my Gramps, who was a spinner of tales that were, even to a young boy, clearly not always factually true, but gave hints instead about his values. I was conscious never in my story to write something that I knew was untrue. But I understand that my knowledge is always situated in my own experience, so it follows that a differently situated person may have experienced (and thus interpreted) the same moment very differently. It's been very interesting to hear my family members' and old friends' takes on

the book. My sister and mom have never disputed my take on anything in the book. Most interesting is the take of Lenn Kimura, a close friend since I was about 11 years old, who lived in the same town, went to the same schools, experienced the same generational immersion in the Beatles music, etc., but told me after reading the book that he was "blown away with how different my experience was from yours." And the differences, for Lenn, lay in family context and the fact that as a Japanese American in a California farming town, growing up in the decades following World War II, he felt very often like an outsider. Other male friends, my age, who grew up gay have also commented on how the book invoked a simultaneous shock of generational familiarity coupled with a very different personal trajectory. This sort of reading is most interesting to me, as it illustrates the limits of assuming some "universality" to a generational story.

IG: *Tall tales and hunting used to be associated, but hunting is more than that in your narrative: it becomes a very important leitmotif, shown as the crucial element for your relationship with your grandfather and father to flow. One of the most interesting aspects of your book is precisely how you have managed to find something positive in that activity which, for many, is associated with cruelty and "machismo," as it becomes the best excuse for communication among the three of you.*

MM: I agree, but I guess instead of using the term "excuse" I would say that hunting became the "mode" of communication between my grandfather, father, and I, and a locus for the creation of a certain kind of bounded intimacy. To the extent that boys are brought up to deny, fear, or even loathe the softer emotional expressions that might make us vulnerable in the public world of boys and men, we still retain a human need for closeness with others. A key question that has motivated much of my academic work on men and sport, and the central question that drives my memoir, is this: after we harden boys emotionally, and scare the hell out of them with the knowledge that they will have to fight in wars and/or in the public world of work and occupations, how do we still manage to find avenues for closeness, intimacy and love? For my dad and my grandfather, it was hunting. They initiated me in to this field of male intimacy, but when I rejected hunting, guns and warfare in my early adult years, how then was I to connect with them? And how do I now connect with my own sons? This is the puzzle I try to assemble in the book, and for me, some of the pieces are still missing.

IG: *It seems that each generation has to live under a particular rhetoric of war and/or postwar. This would apply to your family, a good example of 20th century and early-21st century American History: your grandfather (WW I), your father (WW II), you (Cold War, Vietnam), and your sons (9/11, Iraq-Afghanistan). It is in tracing back how that rhetoric of war has developed that the remarkable changes can be observed, and your book gives testimony of that. Were you aware of this when you were writing your memoir?*

MM: Yes, though the book focuses centrally on hunting and masculinity, war is a strong secondary theme. I write with what I hope is a proper mix of hu-

mor, irony and dread of my own boyhood fantasies of heroism in war, and juxtapose this to my grandfather's grim stance on the horror of all war. I was very aware of tracing a trajectory, from my grandfather, through my dad and myself, to the present moment where my sons are coming of age during a time of Orwellian "permanent war." Part of this trajectory is also a story of intergenerational class mobility, where each generation of men is progressively distanced from the close-up horrors of war: my grandfather was a working class miner with an 8th grade education who was drafted into the Army and sent fight in Russia in 1919. My father was the first of his family to attend university, and was a Navy officer serving as a beach master in the Pacific during WW II. During the latter stages of the Vietnam War, I lucked out with a high lottery draft number, did not have to serve in the military, stayed in college and eventually earned a graduate degree. My sons live in an era with no U. S. military draft, where the children of the upper and professional classes are effectively insulated from military service and wars are fought in our name by men (and some women) mostly from poor and working class backgrounds.

IG: *The necessity of revising concepts regarding gender and our understanding of gender relations has been defended by many academics for a long time now. I think that the traditionally masculine concept of "hero" has been transformed, improved, enriched in your book. You confess to have grown up in the company of many heroes, and in fact the title of your book points to that idea. What do you conceive as a hero, nowadays?*

MM: I love that question. For sure in the book I write of my boyhood heroes—I allude to Davey Crockett in the book's title. But I also admired baseball player Willie Mays, early 1960s U.S. astronauts, and I especially admired and looked up to my dad, who was the high school basketball coach. All of these heroes were competitive men who stood out from other men through public accomplishments. During my youthful feminist awakenings, I announced that I'd rejected these conceptions of masculine heroism, but in the book I write about my continued attachment to them, and the sense of ambivalence that developed. I'd say today I admire people who stand up for social justice. In my profession, my heroes are women a bit older than me—like sociologists Barrie Thorne and Raewyn Connell—who fought to establish feminist scholarship and pedagogy. In my current research I am meeting men who are heroes: not-famous men who are doing the hard and necessary work with boys and men to prevent gender-based violence. I still think Willie Mays was pretty great, though, too.

IG: *What are the prospects for the future as regards issues such as violence (domestic, political, social) or gender relations?*

MM: Feminism has had a huge impact, especially with respect to legal barriers to equality in much of the world. Gender inequalities, however, obviously still exist. And gender-based violence is still a worldwide problem: women are raped and beaten in the contexts of families and wars, and sexually abused or harassed in workplaces. Gender non-conforming women and

men, gay, queer and transgender people still face prejudice, and often violence. There is still much work to be done by feminists, and it's heartening for me to see a new generation of women and men working together to prevent gender-based violence. In my current research, I'm interviewing older men and young men who are doing violence prevention work with boys and men. These younger guys take for granted some of the things that my generation of men saw as radical revelations in the 1970s—that to achieve gender equality, men must be allies with women, and that men have much to gain in the process, broadening their emotional and relational capacities, becoming more fully human. This sort of transformation from cultural celebrations of narrow, dominating, violent men toward the emergence of life-affirming, egalitarian and peaceful men who take risks, asserting themselves for gender justice, is the sense of hope that underlies my memoir, and indeed all of my work.

IG: *It seems to me that in your academic writing, as well as in this book which is more personal, you offer an alternative, and very positive, model of masculinity, instead of longing for an essential masculine self which has been lost somewhere and needs to be recovered (Iron John-like). I have been particularly impressed by the image of yourself as a young man in the 1960s, obviously thinking about having fun, but also loyally taking care of your grandparents. With all the work in which you are engaged concerning this matter, what are your thoughts on contemporary views of masculinity?*

MM: It never ceases to amaze me how, despite several decades of a feminism and gender scholarship that shows, time and again, no evidence for claiming natural, categorical differences between women and men, that most of what we observe as "differences" are at best average differences, that much of these average differences are socially constructed and thus exaggerated—how committed and devoted many people seem to be to the idea of natural categorical differences: women are from Mars, men are from Venus. And though adults seem to have developed a much more varied and flexible conception of a range of possibilities for girls—a real positive legacy of feminist cultural impact—their views of boys are still very narrow. Boys are still largely seen as undifferentiated beings, driven by testosterone, and destined for competition in sports and public life. I do see this shifting among some young people I work with in universities; it's heartening to see a broader sense of possibility among some young men today, even an outright rejection of narrow, homophobic masculinity among some boys and men.

IG: *The epilogue to your memoir finally transforms your story into a gift, and the legacy that you leave to your sons is especially moving. This is what I have gathered after having read your book: that they have a father ideologically and intellectually engaged, who learned some lessons from his father and grandfather, who was taken care of by and took care of his ancestors and who now takes care of his family; a father who was king of a wild suburb—or maybe still is, as he is the owner of a magic ring. And although he does not know what it is exactly that the ring stands for, he knows how to give different meanings to it, as his*

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sons will be able to give other meanings to it in the future. And maybe that is all that matters.

MM: Thanks for putting that so nicely, and thanks so much for this opportunity to reflect with you on my memoir. I will only add that it's particularly meaningful to me that my sons Miles and Sasha (ages now 23 and 19) both read my book and told me it was meaningful to them. I hope it continues to be so, and that my stories become some valued part of the textures of their lives as they move forward.

THE POLITICS OF MASCULINITY AND/AS EMOTION: WALT WHITMAN'S CELEBRATION OF MALE INTIMACY IN THE FIRST PERSON

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Abstract

This article sets out to demonstrate how the exclusive equation of emotions with femininity is a cultural and historical construction. It analyzes the close, though often veiled, relationship between masculinity and sentiment in American culture and history, especially with a view to demonstrating the political potential of men's emotions to transform the existing social order. The argument is that friendships and emotional attachments between men could contribute not only to enriching men's emotional lives but also, and above all, to erasing sexism, racism, and homophobia from our societies. It is argued that men's friendships with other men might play a fundamental role in promoting greater social equality, as a number of Walt Whitman's poems, all of them written in the first person, will help illustrate.

Key words: Masculinity, emotions, male intimacy, politics, Walt Whitman.

Resumen

Este artículo pretende demostrar cómo la asociación exclusiva de las emociones con la feminidad es una construcción cultural e histórica. El trabajo analiza la estrecha, aunque a menudo velada, relación entre la masculinidad y los sentimientos en la cultura e historia estadounidenses, con el fin de ilustrar el potencial político de las emociones masculinas para transformar el orden social imperante. Argumentamos que las amistades y vínculos emocionales entre varones podrían contribuir no solo a enriquecer las vidas emocionales de los propios varones sino también, y sobre todo, a diluir el sexismo, el racismo y la homofobia de nuestras sociedades. Se arguye que las amistades de los varones con otros hombres podrían jugar un papel clave a la hora de promover una mayor igualdad social, como ilustran varios poemas de Walt Whitman, todos ellos escritos usando la primera persona.

Palabras clave: masculinidad, emociones, lazos emocionales entre varones, política, Walt Whitman.

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THE FEMINIZATION OF SENTIMENT IN AMERICAN CULTURE

Despite the pervasive separation between masculinity and emotion in contemporary (Euro-American) culture, emotion has not always been considered feminine, as can be seen, for example, from the rise of male sentimentality in France and England in the 17th and 18th centuries. The crudeness of the men of Henri IV's court and the men of the Fronde (1648-1653), both of whom diminished women and feminine values, was soon contested by the French *précieuses*, ladies "refined" in sentiment and language. French preciosity reached its height between 1650 and 1660 and became the first expression of feminism in both France and England. The *précieuse* was an emancipated woman who advocated feminist values. She demanded the right to education and attacked marriage as the very cause of the institution of patriarchy. Challenging the authority of both father and husband, the "précieuses" rejected not only marriage but also maternity. They defended trial marriage and the severance of such marriage after the birth of an heir, who would be looked after by the father. Challenging the patriarchal bonds between men and women, who married each other without love, the "précieuses" saw love as, first and foremost, the love of a man for a woman, rather than the opposite. As Elisabeth Badinter has argued, "by demanding of a man in love a limitless submission which bordered on masochism, they reversed the dominant model of masculinity, that of the brutal and demanding man, or the vulgar husband who believed everything was permitted to him" (13). Thus, the "précieuses" seemed to reverse traditional gender norms. A few men, the "précieux," accepted the new rules. Although their number was small, their influence was remarkable. They adopted a feminine and refined style—long wigs, extravagant feathers, band collars, chin tufts, perfume, rouge—which was copied by other (lower-class) men. Men who wanted to be distinguished now made it a rule to appear civilized, courteous, and delicate. Traditionally feminine values began to progress in the seventeenth century to the point of appearing dominant in the following century.

The debate over masculine identity was even more explicit in England than in France. In addition to their freedom, English feminists demanded sexual equality, that is, the right to sexual pleasure and the right not to be abandoned when they became pregnant. England seemed to experience a significant crisis of masculinity between 1688 and 1714 (the period of the English Restoration), which entailed questioning the roles of men and women in marriage, the family, and sexuality. English feminists not only asked for the equality of desires and rights, but they also wanted men to be gentler, more feminine. Thus, the Enlightenment, in both England and France, brought about the "feminization" of social norms and masculinity.[1] The

[1] It is true, however, that the "précieux" was differently received in England and in France. The image of the "feminized" man who adopted feminine behaviors aroused in England a fear of homosexuality that we do not see in France among those who despised the "précieux." The "new

Enlightenment, as Badinter (12-13) elaborates, represents a first rupture in the history of virility, and was the most feminist period of European history before the present day. On the one hand, manly values were being challenged, or at least not attracting much attention. War no longer had the importance and the status it once had and hunting had become an amusement. Young noblemen spent more time in salons or in ladies' boudoirs than training for war. On the other hand, feminine values were becoming central to the world of the aristocracy and the bourgeoisie. As Badinter insists, "delicacy of speech and attitudes were gaining more importance than the traditional characteristics of virility...in the dominant classes, unisexism was winning out over the oppositional dualism that usually characterized the patriarchy" (12-13).[2]

The feminization of French and English culture would, in turn, give rise to the 18th-century sentimental movement in Europe. As conventional notions of masculinity and virility were being challenged, men began to adopt traditional feminine values, such as delicacy of speech, good manners, gentle behaviors—and emotional expressivity. This contributed, at least in part, to the emergence of the European sentimental movement, which stressed the importance of the individual's emotional state, encouraging men to explore and express their inner feelings. The movement, as Brian Vickers (ix) has noted, postulated, and therefore encouraged, an ideal sensitivity to—and spontaneous display of— virtuous feelings, particularly those of pity, sympathy, and benevolence of the open heart as opposed to the prudent, rational mind. A number of philosophers and thinkers highlighted the relevance of men's sensations and feelings, which they saw as inseparable from true manly virtue. For example, Adam Smith emphasized the close relationship between man's morality and his emotional life. Actually, he contends that emotions are the primary source of a man's fellow-feeling for the misery of others, and hence of moral virtue itself (9).[3]

man" of the English Restoration is portrayed as a pervert, as vain, petty, and bewitching as a woman. Women were pitied for having been abandoned by men and manly refinement was attacked. The English saw men's feminization as a direct effect of French fashion on English customs. "Certain pamphlets," as Badinter concludes, "very soon saw a connection between the feminization of masculinity and betrayal, between traditional masculinity and patriotism" (12).

[2] However, the 1789 French Revolution put an end to this development. When women publicly demanded the right to vote, the Convention refused them this. The deputies, who had not known the delights of the "Ancien Régime," reaffirmed the separation of spheres and sexual dualism. Women were asked not to mingle with men and their business. As Badinter elaborates, "reinforced by the Napoleonic Code and ratified by the ideology of the 19th century, oppositional dualism" became the hegemonic ideology for a long time to come (13).

[3] Not even the strongest, most masculine man seems to be totally bereft of emotional empathy. In Adam Smith's words, "men of the most robust make, observe that in looking upon sore eyes they often feel a very sensible soreness in their own, which proceeds from the same reason; that organ being in the strongest man more delicate, than any other part of the body is in the weakest" (10). Defining emotions as a central component of masculinity, Smith insists that men regard emotional empathy as "the greatest applause," being often anxious to communicate to their friends both their "disagreeable" and "agreeable" passions. As Smith himself concludes, men "derive still more satisfaction from their sympathy with the former than from that with the latter, and...are still more shocked by the want of it" (15).

Influenced by these philosophical ideas, 18th-century literature embraced as well the main tenets of the sentimental movement. While it is far beyond the scope of this article to provide a detailed account of the form and content of the 18th-century sentimental novel (cfr. Tompkins; Douglas; Vickers (xi); and Brown), it may be relevant to note here that, typically, such genre focuses on a "man of feeling," an intrinsically benevolent and sympathetic protagonist who provides readers with the "sweet emotion of pity" (Vickers xi, xiv). Even though the 18th-century sentimental novel counts some heroines, perhaps most famously Samuel Richardson's Clarissa, many of the major sentimental writers of the time relied on men as heroes and protagonists for their works.[4] That is, for example, the case of Henry Mackenzie's *The Man of Feeling* (1771), which is replete with sentimental male characters. In chapter XIV, for example, Harley, the protagonist of the novel, is deeply moved by the story of the poor mad woman, giving to it the "tribute of some tears" (Mackenzie 151). Though Harley, the "man of feeling," is the source of most tears, all the sympathetic (male) characters in the novel, as Vickers (xxii) reminds us, are granted them. For example, the narrator yields "one cordial drop" to the memory of a good friend; the servant weeps at the parting; the father of the abandoned maid can only "burst into tears;" and an Old Edwards, half way through his sad story, "paused a moment to take breath. He eyed Harley's face; it was bathed in tears: the story was grown familiar to himself; he dropped one tear and no more" (Mackenzie 136, 138, 154).

While the 18th-century sentimental novel recurrently linked masculinity to emotion, the 19th century brought about a progressive feminization of sentiment. Most scholars seem to agree that, by the middle of the 19th century, American sentimentality was seen as exclusively feminine. Indeed, work on sentimentality, as Chapman and Hendler (15-16) have rightly pointed out, seems divided both geographically and chronologically into studies of 18th-century English "sensibility," which recognize the centrality of the "man of feeling" and the relevance of male writers and philosophers to the cult of sensibility, and studies of 19th-century American sentimentality, which tend to gender sentiment as female.[5] Thus, influential critical texts such as R.W.B. Lewis' *The American Adam* (1955) or Leslie Fiedler's *Love and Death in the American Novel* (1960), to name but a few, see both 19th- and 20th-century American literature as centrally engaged with hard-boiled male characters

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[4] Though such a recurrent association of masculinity with emotion might come as a surprise to contemporary readers, one should never lose sight of the fact that the philosophical bases of the sentimental movement, which would in turn inspire the sentimental novel, were founded by (male) philosophers such as David Hume or Adam Smith, whose works concern themselves—on occasions implicitly, and often explicitly—with *men's* emotions. Written at a time when women were still regarded as inferior beings, these philosophical works paid little attention to women's specific emotions and needs, which were generally considered unworthy of discussion.

[5] One of the few critics who has shown the links between British sensibility and American sentimentality is Philip Fisher, although few scholars, as Chapman and Hendler (15-16) note, seem to have taken up his comparison between the affective patterns of Richardson, Sterne, and Rousseau's texts and that of Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin*.

and protagonists. For instance, Lewis argues that as America became independent by breaking its historic bonds with Mother England, a new American hero was born who embodied the specifically American ideological values of independence, autonomy, individualism, and self-sufficiency. In Lewis's view, the Adamic theme recurs in the fiction of classic American writers such as Emerson, Thoreau, Hawthorne, Melville, or Henry James, and continues in the works of Fitzgerald, Faulkner, Ellison, J.D. Salinger, and Saul Bellow, among others. Dissociating himself from his historic past, this new personality, the hero of the new adventure, has been defined as a stoic, individualistic, self-sufficient (and unemotional) male character. In Lewis's words, the American hero is

> an individual emancipated from history, happily bereft of ancestry, untouched and undefiled by the usual inheritances of family and race; an individual standing alone, self-reliant and self-propelling, ready to confront whatever awaited him with the aid of his own unique and inherent resources...the new hero (in praise or disapproval) was most easily identified with Adam before the Fall. (5)[6]

Influenced by these critical opinions, most contemporary scholars seem to keep separating American masculinity from the world of emotions. While the links between women and American sentimentality have been analyzed at length and in depth (Tompkins; Douglas), the position of the sentimental man thus remains largely unexplored. Few scholars seem to have taken up the project of questioning the traditional association of reason and the mind with masculinity, and emotions and the body with women and femininity. Therefore, the origins of American sentimentality in the "man of feeling," as well as his influence on 19th- and 20th-century American culture and literature, have been all but lost (Chapman and Hendler 7).[7]

[6] Unlike Lewis, Fiedler establishes some connection between masculinity and emotions in American culture. For example, Fiedler acknowledges Samuel Richardson as a paradigm of the sentimental novelist and admits the influence of the sentimental tradition on Cooper, as well as Melville and Hawthorne. However, he points out that the homoerotic male bond underlying most classic American literature is a defense against the feminization and sentimentality of American culture. Moreover, he agrees with Lewis that American literature is centrally concerned with representing a lonely, individualistic hero who seeks independent masculinity on the frontier, thus evading familial responsibilities and emotional attachments. Therefore, both Fiedler and Lewis end up establishing a radical separation between American manhood and the "feminine" sphere of emotions (Chapman and Hendler 2-8).

[7] Critics tend to forget that much of Nathaniel Hawthorne's *The Scarlet Letter* (1850), for example, focuses on the tragic relationship between a single mother and her daughter, and that such an overt representation of feminine emotions, particularly motherhood, has traditionally been regarded as a central feature of sentimentalism (Chapman and Hendler 7).

BOYS DON'T CRY? MEN'S EMOTIONS AND/VS. POLITICS

While the feminization of sentiment keeps exerting a powerful influence on contemporary American culture and letters, the traditional view of masculinity as cold, rational, and unemotional has not gone completely unchallenged. For example, Mary Chapman and Glenn Hendler have set out to revise and complicate any understanding of sentimentality that occludes the meaning of masculine affect, showing, for example, how men have often participated in what has been described as the sentimental, domestic sphere. By recognizing and analyzing the relevance of masculine sentimentality in American cultural history, the collection questions any simplistic gendering of sentiment as feminine, showing how the division between the public/unemotional/masculine and the private/emotional/feminine has long been problematized by contested discourses of race, class, ethnicity, and sexuality.[8] As Chapman and Hendler themselves put it:

> Rather than see American "men of feeling" as oxymorons—exceptions to the hard and fast gender rules of sentimental culture—we consider them exemplary of the competing definitions of masculinity available in the... United States. (8-9)

Sentimental Men is thus focused on the realization that masculinity and emotions are mutually constitutive discursive practices, which changes our understanding of both, as well as of concepts such as domesticity, the public sphere, and canonicity. Indeed, the volume also re-reads the literary canon by showing how canonical male writers such as Emerson, Melville, or Norris can be read as "sentimental men."[9] The contributors show how many of the cultural conventions associated with female sentimentality recur as well in the male cult of sentiment: the dying child; the destruction of families by death, slavery, poverty; and the unnecessary suffering of marginalized people. So, this study seems to supplement the feminist work done on sentimentality by rethinking men as both producers and consumers of sentimental culture, rather than merely exemplars of an unemotional code of masculinity (Chapman and Hendler 9).[10]

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[8] In this sense, the book analyzes the masculine emotional lives of African-Americans and Native Americans, working-class men and downwardly mobile men, businessmen and poets, gay men and family men from the past and the present. In so doing, it traces historical changes and continuities in the topic at hand.

[9] Herman Melville, for example, wrote *Pierre* (1852), an (over)sentimental novel.

[10] According to Shamir and Travis, feminist and gender studies have tended to divide cultural products into two traditions along the line of emotional expressivity: a feminine mode marked by effusion of sentiment and its representational conventions, and a masculine code, where affect is described negatively, "in terms of disavowal and repression or—in such instances where men 'betray' emotions—in terms of parody or 'feminization'" (2). Challenging most of these (mis)conceptions of masculinity as unemotional, however, these scholars also attempt to demonstrate how the division of sentiment along gender lines—or what Cathy Davidson has defined as the "affective geography of

However, the aim of this collection is not simply to demonstrate how "big boys do cry," but also analyze the political significance of masculine sentimentality. In so doing, the book extends and expands on the work done by feminist scholars on the politics of sentiment by examining the parallels, as well as the differences, between male and female sentimental discourses (Chapman and Hendler 8). In this sense, the book explores, for example, whether a privileged man can identify with an object of suffering in the same way that white women are said to have identified with racial Others, and whether that identification has the same political force—and limitations—as white women's politics of emotional empathy.

While it seems clear, then, that masculinity and emotions need not be intrinsically opposed, a much more controversial issue remains the political significance, if any, of emotions, in general,[11] and of men's emotions, in particular, which has actually become the subject of a much heated debate. While some insist that emotions can promote a radical social change in the traditional understanding of masculinity, others are deeply suspicious of their capacity to change men's lives and gender relations in any significant ways. In this latter respect, much contemporary scholarship (Segal 284-285; Shamir and Travis 5-7; Robinson 1-15) has warned against the widespread belief that every oppositional position is necessarily a liberating one, that every "liberation" of masculine emotion would produce the desired political effect. Indeed, since the 1970s, a U.S. movement for "male liberation," indirectly inspired by feminism, has gained momentum among white, heterosexual, middle-class men. Influenced by texts such as Warren Farrell's *The Liberated Man* or Herb Goldberg's *The Hazards of Being Male*, this movement represents men as victims, not of women or feminism, but of their power, and of patriarchy itself. Central to this self-proclaimed male victimization is the idea that men are denied emotional

gender" (444)— proves to be an oversimplification. In this sense, the book analyzes the alignment of masculinity with emotion in numerous literary narratives, offering re-readings of canonical texts by Crevecoeur, Thoreau, Lowell, and Du Bois. In the editors' words, the work attempts to contribute to the "emotional history of American masculinity" (3), exploring "what happens when boys, indeed, do cry" (Shamir and Travis 19).

[11] Thus, for instance, Ann Douglas has called into question the political use of emotions, showing how the 19th-century feminine influence of sentimental culture and literature, embodied by both woman and the minister, helped to perpetuate several forms of male hegemony it supposedly criticized. Other scholars, however, have argued how sentimental works offer a "devastating" critique of American society (Tompkins 124). In Tompkins's view, the work of the sentimental writer becomes a political tool that both represents and attempts to influence the social values of its time. Focusing on the famous episode of the death of little Eva in Harriet Beecher Stowe's novel *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, which is often cited as the epitome of Victorian sentimentalism, Tompkins challenges the widespread view that little Eva's death, like every other sentimental tale, is full of emotion but has no social or political effects. Likewise, Raymond Williams' influential concept of "structures" of feeling has shown how emotion is an inter-subjective (and thus politicized) feeling that transcends individuals. Interestingly, Williams defines feeling not "against" thought but "as" thought, not as "preceding" the social but "as" social, showing how the moment-by-moment consequences of interdependence are registered by emotion. For him, social and political change is "changes in structures of feeling" (Williams 128-35).

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expressiveness. Men are, therefore, encouraged to release their painfully blocked emotions. However, the therapeutic value of male release, as Sally Robinson (1-15) indicates, aims at promoting individual growth, and is not usually translated into the social and the political spheres. In other words, the "unblocking" of tears and men's emotions tends to result in the psychological-therapeutic "standing in for" political change. Thus, the release of emotions leaves an empty and ultimately de-politicized "liberated man," who finally blocks the pursuit of social equality between men and women (Robinson 15).[12] Obsessed with their intra-psychic emotional lives, men can thus avoid hearing women's needs and pressing demands for greater social equality.

THE POLITICAL POTENTIAL OF MALE FRIENDSHIP AND INTIMACY: THE EXAMPLE OF WALT WHITMAN

While critics of sentimentality like Robinson thus continue to take it to task for not fulfilling its social and political responsibility, I will be arguing that men's emotions, particularly friendships and emotional attachments between men, could contribute not only to enriching men's emotional lives but also, and above all, to promoting equality and social change. Admittedly, the political effects of men's friendships, like those of men's emotions in general, have been recurrently contested. It has been argued, for example, that men's friendships often result in comradely groups—sports clubs, trade unions, scientific collaboration, expeditions, etc.—which end up excluding women. Even (pro-feminist) men's groups have oftentimes been accused of excluding and/or ignoring women, thereby promoting more male bonding and sexism. As feminist writer Barbara Ehrenreich argued, "men in men's groups are men in bad company" (qtd. Segal 281).[13] Predominantly heterosexual, anti-sexist men's groups have also been confronted at their national Men Against sexism conferences by gay men accusing them of heterosexism and of doing little

[12] Although in the United States "male liberation" remains a powerful social movement, the emotional "soft" male has proved a failure in many countries. Several Nordic feminists, such as Merete Gerlach-Nielsen, have already voiced their deep dissatisfaction with what they see as a passive and fragmented male. As Badinter explains, "even the most responsive to gentleness on the part of men want nothing more to do with these men, who are ersatz traditional women" (152).

[13] Formed mostly by heterosexual men who were involved in relationships with feminists, the first men's groups were founded in England and America in the 1970s with a view to stimulating men's own reflections on the construction, and possible de-construction, of traditional masculinity. These groups have since contributed to making men self-aware of the detrimental repercussions of patriarchal masculinity on their own lives. Men in men's groups often talk about their own sense of oppression as men, since masculinity mandates, for example, the repression of their emotional inner selves, thus separating them from women, children, and each other. Men's groups have proved particularly helpful, therefore, in encouraging men to be more open to, and expressive about, their emotions. As Lynne Segal elaborates, "above all they celebrate...being more in touch with and supportive of each other" (283).

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to undermine gay oppression. Above all, men's groups have been criticized for remaining too personal and local, and for neglecting the public and political side of masculinity. Since masculinity includes both a psychological/internal and social/external component, encouraging men to change their personal life and to be more expressive about their emotions, as most men's groups do, might ultimately prove insufficient, or even irrelevant, to undermine patriarchal masculinity and gender relations at a larger structural level. "The problem for anti-sexist men," as Segal insists, is "the worry as to whether changing themselves" can "actually help destroy male dominance more generally" (284-285).[14]

Even if, as it seems, masculinity scholarship has traditionally identified sexism, homophobia, and de-politicization as three major risks of men's groups and relations, the rest of this article will try to illustrate, however, not only that men's friendships with other men need not be sexist or homophobic, but also that such friendships could actually help undermine homophobia and sexism—as well as other racist and classist distinctions—in our societies. In what follows I will be arguing, therefore, that men's friendships with other men are not purely personal and "apolitical," but that they might play a key role, as will be shown, in the political struggle for gender, sexual, and social equality, as Walt Whitman's poetry (and poetics) will help illustrate. As has been noted above, I will be using Whitman's poems not only to exemplify the transformative potential of male friendship, but also of (male) poetic (self-)expression and (self-)representation more generally. If, as Wordsworth defined it, poetry is nothing but "the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings," then poems may clearly be seen as vehicles for emotional expressivity -and, therefore, for political practice. Moreover, Whitman's poems, especially from the section "Song of Myself" in *Leaves of Grass*, become particularly suitable to the general aim and scope of this volume on masculinities "in the first person," for much of the emotional strength of these poems derives, as we shall see, from an all-powerful first-person narration.

It is already common knowledge that most of Walt Whitman's poetry is centrally concerned with celebrating male friendship and homoeroticism. However, less has been written about his view of male intimacy as the basis for a renewed American democracy, even though such a conception is, paradoxically enough, at the root of his poetics. Whitman's poetic vision is nowhere better expressed than in *Democratic Vistas*, wherein he distinguishes between a spiritualized bonding between men, which he calls "adhesiveness," and a more purely physical attraction

[14] Clearly, Lynne Segal sets emotions and politics in an irreducible binary opposition, which Shamir and Travis have identified as one of the major fallacies of much scholarship on the politics of masculinity and emotions (6-7). This fallacy is described by Catharine Lutz as the "essentializing" approach to emotion, that is, the assumption that emotions are internal psychic or psychobiological energies, radically separated from society and language. Likewise, Joel Pfister and Nancy Schnog have analyzed some of the main problems of this approach, showing how seemingly "internal" emotions are, in fact, constructed and naturalized by the mechanisms of power that seem to be "external" or alien to them.

between men and women, which he defines as "amativeness."[15] Interestingly enough, Whitman contends that "adhesiveness," which he sees as exclusively male, has the potential to transform America into a more egalitarian and progressive society. His vision becomes nowhere clearer than in *Leaves of Grass*, in general, and "Song of Myself," in particular. For example, in "This Moment Yearning and Thoughtful," Whitman, sitting alone and thinking, looks forward to meeting and knowing men from other cultures and nationalities, who might become his friends and lovers. In Whitman's poetry, friendships between men thus seem to cross and undermine traditional sexual, racial, and national boundaries. As he himself explains, "if I could know those men I should become attached/ to them as I do to men in my own lands,/ O I know we should be brethren and lovers,/ I know I should be happy with them" (Whitman 281). Trying to establish "the institution of the dear love of comrades," the poet portrays friendship between men as a means of undermining cultural and social distinctions and, therefore, as a form of promoting social equality. Thus, in "A Leaf for Hand in Hand," Whitman envisions a brotherhood of men from different ages, regions, and social classes. Once again, then, he represents male friendship as having the potential to bring about greater social equality. In his words, "You natural persons old and young!/You on the Mississippi and on all the branches and bayous of the/Mississippi!/ You friendly boatmen and mechanics! You roughs!/ You twain! and all processions moving along the streets!/ I wish to infuse myself among you till I see it common for you to walk/hand in hand" (Whitman 283-284). Dreaming, as another of his poems says, about a "new city of Friends," which would remain "invincible to the attacks of the whole/of the rest of the earth" (Whitman 284), Whitman saw as the main purpose of the United States to found "a superb friendship," which, in his view, has always been "waiting, latent in all men" (285). The institution of a brotherhood of men, which Walt Whitman defined as the very foundation for a more egalitarian society, seems to become the central concern of most of his poems. "For You Democracy," one of his best-known songs, summarizes the poet's vision very clearly, celebrating, once again, "the manly love of comrades" as a unifying force, which Whitman identifies as the basis for a more democratic America:

> Come, I will make the continent indissoluble,
> I will make the most splendid race the sun ever shone upon,
> I will make divine magnetic lands,
> With the love of comrades,
> With the life-long love of comrades.

[15] As Michael Lynch has explained, Whitman seems to anticipate the modern distinction between heterosexuality and homosexuality by setting the terms in gendered opposition. For Whitman, amativeness refers only to sensual, procreative, opposite-sex attraction, while adhesiveness only to same-sex affect and attraction.

I will plant companionship thick as trees along all the rivers of
America, and along the shores of the great lakes, and all over the Prairies,

I will make inseparable cities with their arms about each other's necks,
By the love of comrades,
By the manly love of comrades,

For you these from me, O Democracy, to serve you ma femme!
For you, for you I am trilling these songs. (Whitman 272)

Whitman's progressive politics remain inseparable, then, from his view of male intimacy as the basis for a more egalitarian society. Interestingly enough, such a vision is usually expressed or mediated, as can be seen in the above poems, though an all-powerful first-person narrator, who will eventually reveal himself as "Walt Whitman, an American, one of the roughs." While Whitman's poetry may be—and has been—read as highly autobiographical, this vagueness of authorship also allows him to embody the idea of the poet as everyman, an idea reinforced by the obviously inclusive narrator of the verses. Ultimately, then, Whitman's reliance on the poetic I allows him to increase his emotional connection and proximity to the readers and, therefore, both the poetic and the political force of his poems, which remain one of the strongest celebrations of American democracy.

CONCLUSION

From what has been argued here, it would appear, then, that love and friendship between men might eventually contribute, as Walt Whitman already envisioned one century ago, to diminishing homophobia, as well as other racist and classist distinctions, in our society. Insisting further, I would like to suggest that Whitman's democratic vision of "adhesiveness" might even contribute to undermining sexism, especially if one coincides with Sedgwick that "homophobia directed by men against men is misogynistic and perhaps transhistorically so" (20). Indeed, homophobia is misogynistic not only because it is oppressive of the so-called "feminine" in men, but also because it is oppressive of women. Besides repressing men's "feminine" side, homophobia does indeed seem to have worked to diminish women themselves. As is known, homosexual men have often been stereotyped as "feminine" or "effete" by heterosexual men. Of course, the main aim of this feminization process has been to annihilate homosexuals although, indirectly, it has been demeaning of women as well. In order to assert their superior masculinity, heterosexual men have recurrently tried to diminish homosexual men by associating them with femininity as a mark of inferiority. Ultimately, then, this has reinforced the connections between homophobia and misogyny. Since homophobia thus reveals men's fear and hatred of the "feminine," promoting male homoeroticism of the type envisioned by Whitman could, eventually, contribute to erasing sexism and misogyny, too.

It is true, as has been argued, that men's focus on their emotional inner selves might sometimes prove conservative, preventing them from engaging in larger social

and political issues, including the struggle for social and gender equality. While acknowledging, then, the conservative component of male bonding, this article has tried to demonstrate and emphasize the political potential of men's friendships for bringing about greater social and political equality. Certainly, (re-)establishing the institution of male friendship will not be easy, and will require important social policies, for example to undermine homophobia and racism, both of which help perpetuate the current separation between men. Within our increasingly globalized and capitalist societies, reconstructing men's friendships will also entail the redefinition of work relations to make them less competitive. While it seems clear, then, that the transformation of men's friendships in contemporary society will require important political transformations, one should not forget that intimacy between men, as this article has tried to illustrate, has itself a political potential, which might contribute, as has also been noted, to undermining homophobia, racism, sexism as well as other social and class hierarchies. If, as feminism has taught us, "the personal is political," then rethinking men's friendships and personal relations to other men might also have important political benefits. It is high time, therefore, that we engaged in a complete redefinition of men's friendships, which, though difficult, is far from impossible. As friendship scholar Drury Sherrod has concluded:

> By acknowledging their need for intimacy, and risking the pursuit of friendship, men can begin to achieve the kind of closeness that males have known in other times and other cultures. [...] With commitment and persistence, men can learn to break through the bonds that confine them and rebuild the bonds that unite them. (238, 239)

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VIETNAMESE MASCULINITIES IN LÊ THI DIEM THÚY'S *THE GANGSTER WE ARE ALL LOOKING FOR*

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Abstract

The defeat of South Vietnam in 1975 transformed Vietnamese men into fleeing refugees, boat people, and state-sponsored asylees. Writing against the popular and scholarly representations of Vietnamese refugee men as incapacitated objects of rescue, this paper provides an in-depth analysis of the intimate, insightful, and intense portrayal of Vietnamese masculinities in lê thi diem thúy's novel, *The Gangster We Are All Looking For.* Focusing on the "sad and broken" father in the novel, the article conceptualizes his bouts of domestic violence neither as a private family matter nor an example of individual failing, but as a social, historical, and transnational affair that exposes the conditions—war, urban neglect, poverty—under which Vietnamese masculinity is continually produced, negotiated and transformed.

Key words: Vietnamese refugees, Vietnam War, masculinity, domestic violence, lê thi diem thúy.

Resumen

La derrota de Vietnam del Sur en 1975 transformó a los hombres vietnamitas en refugiados, huidos por mar y asilados con subvención estatal. Con la intención de contestar las representaciones populares y académicas que muestran a los hombres refugiados vietnamitas como incapacitados que han de ser rescatados, este ensayo ofrece un análisis exhaustivo de la representación íntima, profunda e intensa de las masculinidades vietnamitas que presenta la novela *The Gangster We Are All Looking For*, de lê thi diem thúy. Centrándose en el personaje del padre "triste y roto", el artículo conceptualiza sus arrebatos de violencia doméstica no como un asunto familiar privado, ni como un ejemplo de fracaso individual, sino como un asunto social, histórico y transnacional que muestra las condiciones —guerra, abandono urbano, pobreza— bajo las cuales la masculinidad vietnamita es continuamente producida, negociada y transformada.

Palabras clave: refugiados vietnamitas, Guerra de Vietnam, masculinidad, violencia doméstica; lê thi diem thúy.

All Vietnamese have their own stories about what the Americans dub the "Fall of Saigon."[1] This is mine. We left Saigon on April 29, 1975, in those last few hectic hours. Although we often characterize this "first wave"[2] as part of the Vietnamese elites, there were also many others, like my family, who were swept into this exodus, leaving to be on the safe side, never intending this to be the "goodbye." It wasn't until we reached the Philippines that we heard on the radio that Saigon, our home, had "fallen." That evening, in our makeshift tent city, I remember the stillness of a people in disbelief, in shock, a people suddenly without their *quê hương* [homeland]. It is funny how after all these years, what I remember most about that night are the cigarette lights that dotted our tent city, and the men who sat filled with their own thoughts that evening, grieving, contemplating, already missing the way things used to be and could never be again. To this day, I am compelled by the particular masculinity that I witnessed that evening—not triumphant and potent, but in lê thi diem thúy's words, "sad and broken" (117)—an initial lesson about the intersections of race, class, gender, and national origin.

As a people fleeing from the only war that the United States had lost, Vietnamese in the United States have been subject to intense scholarly interest. Casting Vietnamese refugees as objects of rescue, this literature portrays them as "incapacitated by grief and therefore in need of care (DuBois 4-5). Scholars' hyper-focus on the refugees' needs and neediness has made "un-visible" other important facets of Vietnamese personhood: their self-identity, their dreams for themselves, their hopes for their children, and their "ground of being." In short, we know more about how social scientists have constructed Vietnamese, but less about how Vietnamese have created their worlds and made meaning for themselves. In recent years, moving beyond demographic and needs assessment studies, a new generation of Vietnamese American scholars have shifted the focus of study to the gender, sexual, class, political, religious, cultural, and generational diversity of the Vietnamese diaspora (Võ). In particular, scholars like Thuy Vo Dang and Phuong Nguyen have written eloquently about Vietnamese men's attempt to reassert their masculinity in part by adopting a vocal anticommunist position[3] as a way to affirm their South Vietnamese national identity, keep alive the memories of their losses, and counter negative

[1] The "Fall of Saigon" refers to the capture of the capital of Vietnam by the People's Army of Vietnam and the National Liberation Front on April 30, 1975—an event that effectively ended the Vietnam War.

[2] The first wave of Vietnamese refugees comprised largely of highly-skilled and educated individuals who left Vietnam by plane during the Spring of 1975. Between 1978 to the mid-1980s, a second wave of Vietnamese refugees, who were generally lower on the socioeconomic ladder than those in the first wave, left on leaky small fishing boats in a hazardous attempt to get to neighboring countries by sea.

[3] Vietnamese American public retellings of their history often take the form of "anti- communism," which include boycotting Vietnam-produced books, magazines, videos, and television broadcasts, waving American flags while shouting anti-communist slogans, denouncing human rights violations committed by the "corrupt" and "heartless rulers of Vietnam," and plotting the overthrow of the communist government.

racial stereotypes of Vietnam and Vietnamese refugees in the United States (Vo Dang; Nguyen).

Vietnamese American artists have also begun to grapple with the war's disastrous consequences for Vietnam and its people, giving rise to oft-haunting artistic and cultural representations that imagine, remember, and trace complex genealogies of war and forced displacements that precede and shape Vietnamese resettlement in the United States. For an intimate, insightful and intense portrayal of Vietnamese masculinities, I turn to lê thi diem thúy's *The Gangster We Are All Looking For,* a novel widely noted for its lyrical contemplation on the tensions, irresolutions, and contradictions of Vietnamese American lives. Focusing on the "sad and broken" father in the story, I conceptualize his bouts of domestic violence neither as a private family matter nor an example of individual failing, but as a social, historical, and transnational affair that exposes the conditions under which Vietnamese masculinity is continually produced, negotiated and transformed.

THE GANGSTER WE ARE ALL LOOKING FOR

Told through the knowing eyes of a lonely and imaginative child, lê thi diem thúy's 2003 *The Gangster We Are All Looking For* is a quietly powerful account of a Vietnamese refugee family who is in America but not of it. Part-memoir, part-novel, it is among the first book-length fictional works to come from the "boat people" generation of the late 1970s and early 1980s. In 1978, six-year-old lê and her father fled their home village of Phan Thiết in southern Vietnam in a small fishing boat, leaving behind her mother and younger siblings in the chaos. After a brief stay in a refugee camp in Singapore, they were resettled in Linda Vista, a racially diverse working-class community in San Diego. In 1980, lê's mother and younger sister, after a stint in a refugee camp in Malaysia, joined them in San Diego (Mehegan). Growing up, lê sensed an implicit silence in her family about the Vietnam War: "When my dad got together with his friends, they would sing songs and tell stories about when they were schoolboys. But there was a way they leapt over the war and the aftermath of the war. There was no one for me to turn to with my questions: how did we get here? Why are we boat people? If my mom misses her parents, and our town, then why aren't we there? ... And because I had no one to ask those questions, I swallowed them inside myself" (Moore). At the same time, she was bombarded with media images of the Vietnam War as a spectacle—and as an American tragedy: "In mainstream narrative about Vietnam, it's usually about the American GI, while the Vietnamese are part of the landscape. They rarely get particularized as characters" (Mehegan). lê reveals that she wrote *The Gangster* in part to put on record what happened to the Vietnamese people, not just during the war, but also before and after the war: "In this country ... [t]he questions about what happened to Vietnamese people don't get brought up ... For America to grow in its consciousness, it needs to ask what happened to the Vietnamese" (Moore).

In lyrical prose that reads like poetry, lê depicts the United States not as the land of opportunities but as the breaker of families—a place where family life will never be what it could or should have been. Haunting the narrator's family is the specter of her dead older brother, who drowned in Vietnam when he was just six years old—a death made more tragic by the absence of the father who was being held in a reeducation camp. The brother's death provides lê with a narrative device to move the story back and forth between Vietnam and California and to shift time, place, and viewpoint constantly throughout the novel. As lê interweaves memories of Vietnam with incidents in the United States, she melds the past and present, conveying the fluidity of time but also the unending-ness of the war's impact on Vietnamese lives. As she reminds us: "War has no beginning and no end. It crosses oceans like a splintered boat filled with people singing a sad song" (87). Because *The Gangster* refers repeatedly to history and politics, it demands that we confront the sad and violent history that exists between Vietnam and the United States, and the politics of translocated race, gender, and class that springs from this past.

"SAD AND BROKEN": MASCULINITY THROUGH THE LENS OF EMOTIONS

In Western social thought, emotions are understood predominantly as the antithesis of reason and as interiorized private experience, disconnected from history and culture (Lutz). The tendency to devalue emotions and to "disappear" them from social analysis has deflected attention from the relationship between emotions, social structure, and power. Since the 1970s, there has been a resurgence of emotion studies in virtually all of the disciplines, with scholars challenging the Western academic and popular association of the emotions with irrationality and biology and have insisted that the emotions are about social life rather than simply internal states (Lutz; Bendelow and Williams; Reddy). In other words, emotions constitute collective ways of acting and being shaped by the historically specific social structure and culture of a particular society, group, or community. British cultural materialist Raymond Williams coined the concept "structure of feeling" to define social experiences that are often not "recognized as social but taken to be private, idiosyncratic, and even isolating" (132). Since the most common modes of social analysis define the *social* as the known and reduce it to fixed forms, they tend to miss the tensions, shifts and uncertainties of feelings that constitute the living present. Williams argues that the alternative to these analytical reductions is not the silencing or disappearance of these complexities and tensions but a "kind of feeling and thinking which is indeed social and material" (131). Thus lies the importance of examining masculinity through the lens of emotions: it enables us to see the material, cultural, and political circumstances that constrain men's lives, their responses to and against these constraints, and the emotional tensions that result therein.

In *The Gangster*, lê poignantly details the emotional tolls of living a life not of one's own design. Most poignant are the exquisite portraits of the haunted,

brooding father, whom she calls Ba,[4] "who cries in the garden every night" (27) and who is "sad and broken" (117). Ba's sadness and brokenness often turn into hopeless rage for a father's authority: "He becomes prone to rages. He smashes television, VCRs, chases friends and family down the street, brandishing hammers and knives in broad daylight" (116). "Growing up, there were nights when I would hear him staggering in the alley outside my bedroom window. I listened as he tackled the air, wrestled invisible enemies to the ground, punched his own shadow. Drunkenly, he would yell, 'I'm not scared! Come out and fight me. I'm here!'" (100-101). At night, once his rage has subsided, he sits motionless in the dark for hours, "his body absolutely still, his hands folded on his lap, penitent ... straining toward things no one can see" (116).

WAR, RACE, AND MASCULINITY

Ba's rage bespeaks the aftermath of gender, race and global inequality. As subjects of U.S. war and imperialism, Vietnamese masculinity has to be understood within the context of U.S. war in and occupation of Southeast Asia. Americans first encountered Vietnamese men through war—and "largely through the trope of violence" (Chong 91). During the Vietnam War era, Vietnamese men appeared on American television news, in newspaper photographs, and in government pronouncements as ruthless and depraved Viet Cong or corrupt and inept South Vietnamese who were vicious in their disregard for human life (Chong 91). Both during and after the war, Vietnamese dead bodies were not accorded the same humanity and dignity given to American bodies. "From the American perspective," argues Viet Thanh Nguyen, "the Vietnamese bodies must be dehumanized, de-realized, in order to allow for the humanization of the American soldier and the substantiation of *his* body and, through it, of American ideology and culture" (618). In this context, "Vietnamese Americans as refugees occupy the position of self-mourners because no one else mourns us" (Nguyen-Vo 170).

The depiction of Vietnam and its people as the "yellow peril" shaped American reception of Vietnamese refugees. In May 1975, soon after the arrival of the first wave of Vietnamese refugees, a Harris poll found that the majority of Americans did not welcome them: more than 50 percent of those polled felt that the refugees should be excluded; only 26 percent favored their entry. Five years later, a poll of American attitudes in nine cities revealed that nearly half of those surveyed believed that the refugees should have settled elsewhere. This poll also found that more than 77 percent of the respondents would disapprove of the marriage of a Southeast Asian refugee into their family and 65 percent would not be willing to have a refugee as a guest in their home (Espiritu, *Home* 206). As Sylvia Chong suggests, in American orientalism, Vietnamese refugees constitute an internal threat since they "could

[4] "Ba" means "father" in Vietnamese.

not be digested by a body politic that desired to forget its participation in a failed imperialist endeavor" (103).

The defeat of South Vietnam battered Vietnamese masculinity, transforming them into fleeing refugees, boat people, and state-sponsored asylees. As a people without their *quê hương*, Vietnamese refugee men in the United States, cast by the media as incapacitated and demoralized objects of rescue, often found themselves at the mercy of white men who had been (re)positioned from defeated foes or allies to valiant rescuers of fleeing Vietnamese. The moment Ba, the four uncles,[5] and the narrator (a nameless six-year-old-girl) stepped off the airplane at San Diego International Airport, they turned into indebted refugees who had to appear appropriately grateful to their sponsor, Mel, who had reluctantly assumed responsibility for the group after the sudden death of his father, the original sponsor. As the six refugees crammed into the one bedroom in Mel's house where they would all be sharing, they overheard Mel talking agitatedly to his mother; "the tone of their voices" troubled the new arrivals. Inside the crowded bedroom, furnished with two bunk beds and one double bed, the five grown men and young girl kept still, quietly pondering their new lives as Mel's charges. As one of the uncles lay down on the bed, he "let his feet hang off the edge of the bed so he wouldn't get the covers dirty" (7)—a telling sign of his/their distress about living in the borrowed space of another man's home.

In the face of Mel's evident discomfort in having "inherited a boatload of people" (6), Ba swallowed his unease and insisted to his four companions and his young daughter, who "heard without listening," that "Mel was a good man" because he "had bought our way into the United States" (7). Because Mel had "opened a door" for them, Ba exhorted, we had to "thank him. And then thank him again" (7-8). But beneath this public deference to white masculinity and forced gratefulness to U.S. "generosity," rage simmered. During that very first night in America, after exhorting the dispirited group to be grateful to Mel, Ba "climbed out the bedroom window and was sitting ... on the front lawn of the house staring at the moon like a lost dog, and ... crying" (8). Although Mel was oblivious to the anguish of his new charges, the young daughter noted intently that her Ba "cries in the garden every night" and that "nothing comes of it" (27)—an early lesson on the brutal aftermath of the U.S.-Vietnam encounter. In this scenario, Vietnamese men and their families, as the purported grateful refugees, constitute the human scenery deployed to confirm the superiority of white American middle-class way of life and the righteousness of America(ns) rescuing and caring for Vietnam's "runaways" that erases the role that U.S. interventionist foreign policy and war played in inducing this forced migration in the first place.

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[5] The four "uncles" were fellow "boat people" who traveled with Ba and the daughter from Vietnam to San Diego. As the narrator explains, "Ba and I were connected to the four uncles, not by blood but by water" (3).

DOWNWARD MOBILITY AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

It is within this context—of war, displacement, and racism—that Vietnamese refugee men have had to carve out a place for themselves and their families in America. The economic status of the majority of Vietnamese Americans, especially of the post-1978 arrivals, is characterized by low-status minimum-wage employment, dependence on public assistance, and participation in the unstable informal economy (Gold and Kibria; Zhou and Bankston). As a predominantly working poor population with limited human capital and human resources, many of these refugees have resettled in low-income minority neighborhoods that have borne the brunt of governmental neglect, social isolation, and persistent poverty. Treated with disdain as subordinates in the racial hierarchy of U.S. society, many Vietnamese men—with backgrounds in farming or soldiering, limited education, and suffering the aftereffects of war, flight, and displacement—could not find suitable and steady employment (Gold and Kibria).

At the same time, the growth of female-intensive industries in the United States, particularly in the garment and microelectronics industries, has increased employment options for many Vietnamese women, even those with limited education, skills and English fluency (Kibria). In these labor-intensive industries, employers prefer to hire immigrant women over men because they believe the patriarchal and racist ideologies that women can afford to work for less, do not mind dead-end jobs, and more suited physiologically to certain kinds of detailed and routine work (Espiritu, *Asian* 89). Research on Vietnamese refugee masculinity has established that gender role reversals—wives' increased opportunities in the labor market and husbands' reduced economic and social status—have diminished men's patriarchal authority, forcing men to renegotiate their labor and social value within the family (Kibria). Men's inability to "be masculine," due to their unemployability and loss of status and power, places severe pressure on their sense of well-being, leading in some instances to sexual and other physical violence against their wives and children (Bui and Morash 192). In particular, former political detainees, like Ba, were more likely than other men to engage in physical and verbal abuse against their partners (Bui and Morash 202).

In *The Gangster*, lê depicts the family's arrival in the United States not as the end but as the beginning of story, poignantly detailing the main characters' struggles with living a life not of their own design. Cognizant of what Avery Gordon terms "the endings that are not over" (195), lê refuses to naturalize and privatize domestic violence among poor refugee families; instead, she shows how it is intimately linked to the violence of war, of urban neglect, and of poverty. The young narrator bemoans her parents' unfulfilled dreams and unfulfilling lives in America: "[Ma][6] worked as a seamstress, doing piecework at our kitchen table. [Ba] worked as

[6] "Ma" means "mother" in Vietnamese.

a welder at a factory that made space heaters. Neither of them wanted to be doing it; Ma wanted to have a restaurant, and Ba wanted to have a garden" (43). She *sees* their poverty intensely, in the rusted gates of their small red apartment building; and she *sees* how demeaning jobs and crushing poverty have contributed to her father's hopeless fury, and her parents' "big fight[s] about nothing" (66-67). During one of their fiery arguments, Ma ordered Ba not to touch her with his hands. "Ba clenched his hands into tight fists and punched the walls ... I see his hands punch hands punch hands punch blood" (92). These violent incidents indicate that the cost of institutional oppression is palpable not only in blocked opportunities but also in stunted relationships.

In the following scene that takes place in a runaway shelter, lê poignantly depicts the complexity of the father-daughter relationship, one that refuses to be privatized but calls into being the larger history and context of war, refugee resettlement, and chronic poverty:

> Before I had run away for good, my father once came to pick me up at a shelter. As we sat in a conference with two counselors, he was asked if there was anything he wanted to say. He shook his head. When pressed, he looked down at his hands. He apologized for what his hands had done. The counselors understood this to mean he was taking responsibility for his drunken rages. They nodded in approval. But then he drew his palms together and apologized for all that his hands had not been able to do. He spread his hands wide open, and said, in Vietnamese, to anyone who could understand, there were things he had lost grasp of.
>
> The room seemed to shrink in the face of his sorrow. Beside him the two counselors were like tight little shrubs no one had ever watered. I thought they had no right to frown at my father. I could not wait to get us out of there. I told the counselors that I was ready to go home. I remember crossing the parking lot, my hand in my father's hand, the two of us running to the car as though we were escaping together again. (118-119)

In this excerpt, lê disrupts the widespread Western construction of patriarchy as particular to Asian culture, which freezes Asian immigrant men as always-already "subjects-who-perpetrate-violence," and foregrounds the need to theorize and situate all forms of male violence (Mohanty 58). Stressing the intersection of race, gender, and class, she makes clear how gender differentiation and oppression is not a universal experience but is structured differently, depending on how it intersects with other inequalities such as race and class. Thus from their race and class vantage point, the two social service workers understand the gesture of the father as an apology for domestic violence—"for what his hands had done." In contrast, the shamed father and daughter recognize that the apology is more for his inability to provide for his family—for what "his hands had *not* been able to do" (emphasis added). More than a cultural misunderstanding, the scene evinces a power struggle in which the feminist values of the American counselors are deemed universal while those of the powerless refugees are misrecognized—though not entirely silenced. The novel thus exhorts us to acknowledge that economic and social discrimination have locked many working-class men of color into an

unequal relationship with not only privileged white men but also privileged white women (Espiritu, *Asian*).

Facing the overbearing and patronizing social service workers, the daughter abruptly and protectively took her father's hand and both fled—away from the oppressive state system that threatened to further humiliate a man who has just apologized for what "his hands had not been able to do." This scene encapsulates the parent-child role reversal common in immigrant families, yet another erosion of the father's authority in the domestic sphere: the night they left Vietnam, it was the father who carried the daughter down to the beach and placed her on the fishing boat; but now in America, it was the English-speaking daughter who freed the father from the prying bureaucrats in the shelter.

At the same time, this act—"of escaping together again"—moves the story beyond the familiar sociological trope of intergenerational conflict and deviant masculinity to one about joint lives. Although divided by generation, culture, and language, the father and daughter are connected by their shared histories as racialized and gendered refugees in the United States. The crises that have shaped the father, while unknown to and unheard by Mel and the social service workers, are deeply felt and lived by the daughter.[7] Having witnessed and braved these misfortunes alongside her father, the daughter's memories of him and their relationship contain a mixture of both tender as well as terrifying moments:

> To protect myself, I tried to forget everything: that first night at the refugee camp in Singapore; those early morning walks after we arrived in America; the sound of his voice asking a question no one could answer; the shapes his fists left along a wall; the bruises that blossomed on the people around him; the smell of the fruit he brought home from the gardens he tended; the way the air seemed charged with memories of blood; the nets we fell through, faster and faster, year after year, dreaming of land. (117-118)

Out of the scraps of their lives, which include "early morning walks" as well as "bruises" and "memories of blood" as well as "smell of ... fruit," a life lesson about surviving emerged: "It was my father who taught me ... how to keep moving even when a bone in the leg was broken or a muscle in the chest was torn" (100). It is the father's will to "keep moving" that enables the daughter to see him, however "sad and broken," as one who is never utterly defeated: "His friends fell all around him ... first during the war and then after the war, but somehow he alone managed to crawl here, on his hands and knees, to this life" (103).

[7] Cam Nhung Vu, in her analysis of this same scene, notes that she was also struck "by the imagery of the two holding hands and running together, an image that suggests their collusion, their togetherness and of course, the reference to the original escape" (143).

"PEOPLE LARGER THAN THEIR SITUATION"

Having few recourses to change the conditions of their lives, many Vietnamese men, like Ba, "fold down, crumble into their own shadows" (122). And yet, lê writes that having managed "to crawl here,..., to this life," Vietnamese are a "people larger than their situation" (122). Even when Ba tries to make himself small, "so that in the world there was very little left of him" (122), traces of him, as a virile "Buddhist gangster from the North," persist in his wife's gentle memories, in his daughter's active imagination, and in his own "complex personhood" (Gordon 4).

Throughout *The Gangster*, lê intersperses depictions of the "sad and broken" father with recollections of the handsome and irreverent young man who courted his eventual wife with his "sharp profile" and a "handful of pebbles" (83). War intruded on their relationship, taking him from her at key moments in their married lives: the birth of their first born when he was at a military camp in South Vietnam, the death of their second child when he was detained in a "reeducation" camp, and the escape from Vietnam when he couldn't find her anywhere in the chaos. And yet, in spite or perhaps *because* of these multiple separations, Ba and Ma "are always meeting for the first time, savoring the sound of a name, marveling at the bones of the face cupped by the bones of the hand" (82). For the daughter, the enraged father who sent her reeling to a runaway shelter coexists alongside the enigmatic young man who stares out of a black-and-white photograph, "in which he wears a hat of canvas camouflage cocked to one side. His expression is wary. His arms are crossed in front of him, bare and luminous, one hand balled into a fist" (103). In this picture, he is defiant: "what reveals him most is the will to give nothing away" (103). The figure of the once-fearless and swaggering lover/husband in South Vietnam rounds out the portrait of the angry and dispirited man in the United States, reminding us that Vietnamese have not always been "sad and broken," and that they have led full and fulfilling lives in another time and place. As Avery Gordon tells us, "even those called 'Other' are never never that" (4).

Beside the brash gangster and the enraged husband/father, another form of masculinity percolates, as the father tends to the young daughter during his wife's absence. As the daughter tells it, on their daily walks to school each morning, "we'd stand on the sidewalk and Ba would comb my hair with his fingers. Then he'd pull two barrettes out of his shirt pocket, push my hair away from my eyes, and gently snap the barrettes in place" (18). This tender gesture reminds us that all people, including those who live in the most dire circumstances, are beset by "contradictory humanity and subjectivity" (Gordon 4). Sometimes, they "get stuck in the symptoms of their troubles" (Gordon 4) but other times, they transform themselves. There lies the contribution of lê's novel: it makes audible and visible the "noisy silences" and "seething absences" in Vietnamese life (Gordon 200), exposing the brutal conditions that constrain refugees' everyday life but also revealing the possibilities of transformation that always lie therein.

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NEGOTIATING A MASCULINE BLOC: JONATHAN FRANZEN'S *THE CORRECTIONS*

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Abstract

Contemporary research on masculinities has focused on demonstrating how these are multiple, hierarchical, collective as well as individual, complex and contingent. In this article, I read Jonathan Franzen's *The Corrections* in the light of such recent theorizations. I propose to focus on the negotiation of what Demetriou has termed a masculine bloc, which is a space in which hegemonic and non-hegemonic masculinities coexist and, therefore, a strict duality between both categories is transcended. Next, I suggest focusing on the construction of masculinities as subject positions that are interwoven with different geographical levels. It is my contention that St. Jude, the fictional city for the Lamberts' home in the Midwest, conforms the symbolic arena in which hegemonic masculinity is staged.

Key words: Masculinities, hegemonic masculinity, alternative masculinities, masculine bloc, Jonathan Franzen.

Resumen

La investigación actual sobre las masculinidades ha identificado que algunas de las características esenciales que pueden determinarse son: la jerarquía, la complejidad y la contingencia así como la posibilidad de ser colectivas o individuales. En el presente artículo, analizo el texto titulado *The Corrections* de Jonathan Franzen en el contexto de dicha investigación. Propongo centrarme en la negociación de lo que Demetriou ha calificado como la coalición masculina. Éste es un espacio híbrido en el cual se combinan aspectos de diferentes masculinidades tanto hegemónicos como no hegemónicos y, por lo tanto, se transciende el dualismo inherente de la formulación. A continuación, propongo analizar la construcción de las masculinidades en relación con diferentes niveles geográficos con el fin de proponer que la ciudad ficticia de los Lambert en St. Jude, en el medio oeste americano, es donde se constituye el escenario simbólico en el cual se representa la masculinidad hegemónica.

Palabras clave: masculinidades, masculinidad hegemónica, masculinidades alternativas, coalición masculina, Jonathan Franzen.

One last Christmas reunion in St. Jude. This is Enid Lambert's central design for her family, which constitutes the structuring spatial principle Jonathan Franzen's *The Corrections*. In it, the lives of the Lambert family members are put to the strain of utter transformation. In the face of ongoing disintegration—"the whole northern religion of things coming to an end" (Franzen 3), Alfred Lambert, the patriarch of the family, shakes his head at the intricacy that characterizes the daily routine for the couple, a state he terms "the complexity of it all" (5). Relying on a dense plot set-up abounding in subplots and interwoven character networks, what Franzen himself has referred to as "interlocking-novellas structure" (qtd. in Burn), the novel received wide critical acclaim upon its publication. Kakutani's review of the book for *The New York Times* argued, for instance, that the novel constituted an apt metaphor for the United States in the 1990s, a decade in which money madness, envy, resentment, greed, acquisitiveness and self-delusion were the hallmarks of the time. James Wood also points to the way in which we can identify most of the various currents of contemporary American fiction in *The Corrections* such as domestic realism; social and cultural analysis; the campus farce; the crude Dickensian exposition; or the acute irony in reference to the politics of cuisine or the Lithuanian black market (201). From the perspective of gender, Kristin Jacobson has termed the novel an instance of "domestic masculinity," a term that "refers not only to men's particular relationship with the domestic sphere or feminized, domestic practices but also to the generic blending of the social and domestic novels" (218). Thus, *The Corrections* constitutes in Jacobson's view, the questioning of patriarchal literary hierarchies that ultimately reproduce gender distinctions that "differentiate the so-called niche category of women's fiction from the more 'universal,' well-respected, and frequently more masculine genres" (218).

In this article, I wish to take my cue from the gender issues raised by Jacobson and I suggest reading the character of Alfred Lambert in the light of contemporary research on masculinities. In order to do so, I propose to initially focus on the negotiation of what Demetriou has termed a masculine bloc, which is a space in which hegemonic and non-hegemonic masculinities coexist. Next, I suggest focusing on the construction of masculinities as subject positions that are interwoven with different geographical levels: the local, the national, and the global. It is my contention that St. Jude, the fictional city for the Lamberts' home in the Midwest, conforms the symbolic arena in which hegemonic masculinity is staged. Finally, I argue that Chip Lambert constitutes an example of a masculine bloc in which non-hegemonic features prevail.

HEGEMONIC AND ALTERNATIVE MASCULINITIES: THE MASCULINE BLOC

The study of masculinities in recent years has developed a body of international research that, as Connell explains, has drawn important conclusions about the present state in the construction of masculinities: "there are multiple masculinities; there are hierarchies of masculinities, often defining a 'hegemonic' pattern for

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a given society; masculinities are collective as well as individual; masculinities are actively constructed in social life; masculinities are internally complex; masculinities change in history" ("Gender"). In Connell's definition, the notions of multiplicity, complexity, hierarchy, collectivity, and contingency are key to an understanding of contemporary masculinities. Among them, the identification of hegemonic and non-hegemonic practices has become the stepping stone towards the recent investigation on masculinities.

The terms were originally formulated in Connell's *Gender and Power* and further expanded in Carrigan, Connell, and Lee's "Towards a New Sociology of Masculinity" and other texts such as Segal's "Changing Men: Masculinities in Context" or Cornwall and Lindisfarne's *Dislocating Masculinities: Comparative Ethnographies*. By hegemonic masculinity these authors entail a hierarchy in which a dominant form of masculinity rules over other forms of masculinities and is, in turn, distinguished from them in that it refers to the most honored and normative way of being a man at a specific historical moment. Thus, hegemonic masculinity constitutes a dominant, more socially central form of masculinity that guarantees the dominant position of men over other forms of non-hegemonic masculinities as well as the subordination of women.

This binary model does not require that all men attempt to closely follow the requirement of a hegemonic form of masculinity at specific historical and geographical times. Some men may actually oppose or question the hegemonic model by developing alternative masculinities although, as Connell has claimed, all men position themselves in relation to it and therefore, the model is unavoidable. Thus, even if men may not actually enact a hegemonic masculinity, they may embody a complicit masculinity in passively maintaining and therefore sustaining a hegemonic model, making it pervasive and ultimately inescapable (Connell, *Gender*; Demetriou).

Connell's binary formulation of hegemonic and subordinate forms has been, however, widely questioned given the impossibility of finding clear-cut hegemonic or non-hegemonic configurations. Actually, Connell and Messerschmidt acknowledge in their revisions of the concept that it is difficult to find a pure hegemonic practice (836). In this sense, Groes-Green, for instance, has urged to move beyond the dichotomies between modern and traditional forms of masculinities as well as to explore entanglements of hegemonic and alternative masculinities. In the same line, Demetriou has elaborated on Connell's formulation in order to theorize the possibility of hybridization of both hegemonic and non-hegemonic practices into a common space. By drawing on Gramsci's concept of historic bloc and Bhabha's notion of hybridity, Demetriou has argued that hegemonic masculinity "is not a purely white heterosexual configuration of practice but it is a hybrid bloc that unites practices from diverse masculinities in order to ensure the reproduction of patriarchy" (337). Thus, in opposition to Connell's dual formulation, Demetriou's theory dispenses with the dualistic understanding of masculine power and practice and opens up the possibility of identifying non-hegemonic elements within hegemonic masculinity as sign of hybridization, flexibility rather than contradiction or weakness (348).

It is such determination to transcend the intrinsic dualism found in Connell's formulation that has led Demetriou to highlight the permeability in the construc-

tion of both categories. Thus, Demetriou advocates for a "third space" or "masculine bloc" in which elements from both hegemonic and non-hegemonic subject positions meet. If hegemonic masculinity appears "as an essentially white, Western, rational, calculative, individualist, violent, and heterosexual configuration of practice that is never infected by non-hegemonic elements" (Demetriou 347), such a definition necessarily rests on a relational dependence on non-hegemonic forms, which are defined in the negative as black, non-Western, irrational, effeminate or non-violent. Therefore, hegemonic masculinity's sustenance on subordinate masculinities for definition proves, in Demetrious's view, the claim about the need to formulate the hybridity and permeability of the two categories as well as acknowledge the creation of a third space or masculine bloc (347).[1]

It is Demetriou's theorization of the masculine bloc what I will now proceed to apply to *The Corrections* and, specifically, to Alfred Lambert, the patriarch of the family.

ALFRED LAMBERT'S NEGOTIATION OF THE MASCULINE BLOC

One of the characters in the novel that best exemplifies the negotiation of a masculine bloc in which hegemonic and subordinate elements combine into a hybrid masculine space is Alfred Lambert. His developing Parkinson's disease and its resulting loss of control over his body and actions are constitutive elements in his process of transformation from the performance of a normative hegemonic role to a subordinate one. Thus, the fretfulness that haunts Alfred and his disjointed family becomes clear from the beginning of the novel: "ringing throughout the house was an alarm bell that no one but Alfred and Enid could hear directly. It was the alarm bell of anxiety" (Franzen 3).

For Alfred, the process of redefinition and decline we are about to witness entails the awareness that his hegemonic role as the Lambert patriarch is no longer sustainable in the face of his illness and of his wife Enid who is indeed "a guerrilla" (Franzen 6), lives "a refugee existence" and "whose ostensible foe was Alfred" (7). Despite the fact that Alfred apparently constitutes "the governing force" that seems to still prevail in Enid's behavior, his loss of ascendancy as the Lambert patriarch is evident: "unfortunately, Enid lacked the temperament to manage such a house, and Alfred lacked the neurological wherewithal. Alfred's cries of rage on discover-

[1] Demetriou's claims have been acknowledged by Connell and Messerschmidt, who accept the ambiguities in usage when critics refer to the actual characteristics that in point of fact conform hegemonic masculinity to conclude that hegemonic masculinity should not be used as a fixed or transhistorical model since such a usage ignores the massive evidence of change in social definitions of masculinity (838). Connell and Messerschmidt also recognize Demetriou's conceptualization of dialectical pragmatism and the appropriation of specific subordinate masculine practices into hegemonic masculinity and its resulting creation of a hybrid third space.

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ing evidence of guerrilla actions [...] were the cries of a government that could no longer govern" (7).

It is precisely in the context of the family dynamics where Alfred's progressive loss of hegemony becomes obvious. As a central institution that exerts a direct influence upon the contemporary organization of gender together with other fields such as the state, the workplace or the labor market (Connell, *Gender* 602), the family witnesses Alfred's declining pre-eminence over Enid and his children, an aspect which is intrinsically related to his decaying body, the main signifier for his subordinate subject position. As Connell argues, the masculine body constitutes the key element in the construction of different masculinities, since "masculinity is, in most cases, thought to proceed from men's bodies, to be inherent in a male body or to express something about a male body. Thus, the body seems to drive and direct action (e.g., men are naturally more aggressive than women...) or the body sets limits to action (e.g., men naturally do not take care of infants)" (*Masculinities* 45). Moreover, the centrality of the male body in the construction of masculinities is, in hegemonic masculinity, specifically paired with physical perfection and wholeness (Connell, *Gender*; *Masculinities*).

This thesis is also developed by Mosse, who identifies the rise of what he terms a standard of masculinity based upon the perfect body in the late 18th century, a period of deep social transformation in which the body undergoes a process of reinterpretation in the context of the emergence of modern bourgeois society. In it, the body becomes the prominent signifier of manliness with its corresponding moral attributes of strong willpower, moral fortitude, and martial nobility. Moreover, Mosse's formulation of a standard of masculinity suggests that such ideal model of manliness was centrally based on the perfect lines of the neoclassical male body. In this way, Mosse identifies the ways in which the modern age was characterized by a preoccupation with beauty and the human body, aspects that became central constitutive elements of a manly ideal that has continued to exert a profound normalizing influence until the twentieth century. It is in this context that normative hegemonic masculinity in the modern era has largely been built upon the notions of toughness, aggressiveness, physical dominance, racism, homophobia or misogyny and a body that is whole, that is without any disability.

If the above-mentioned elements constitute essential features of a hegemonic model of masculinity, a correlation can be established between physical masculine degeneration and a non-hegemonic subject position. Connell and Messerschmidt have emphasized the ways in which hegemonic masculinity is related to particular ways of representing men's bodies, to what they term a "pattern of embodiment" since "bodies are involved more actively, more intimately, and more intricately in social processes than theory has usually allowed. Bodies participate in social action by delineating courses of social conduct, the body is a participant in generating social practice" (851).

Thus, Alfred's body becomes the main signifier of the masculine bloc in which his physical decay coexists with the remains of a past hegemony. In this sense, the combination of Alfred's loss of ascendancy over his family with his past as the hegemonic patriarch is clearly perceived by his sons.

For Chip, his own identity is initially structured around the figures of his parents, defined as "killers" when they visit him in New York and attempt to exert an obvious control over their son (Franzen 17). Chip's life, clothes and "tall, gym-built" body is filtered through his parents' "disappointed eyes" (18). Although his parents cast accusing glances, Chip is also aware that despite Alfred's illness and age, his father's old hegemonic masculinity lingers long:

> Though stooped in the neck now, Alfred was still an imposing figure. His hair was white and thick and sleek, like a polar bear's, and the powerful long muscles of his shoulders, which Chip remembered laboring in the spanking of a child, usually Chip himself, still filled the gray tweed shoulders of his sport coat. [...] For a moment it seemed to Chip that his father had become a likable old stranger; but he new Alfred, underneath, to be a shouter and a punisher. (19, 25)

Alfred's past violent behavior, fundamentally based on the exertion of physical superiority over his children, is thus revealed at several points in the novel, which contrasts with Alfred's physical deterioration and its related positioning in a subordinate form masculinity. This latter aspect is further highlighted by Alfred's progressive loss of control over his body and his reaction to it as an instance of material dispossession: "his affliction offended his sense of ownership. These shaking hands belonged to nobody but him, and yet they refused to obey him. They were like bad children ... Irresponsibility and indiscipline were the bane of his existence, and it was another instance of that Devil's logic that his own untimely affliction should consist of his body's refusal to obey him" (Franzen 77). This gradual transformation of Alfred's body finds refuge in a quintessential masculine space, the basement of the Lambert house in St. Jude, which becomes both a liberating space away from Enid as well as a confining one in which Alfred's physical decay becomes evident. In it, we witness the ways in which managing language and putting words together becomes increasingly challenging while Alfred's hearing becomes impaired and his hands constantly shake.

Thus framing Alfred's physical decay in terms of the impossibility of a hegemonic dominance over his body, the text maintains the tension between the transition to a different state with the sustained resistance to such a process, an attitude that reaches its peak in the chapter entitled "At Sea," Franzen's astounding parody of a sea cruise in which Alfred eventually falls overboard the *Gunnar Myrdal*. In it, Alfred and Enid participate in the distinctive mobility of all the characters in the text and embark on a much-anticipated cruise through the black sea in Nova Scotia. While at sea, the miseries of the married years together become evident. Ironically, their past sexual routine reveals the extent to which Alfred's hegemonic masculinity has been dependent on Enid's performance of her passive sexual role:

> To exert attraction, Enid had to be a still, unbloody carcass. Her stillness and self-containment, the slow sips of air she took, her purely vulnerable objecthood, made him pounce. And feeling his padded paw on her ribs and his meat-seeking breath on her neck she went limp, as if with prey's instinctive resignation ("Let's

> get this dying over with"), although in truth her passivity was calculated, because she knew passivity inflamed him. (Franzen 279)

It is also in this chapter that we learn what it means for Alfred to feel "like a man" (Franzen 283). When the narrator accounts for Alfred's past as a railroad engineer, we discover his ethics of work, essentially structured around long working hours in opposition to "a new effeminate generation for whom 'easygoing' was a compliment" (281). Eventually, Alfred is featured as a tough professional, the persistent breadwinner who works long hours in order to provide for his family: "no man worked harder than he, no man made a quieter motel neighbor, no man was more of a man" (283).

That Alfred's collapse and fall overboard the ship takes place while at sea and away from St. Jude is representative of the ways the negotiation of alternative subject positions in the novel is also intrinsically related to several levels of spatial presence: the local, the regional, and the global. As we shall see, these locations become entangled as the different plot lines and characters converge.

James Annesley, for instance, argues that in *The Corrections*, Franzen sets the Lambert family against the backdrop of international politics, new technologies, consumer economics, and the free market in order to establish an analogy between the intricacies of the Lambert family and globalization's complex combination of forces. In this sense, the novel constitutes a new contribution to the genre of the novel, the novel of globalization (111-112). Annesley further surveys the use of the term globalization, which has been used to either account for phenomena as diverse as tourism, climate change, Jihadi terrorism, the power of international brands, mass migrations, the spread of the English language or to be understood as "the product of intricately interrelated changes in the organization of social, political and economic spheres that are in turn linked to technological developments" (112). Thus, Annesley argues, the resulting effect is that globalization seems to account for everything while it remains a concept that is "porous, unstable and potentially overstretched" (112). Even though the debate seems to be characterized by a wide diversity of positions, Annesley builds on Giddens' and Held's definitions of the term to conclude that globalization is built on the assumption of a more homogeneous world in which internationalized forms of culture are increasingly developed and markets become global (112). For Annesley, novels such as *The Corrections* or *White Noise* by Don DeLillo are not just novels about globalization but rather direct interventions into the debates around globalization (113).

From this perspective, *The Corrections* offers a clear insight into the networks and the complexity into which characters become entangled, which are best exemplified by the relationship different characters establish with the W_Corporation: Billy Passafaro assaults Rick Flamburg, the company's vice-president, while Billy's sister, Robin, is married to Brian, who has himself sold a piece of music software to the W_Corporation. This is the money Brian uses to fund "The Generator," a new restaurant whose head chef becomes Denise Lambert. Denise will partly use her salary to provide financial support for Chip Lambert, mostly unemployed.

The direct interrelation between a global picture and the construction of different models of masculinities has been addressed in recent research in the field. Thus, Connell contends that the awareness of a global picture must be part of any study of masculinities since "European imperialism, global capitalism under U.S. hegemony, and modern communications have brought all cultures into contact, obliterated many, and marginalized most [...] The dimension of global history must now be a part of every ethnography" ("Big" 601). This aspect is further formulated by Connell and Messerschmidt, who point at the need to develop a critical framework that accounts for the possible intersection between three specific levels of action in the construction of hegemonic masculinities: global, regional, and local. In it, the local level entails a hegemonic masculinity that is constructed in the arenas of face-to-face interaction of families, organizations, and immediate communities; the regional level constructs hegemonic masculinity at the level of culture or nation-state; and finally, global hegemonic masculinity, which is constructed in transnational arenas such as world politics and transnational business and media (849).

In the novel, the interconnected effects of corporate capitalism and masculinities come to the fore in the Corecktall Process, the treatment that may cure Alfred's mental disorder. Once more, Franzen uses his network technique by skillfully relating the selling of the patent Alfred developed to the Axon Corporation to the family dynamics. Thus, Alfred's son, Gary, believes that Axon is not paying enough for Alfred's patent and he will try to stop the sale and raise the price while at the same time he will attempt to have Alfred included in the clinical testing for the Corecktall Process. Gary's negotiation with Axon and the information he is able to obtain about the company offers him the opportunity to heavily invest in the company's stock, which will also prove a failure as the stock slumps in the market slide. Eventually, Gary's negotiations collapse and Axon does not pay a higher price for the patent nor do they include Alfred in the experimental treatment.

The episode, however, allows Gary to perform a hegemonic masculinity based on the illusory nature of the power he is allowed to momentarily hold. Thus, he substitutes for Alfred in his performance of a bold and aggressive attitude which his plotting and negotiation with Axon requires and it is precisely his present aggressiveness what he senses has been Alfred's weakness: "He saw an opportunity here to make some money and avenge Axon's screwing of his father and more generally, be bold where Alfred had been timid" (217). Gary's attempt at replacing Alfred in his role as hegemonic patriarch—a function he is negated as father and husband at home—constitutes another instance of the masculine bloc, of the evident coexistence of hegemonic and non-hegemonic aspects into a hybrid space.

If the global level constitutes one of the spatial axes of the novel, the novel's concern with the national and local planes is also present. These become apparent in Franzen's own definition of the text as "a family novel about three East Coast urban sophisticates who alternately long for and reject the heartland suburbs where their aged parents live" (qtd. in Poole 272). In *The Corrections*, such mobility is directly related to the characters' negotiation of different masculinities, which proves Connell's thesis about practice being situational, since it is their alternating locations

away from or to St. Jude what reveals their changing masculine subject positions, their own masculine bloc.

It is no coincidence that St. Jude constitutes the Midwestern center against which each of the characters negotiates his masculine bloc. The Midwest, Franzen's birthplace, and the United States' heartland, constitutes the symbolic center for the family members.

As Poole has argued in his approach to what he deems Franzen's Midwestern poetics, "there steadfastly remains a common, nationwide understanding that this is a homogeneous, coherent region: the American heartland" (265). Thus, although the Midwest was not an exceptional historical region like the South or New England, it came to signify America as a nation (265). Furthermore, the Midwest is the place where, what Poole considers "two ancient American myths" coexist. Namely, the ideal of the farmer and agrarianism, on the one hand, with the old-fashioned and reactionary quality of the region, on the other (269). It is this latter quality which is key to the construction of a hegemonic normative masculinity that becomes fundamentally interrelated with the Midwest at the national level and St. Jude at the local one.

While Enid constitutes the novel's determined spokesperson for the values of the Midwest, "she founds her insistence for remaining in the Midwestern suburbia on the predictability of things, on the reliance of daily routine" (Poole 277), for Gary, the sadness of the Midwest as well as the place itself is what makes him hate it (Franzen 203). For Enid, the daily routine features as her innermost activity keeping up a tight control of what she perceives as her children's needs. In the case of Denise, this is defined as the possibility of finding a suitable husband that embodies a model of traditional masculinity as a breadwinner,

> receiving, as her reward, the vows of a young man with a neat haircut of the kind you saw in and for newswear, a really super young fellow who had an upbeat attitude and was polite to older people and didn't believe in premarital sex, and who had a job that contributed to society ... and who came from a loving, stable, traditional family and wanted to start a loving, stable, traditional family of his own. Unless Enid was very much deceived by appearances, young men of this caliber continued, even as the twentieth century drew to a close, to be *the norm* in suburban St. Jude. (139)

Despite Enid's dream about finding the perfect suitor for her daughter, her absolute capacity for illusion eventually brings the family together for the much-announced Christmas. When the family reunion does finally take place in the chapter "One Last Christmas," we can witness the possibilities of crafting a masculine bloc in which non-hegemonic or alternative aspects prevail.

THE PATH TOWARDS ALTERNATIVE MASCULINITIES

As we have seen, Alfred's past hegemonic masculinity is shown to merge into a masculine bloc that allows him to confront his decay. By comparing what he perceives as his now obsolete body with the string of Christmas lights he tries unsuccessfully to light, he reaches the conclusion that "it was hell to get old" (Franzen 534) and seriously considers suicide as an option. It is at this point that the millennial imagery that recurs throughout the text and focuses around a disintegrating social structure comes full circle, an aspect that becomes highlighted by Enid's heightened illusory sense about reality. While Alfred faces up to his illness, reconsiders what he terms "the wisdom of surviving" after his ship incident (Franzen 534), and confronts his approaching death, we learn about Enid's shame upon the incidents on the ship in which, among other things, she had taken an illegal drug the doctor on the ship prescribed for her and she concludes that "her shame was crippling and atrocious. It mattered to her now, as it hadn't a week earlier, that a thousand happy travelers on the *Gunnar Myrdal* had witnessed how peculiar she and Alfred were" (538). True to her ever-present capacity for transforming reality, Enid chooses not to confront Alfred's decay and decides, instead, to start personally handwriting her hundred Christmas notes, in which she includes a short note which reads: "Loved our cruise to see the autumn color in New England and maritime Canada. Al took an unexpected 'swim' in the Gulf of St. Lawrence but is feeling 'ship-shape' again!" (542).

Enid's attitude contrasts sharply with Chip Lambert's, whose life is meant to be a fundamental correction of his father's. At the beginning of the novel, Chip's antagonism with his parents is obvious. As the novel progresses, however, Chip goes through several stages: his struggling with postmodern theory—his dissertation, "Doubtful It Stood," is an analysis of castration anxiety in Tudor drama—; he is fired from his job as professor of "Textual Artifacts" at a liberal-arts college for sleeping with an undergraduate; travels to Lithuania where he assists a business man in the commission of international wire fraud and finally returns to St. Jude.

Chip's final correction constitutes a negotiation of a masculine bloc in which, rather than seeing himself through his father's eyes, manages to commit himself to Alfred in the final stages of his illness. As Hawkins argues, "by loving his father, Chip proves that he need not be mired in his father's utilitarianism or in the expressive individualism to which Chip has adhered for much of his life" (82). Despite the hostility that has permeated his relationship with his parents, Chip eventually manages to perform a masculinity that is substantially structured around his compassion for his father as well as the rejection of the hegemonic features he has learned to read in his father's life. Thus, he possibility of a masculine bloc in which love, compassion or respect are predominant, constitutes one of the novel's final corrections.

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PERFORMING MASCULINITY, PERFORMING THE SELF: RUDOLFO ANAYA'S *BLESS ME, ULTIMA* AND *HEART OF AZTLAN*

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Abstract

This article explores how *Bless Me, Ultima* and *Heart of Aztlan*, the two earliest novels by acclaimed Chicano writer Rudolfo Anaya, problematise and negotiate Chicano masculinity issues. I will focus on the main characters of the novels, who, at different vital moments of their lives, question the meaning of manhood amidst important socio-economic changes and conflicting cultural traditions. Anaya reveals the complexity of being "mestizo" in American society, and exposes how hegemonic standards of masculinity are Manichean, restrictive and reliant on gender inequality. I will finally examine whether the novels challenge hegemonic gender orders, successfully negotiate non-heterosexist ideals of manhood, and ultimately contribute to the advancement of egalitarian gender relations for the Chicana/o community.

Key words: Masculinity, hegemony, power relations, machismo, gender (in)equality, Chicana/o literature.

Resumen

Este artículo explora cómo *Bless Me, Ultima* y *Heart of Aztlan*, las dos primeras novelas publicadas por Rudolfo Anaya, autor clave en la literatura chicana, problematiza y negocia conceptos hegemónicos de masculinidad. Me centraré en los dos personajes principales de las dos novelas, quienes, en distintos momentos vitales, cuestionan el significado de ser hombre a raíz de profundos cambios socio-económicos y tradiciones culturales en conflicto. Anaya expone la complejidad intrínseca a ser mestizo en la sociedad estadounidense, y descubre cómo los ideales hegemónicos de masculinidad socialmente aceptados y celebrados son maniqueos, restrictivos y anclados en la desigualdad de género. Finalmente, cuestiono el grado en que las novelas desafían y desestabilizan el orden de género hegemónico, negocian modelos de masculinidad no heterosexistas y contribuyen al avance de relaciones de género igualitarias en la comunidad chicana.

Palabras clave: masculinidad, hegemonía, relaciones de poder, machismo, (des)igualdad de género, literatura chicana.

Usually referred to as one of the "founding fathers" of Chicano literature, Rudolfo Anaya's prolific *oeuvre* comprises several novels, short stories, children's books and essays. His novel *Bless Me, Ultima* was awarded the Quinto Sol National Chicano Literature Award in 1972, and it is nowadays part of the curricula in American high schools, along with Sandra Cisneros' *The House on Mango Street*. Now in his mid-seventies, Anaya is about to publish yet another novel, in which issues of masculinity, aging, life and death are explored once more.[1] These themes, recurrent in Anaya's work, were also present in his first novel, *Bless Me, Ultima*, which narrates the story of Antonio Márez y Lunas, a seven year old boy who attempts to make sense of himself in society, first as a boy and then *as a man*. This topic appears as well in his second novel, *Heart of Aztlan*, an account of several male characters going adrift in the midst of social, geographical and economic changes that make them wonder about their performance of masculinity within the context of gender relations. Forty years after the publication of these two novels, the same issues seem to still hunt Anaya since his new work deals with the experience of an elderly man who further questions the definite or defining character of his manhood through the prism of age, among other elements. Nevertheless, if one brings together Anaya's early and latest work, there seems to be a constant leit-motiv in his male characters: the need to find a place in the world, to define oneself in it and *in relation to* it as men, as well as the desire to find fulfilment and belonging as part of a whole. From this starting point and while awaiting the publication of Anaya's forthcoming novel, I will go back to the roots, or to borrow Anaya's words "let me begin at the beginning [...] the beginning that came with [*Bless Me*,] *Ultima*" (*Bless* 1). I will also look at *Heart of Aztlan*, a less widely acclaimed novel that nonetheless offers an interesting textual and referential space from where to explore and unravel the gender dimension of Anaya's early universe.

Most of the literary criticism about Anaya's work effectively addresses these issues: the religious and spiritual worlds in his novels, the role of the "curandera" or shaman that provides spiritual guidance, and the use of myth/mythology and archetype to explore the dynamics between individual and collective identities, among others.[2] However, the gender perspective in these analyses is somehow opaque.[3] In other words, much of this research revolves around female characters, most prominently Ultima, but it does not analyse the protagonists in the novels,

[1] I am thankful to Prof. María Herrera-Sobek for mentioning this new publication to me.

[2] See Roberto Cantú, Enrique Lamadrid and Robert K. Anderson for a discussion of these issues.

[3] This is clearly a result of the time in which that criticism was produced, a moment in which "gender" analyses were mostly women-related, as early as the 1970s-1990s. However, with the rise of masculinity studies and its inclusion as part of gender studies, I believe an analysis of these issues will add to the gender discussion of Anaya's novels, illuminating new ways of looking at his work and enhancing previous critical scholarship. As an example of insightful criticism on masculinity issues within the tradition of magical realism and postcolonial writing, see Köhler.

who are men, as inevitably marked by their gender configuration.[4] The sense of loss and their fight for social justice are inextricably linked to the search for self-fulfilment, being all this clearly determined by the fact that they are "men" and, "as such," expected to socially function according to hegemonic ideals of manhood. This gendered organisation of society and the notion of hegemonic masculinity have been thoroughly theorised by Raewyn Connell, who analyses men as gendered social subjects within a matrix of power relationships that define their very sense of self.[5] Connell has pointed out that men's identity choices, allegiances and disengagement from specific roles or models of manhood function in relation to very specific ideals of masculinity populating the social imaginary. These masculine ideals work in terms of binaries, being either socially celebrated or rejected, and are shaped by specific discourses on race, ethnicity, class, sexuality and religion—to name a few—that measure the level of privilege and access to it that men enjoy. In this respect, men strive to embrace hegemonic ideals of masculinity that constitute what normative masculinity represents. Men who conform to a given pattern receive a greater social, economic and political privilege, independently of a wider range of choices available to them on a regular basis. However, as Connell has underlined, neither all men have access to that ideal nor can they fully perform it, since by definition, hegemonic masculinity is a standard of masculinity only available and "enjoyable" by a few. In effect, hegemonic masculinity is defined along normative discourses, and is therefore restricted to those men who fully comply with them, if this is ever possible.[6] In this regard, there are higher or lesser degrees of compliance and therefore, access to socio-economic privilege. This is part of the very workings of hegemony and hegemonic masculinity, since it represents an ideal that hardly any can embody, but as a disembodied ideal, it is a regulatory "tool" that grants or restricts access to those economic and political privileges for men in general. This implements a hierarchical distinction between hegemonic and non-hegemonic masculinities that perpetuates social inequality. Problems and anxiety arise when this performance of hegemonic masculinity is unsuccessful. My aim in this essay will be, therefore, to explore the tensions and problematisation of the standards of hegemonic masculinity that populate both texts, as well as to question the discursive and socio-economic contexts in which the characters function.

As inferred from above, gender issues permeate and are constitutive of social dynamics that intersect with other discourses that have a bearing on identity formation processes (cfr. Anzaldúa; Butler; Castillo; Sandoval. This intersectional

[4] For a gender-focused analysis of the novel see Robert K. Anderson.

[5] See Connell's *Gender and Power* for an early formulation of this idea, which has been a seminal concept in the study of masculinities world-wide. See also Connell and Messerschmidt for a recent discussion and revision of the concept in an attempt to elaborate on it, in light of the criticism that followed its initial formulation. Hondagneu-Sotelo and Messner's article about the "new man" and the Mexican immigrant man is also relevant to understand how the notion of "hegemonic masculinity" has been applied to the study of power relations among men from different ethnicities.

[6] For a detailed discussion of this issue see Connell's *Masculinities*, or *The Men and the Boys*.

approach is crucial for understanding Chicana/o writing as forged by and out of the tensions that emerge through Chicanas/os' non-hegemonic experiences and socio-political situation, which the characters confront and negotiate from multiple and self-contested positioning. The novels themselves work as discursive and textual arenas in which processes of identification and "disidentification" take place, and in which new identity practices can potentially emerge. In effect, *Bless Me, Ultima* and *Heart of Aztlan* portray the main characters' struggle to achieve and/or restore their manhood, and document their spiritual, mental and physical journey towards self-fulfilment. In this respect, *Bless Me, Ultima*, usually approached as a "bildungsroman," revolves around Antonio's rite of passage from childhood into adolescence in his way to adulthood.[7] As Angelika Köhler explains, Antonio's transition into adulthood is marked by the realisation of his hybrid condition which is also part of his parents' heritage. Even though "Anaya constructs his story of Antonio Márez on the basis of a binary opposition of indigenous and Western culture[,] [...] he dissolves this dichotomy by creating the boy's father and mother, the apparently competing elements, as incorporating a hybrid cultural heritage themselves" (Köhler 205). According to Köhler, this is the way in which Anaya transcends the limitations of the traditional western genre to suit a post-colonial and cross-ethnic/Chicano experience (Köhler 205).[8] Nevertheless, it is indeed the "hybrid" character of the novel that Marta Caminero-Santangelo finds problematic. In her opinion, this paradigm in the novel is rooted in the opposition between the Spanish/Mexican and the Anglo, which reduces the *indigenous* background to a subtext that is constantly overlooked. In Caminero-Santangelo's view, the fact that both parents adhere to either their Mexican or Spanish ancestry and favour them over their indigenous roots—embodied by Ultima and a few other characters—does little to recover and vindicate the indigenous element in Antonio's sense of self. This is problematic because it ultimately fails to make a powerful statement about Chicano/a identity politics and ends up reproducing Manichean identity practices that do not transgress a powerful/powerless dynamics. As a result, "the historical lesson embedded in the stories is about the parallels between Anglo and Spanish/Mexican colonization, but neither the people of Las Pasturas nor Antonio hear that lesson" (Caminero-Santangelo 122). What is more, it ultimately validates two frameworks of reference (Spanish and Mexican cultures) that have traditionally enjoyed privilege at the expense of racial and cultural "others."

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[7] For further discussion on the use of the "bildungsroman" in Chicano literature see Tomás Vraukó.

[8] Köhler further elaborates on this and adds that "in Mexican American cultural history, the experience of being confronted with the power of colonization has primarily developed from Chicano life in contemporary American society. Against this background, the Spanish, although the culture of the Western European conquerors, established a framework for identification as Chicanos/as which, as the Luna-Márez family demonstrates, easily mingles with indio heritage" (205). This destabilises and transcends the limitations of a genre that has mostly suited hegemonic experiences of identity politics.

However, what neither Köhler nor Caminero-Santangelo tackle in their respective analyses is the fact that Tony's process of "growing up Chicano" is clearly gendered: It is not only a matter of becoming an adult and abandoning the safety of the domestic realm, or negotiating ethnicity and vindicating different traditions. It is all of it at once in a process constantly defined in the novel as "becoming a man" (*Bless* 53), as being recognised as such by your peers (i.e. men in the family, friends etc), as well as achieving the respect and social validation this entails.

Anaya's work, set in the village of Guadalupe in New Mexico, engages in a discussion of tradition and gender relations through a seven-year-old character that apparently carries the very dichotomy of "the masculine" and "the feminine" in his own surname: Antonio Márez y Luna finds himself in the quandary of whether to follow his mum's dreams, firmly rooted in his potential future as a priest and spiritual guide of a Catholic farmer community (Lunas) or to fulfil his father's frustrated aspirations of a life in Las Pasturas as a "vaquero" with no strings attached, who would like for his son to move with him to California and work in the vineyards. Being a Luna or a Márez symbolises the ideals of masculinity at Tony's disposal to embrace and follow. This dilemma of the self and Tony's journey towards self-discovery are presented through his experiences and most symbolically, his dreams, at times prophetic, at times accounts of his past and present. Antonio's anxiety about his future as a man is introduced from the very beginning of the novel in a dream about his birth. In a ceremonial scene, Antonio says:

> Now the people who had waited patiently in the dark were allowed to come in [...] I recognized my mother's brothers, my uncles from El Puerto de los Lunas. They entered ceremoniously [...] This one will be a Luna, the old man said, he will be a farmer and keep our customs and traditions. Perhaps God will bless our family and make the baby a priest.
> And to show their hope they rubbed the dark earth of the river valley on the baby's forehead, and they surrounded the bed with the fruits of their harvest so the small room smelled of fresh green chile and corn, ripe apples and peaches, pumpkins and green beans.
> Then the silence was shattered with the thunder of hoof-beats; vaqueros surrounded the small house with shouts and gunshots, and when they entered the room they were laughing and singing and drinking.
> Gabriel, they shouted, you have a fine son! He will make a fine vaquero! And they smashed the fruits and vegetables that surrounded the bed and replaced them with a saddle, horse blankets, bottles of whiskey, a new rope, bridles, chapas, and an old guitar. And they rubbed the stain of earth from the baby's forehead because man was not to be tied to the earth but free upon it.
> These were the people of my father, the vaqueros of the llano. They were an exuberant, restless people, wandering across the ocean of the plain. (*Bless* 5)

Dreaming about his first gasps of life, Antonio becomes aware of the duality and the conflicting values inherent in his name, and that he will later identify as characteristic of his world. As Robert K. Anderson explains, this initial dream sets the tone of the novel as "[Tony] witnesses his birth and the consequential spirit of

contention between his parent's families as each unit seeks to guarantee—via its respective folk rituals- his future allegiance" (96). Tony is placed at a crossroad of either choosing one set of values over the other, or reconciling those values and transcend them. Undoubtedly, these competing principles permeate the divergent ideals of masculinity that the characters embody and/or negotiate, and which would serve to measure their compliance or deviation from traditional notions of "masculinity" and "femininity." The Márez, in Antonio's words, are men as restless as the sea, in constant movement, wandering around *las llanuras* and earning a living out of raising cattle. They are trustworthy, have a strong sense of honour and male bonding. However, they are men who value their independence above all. In effect, Tony's father is a descendant of "men of the sea, the Márez people, they were *conquistadores*, men whose freedom was unbounded" (*Bless* 23). As a "conquistador," Gabriel, Antonio's father, learned how to be a man by "conquering" "el llano," as he declares:

> A man cannot struggle against his own fate. In my own day we were given no schooling [...] Me, my father gave me a saddle blanket and a wild pony when I was ten. There is your life, he said, and he pointed to the llano. So the llano was my school, it was my teacher, it was my first love— [...] Ay, but those were beautiful years [...] The llano was still virgin, there was grass as high as the stirrups of a grown horse, there was rain—and then the tejano came and built his fences, the railroad came, the roads—it was like a bad wave of the ocean covering all that was good." (*Bless* 51)

This extract echoes the masculine ideals of the interior frontier man and the "vaquero." As Alberto Varón and Michael Kimmel have discussed, the attraction towards the "unknown" and the desire to control nature characterised these and similar models of masculinity, which populated 19th-century American culture and played a key role in U.S. expansionist politics to the West. However, this fragment also evokes the same idea of "conquest" that Amerindian territories experienced in the 15th century. Spanish conquistadores' craving for the unknown, the undiscovered, the "virgin" lands of the far away world parallels the Márez's desire to explore, to run free, to "conquer" the llano. Therefore, masculinity is measured against nature and its wilderness: Mastering and taming it is part of the process of growing up into a man, and becoming a successful one. On the contrary, the Lunas are people from the earth, working and sowing the land in perfect harmony with Nature and the universe, having solid roots, scarce words but a great sensitivity. As said in the novel, "it is the blood of the Lunas to be quiet, for only a quiet man can learn the secrets of the earth that are necessary for planting—They are quite like the moon—And it is the blood of the Márez to be wild, like the ocean from which they take their name, and the spaces of the llano that have become their home" (*Bless* 38). As Tony explains, "the men of the llano were men of the sun. The men of the farms along the river were men of the moon" (*Bless* 25). According to Anderson, Köhler and Lamadrid, the archetypal and symbolic level of the novel, rooted in Manichean categories of masculine-feminine, catholic-indigenous, good-evil, right-wrong etc., call into question the way Western societies are organised while simultaneously

highlighting the intrinsic problems to being "interstitial" and "mestizo," which are defined according to the less privileged element of the binary.

In addition, Tony's father also symbolises the sense of loss and displacement (both mental and spiritual) that seems to grow in Anaya's male characters at this early stage of his career. In a similar fashion as in *Heart of Aztlan*, the head of the family experiences intense alienation when he cannot relate to the elements that have traditionally defined his masculinity. In the case of *Bless Me, Ultima*, it is life in "el llano," which needs to be abandoned for the sake of marriage and raising a family. In Tony's words:

> My father worked half a day on Saturdays at the highway and so in the afternoon he drank with his friends at the Lopnghorn Saloon in town. If he drank too much he came home a bitter man, then he was at war with everyone. He cursed the weak-willed men of the town who did not understand the freedom a man of the llano must have, and he cursed the war for taking his sons away. And if there was very much anger in him he cursed my mother because she was the daughter of farmers and it was she who kept him shackled to one piece of land. (*Bless* 26)

Although Tony's father controls a sphere of power as a provider and head of the family, thus enjoying recognition among his peers, his masculinity is rearticulated as non-hegemonic and subordinated when he becomes a blue-collar worker in the monstrous American economic grinding. This also rings true of *Heart of Aztlan* (1976), in which Clemente witnesses his own psychological, spiritual and physical deterioration after moving from his rural home town to the barrio of Barelas, in Alburquerque. Anaya's second novel continues the discussion of masculinity and gender politics begun in *Bless Me, Ultima* by displaying a wider network of male characters who experience intense anxiety when having to negotiate their position and privilege—as *men-* in society. If *Bless Me, Ultima* conveys the beauty of "el llano," "las pastures" and its lyricism, as well as the negotiation of old and new values in the face of industrial changes, *Heart of Aztlan* explores and tackles the perils of city and barrio life, which is swiped away by the exploitation of the Mexican American workers in the factories (the shops) and stirred by the "pachuco" culture of the 1940s and 1950s border cities.

Bless Me, Ultima, reflects on the meaning of life, the trials and tribulations of being Chicano and becoming a man amidst socio-economic changes, conflicting faiths and cultural traditions. In addition to this, *Heart of Aztlan* deals in detail with the disintegration of the Chicano nuclear family, as well as the challenge of growing up Chicano and Chicana in an urban environment in which gender identities are constantly redefined and "resituated." The brutal impact that city life has on the Chavez family (notice here the allusion to Cesar Chavez as leader of the United Farm Workers) badly strikes its men, who seem to go adrift in a world where steel has replaced land, the claustrophobic factories have overshadowed the openness of "el llano," and the lawless streets have driven away the simplicity of "pueblo" life. It is at this particular crossroad that the family structure and gender dynamics are to be reconfigured and reshuffled. As such, Clemente Chavez, the head of the fam-

ily, falls apart when he realises that everything that has given meaning to his life is at a loss. In a way that recalls María Amparo Ruiz de Burton's *The Squatter and the Don*, and its narration of land dispossession after the Mexican American War (1845-1848) (cfr. Aranda), the opening pages of *Heart of Azlan* portray the crisis experienced in the rural areas after World War II, which forced farmers to sell their lands and relocate to the cities for survival. This moment is conveyed in the novel in great detail, emphasising the transcendence and the impact it will have on the lives of the family members. It also projects a notion of masculinity as intimately tied to the earth and its rhythms, which nurtures a sense of manhood both in Anaya and Ruiz de Burton's work.[9] In Clemente's words

> "There is no justice in dealing in land," Clemente shook his head. "You offer me Judas money for my three acres, for a home I built from this very earth with my bare hands, for a well basted a foot at a time out of the hard earth so that I might have water for the jardín and the animals—You offer me nothing, just enough to pay off my debts [...] When I sell my land I will be cast adrift, there will be no place left to return to, no home to come back to." (*Heart* 3)

Land works as a metaphor for belonging, for a way of life related to traditional values, and in the case of *Heart of Azlan* and *Bless Me, Ultima*—and the same with Ruiz de Burton—to a patriarchal organisation of society. The land represents a paradigm that has traditionally defined masculinity as trustworthy, reliable, solid, down to earth, enduring and strong, and linked to the role of breadwinner. In effect:

> [Clemente's] soul and his heart were in the earth, and he knew that when he signed he would be cutting the strings of that attachment. It was like setting adrift on an unknown, uncharted ocean [...] He looked at his sons and knew there would be nothing left to pass on to them. Without the land the relationship a man created with the earth would be lost, old customs and traditions would fall by the wayside, and they would be like wandering gypsies without a homeland where they might anchor their spirit. But he had to go because there was no work in Guadalupe, and because he had to be the leader in helping to create a new future for his familia. (*Heart* 3-4)

[9] In the case of Ruiz de Burton, I have explained elsewhere how land plays a central role in the development and reconfiguration of masculinity politics in the novel, which are intimately connected to the socio-economic hegemonic order implemented in the U.S. over the 19th century. In this respect, "land [...] works as a metaphor for manhood, as both characters' masculinities, William Darrell's and Don Mariano's are dependent on it. The former claims land in order to provide for his family, earn his living and be economically independent, which would eventually prove his manhood, measured by his breadwinner role and his capacity to successfully work the land (thus working/crafting his masculinity). The latter was dependent on the land he has inherited (which bear witness to his individual and collective history); in his capacity to keep and enrich it rests the survival of his family and their way of life" (1240-1241).

Land stands as a witness to the history of those men who worked it and bears the memory of peoples, as it also happens in *Bless Me, Ultima*. Once being sold for capitalist purposes, men feel dispossessed, adrift, as Clemente says, overwhelmed by the sense of being uprooted and "unrooted," which will shape the construction of masculinity and gender in the novel. Still, Clemente experiences a "descend to the underworld" soon after his arrival in Barelas, whose pace and values he finds strange and alien. In addition, working in the railroad neither allows him to gain pride in his work nor to be valued for it, since he is considered another faceless worker. Traditional spheres for Clemente's notion of manhood, such as work and the family unit, seem to "fail" the Mexican American man, who is at the expenses of unions and the interests of the capital. Accordingly Clemente feels that

> Somehow he had lost command over his life and destiny [...] A world he once ruled had suddenly slipped away from him, and a wedge had been driven between himself and his family. First he blamed the city and the alienation he felt in it, and he cursed the politics of the shops which were splitting the men into different camps, and tonight he lashed out against his wife [...] He saw her plotting with the forces that were set on destroying his position as head of the family. She had grown stronger since their arrival in the city, while he had grown weaker. She was now in control of the finances of the family, and he had to beg or steal from her just to buy a drink [...] Maybe he had been too weak; he had to rule with an iron hand. He would make the rules, and they would obey! For a moment he felt a surge of *power* [my emphasis] fill his body [...] [h]e would control again, he would rule again! (*Heart* 74)

Like Gabriel in *Bless Me, Ultima*, Clemente resents his wife and family for the alienation he experiences in the new social environment. To his eyes, they are the reason why he abandoned rural life and with it, the environment that gave meaning to his identity. Since "the process of becoming a man is a process of striving for power" (Hurtado 94), Clemente's identity/masculinity crisis is connected to a wider crisis of the gender order which destabilises his *power* to *rule* within and outside the private sphere. This is aggravated by the fact that he loses his job after confronting the corruption of the workers' union, which has an impact on his role as breadwinner and head of the family. In addition, this adds to his loss of "authority" over his wife and daughters, who become increasingly anglicised and economically independent, as well as the real family providers. Nevertheless, Clemente regains his manhood by becoming the head of a bigger family and the leader of the workers. As stated in the novel "[t]the familia without a strong father soon falls apart, and [...] a pueblo without a good leader is not united in its effort to serve the people, and a country without a good, strong man to guide it is soon overrun by its enemies" (*Heart* 83). In effect, after a cathartic moment in the novel in which Clemente dreams of Aztlan and journeying to its very heart, he becomes the spiritual and political leader of his community. In so doing, he leads them in face of poverty, unemployment, exploitation and discrimination in a similar fashion to Cesar Chavez and the United Farm Workers. Therefore, there is an identification of the community with the nuclear family, an idea that was strongly celebrated by the Chicano Movement. The novel

also makes a statement in defence of civil rights, highlighting the fight against racism and class discrimination that the Movement sought. Therefore, Clemente's masculinity is "healed" and transformed by his political and social activism, as well as his sense of responsibility and pride in his cultural roots. In effect, Clemente's strong moral values, which are clearly identified as those of "el llano," are the ones that will stand in face of racial and class abuse. Indeed, it is his role as political and spiritual leader of the community which will help him regain his position as father and head of the family.

Bearing this in mind, it is necessary to ponder on whether Anaya's novels actually transgress hegemonic ideals of masculinity and whether they work towards a reconfiguration of gender relations in non-heterosexist grounds. In the case of *Bless Me, Ultima*, the dichotomy between sun and moon, which in appearance looks as "male and female," seems to be at odds throughout the novel, but apparently comes to a resolution in Tony with the help of Ultima, a "curandera" who moves with Tony's family in her old age and will help the child to understand the following truth

> [t]he sweet water of the moon which falls as rain is the same water that gathers into rivers and flows to fill the seas. Without the waters of the moon to replenish the oceans there would be no oceans. And the same salt waters of the oceans are drawn by the sun to the heavens, and in turn become again the waters of the moon [...] The waters are one, Antonio [...] You have been seeing only parts, she finished, and not looking beyond into the great cycle that binds us all. (*Bless* 113)

In gender terms, this passage may work as a metaphor for more fluid notions of gender identities, which set aside polarised visions of gender (e.g. Márez and Lunas, the sun and the moon) and advocate for a more balanced and inclusive vision of masculinity. The connection between the moon and sea waters represents the relationality of gender, the fact that both masculinity and femininity are interdependent and involved in a constant process of redefinition.[10] Since "the waters are one" (*Bless* 113), what has been traditionally associated as masculine or feminine comes to be presented as part of both, thus dismantling the naturalisation of gender dichotomies according to heterosexist practices. Gender can be negotiated, making gender identities more egalitarian and integrative of each other. Values traditionally defined as masculine and/or feminine should be cultivated by both genders, such as the Lunas' nurturing of the land, and the Márez's freedom of mind. As Antonio's father explains, "Ay, every generation, every man is a part of his past. He cannot escape it, but he may reform the old materials, make something new" (*Bless* 237). Therefore, the novel seems to point to the need of finding and cultivating a new

[10] In fact, without this understanding of gender in such terms, men and women are destined to be stagnated in polarised gender identities and subject positions that will impair the existence of more egalitarian gender practices. This is illustrated by Antonio's parents and their relationship, as well as the gender dynamics reproduced in the family unit. Both Gabriel and María seem to be at odds, inhabiting very different worlds and spheres and lacking any deep understanding of each other.

masculinity, connected to the past but free to grow into a more just and hopeful future by nurturing this process in the present.

However, it should also be questioned the extent to which the novel pays heed to Ultima's words. If gender relationality and a new sense of manhood are advocated, it should be questioned whether the novel conveys such a reflection in Antonio as a character. Even the description of Lunas and Márez as patterns of masculinity along the lines of traditional gender ideals seems to be further obscured from the moment in which *los Lunas*, by association with the feminine and priesthood, are dismissed by Gabriel and his three oldest sons as embodying an invalid ideal of masculinity.[11] The supposed connection with "feminine" values potentially makes that form of masculinity an alternative to more ossified ideals, but the fact that the Lunas are described as a patriarchal family, in which women are nearly absent and/or silent, and decision making processes are carried out by men, actually reveal that what seemed a more flexible standard of masculinity, relies, in the end, on polarised gender dynamics that end up reinforcing heterosexism and patriarchy.[12] The fact that Antonio realises that "I was growing up and becoming a man and suddenly I realized that I could make decisions" (*Bless* 72) stands as one of the most important defining traits of hegemonic masculinity in the novel, a characteristic that defines both Lunas and Márez alike, despite other differences. This idea is confirmed at the end of the novel, when Antonio orders his own mother to take her sisters indoors after Ultima's death. "'Take them to their room,' I said to my mother. It was the first time I had ever spoken to my mother as a man; she nodded and obeyed" (*Bless* 246). Antonio's words are recognised as bearing authority and the mother's reaction further legitimates that. As a result, his transition into a heterosexist notion of manhood is completed.

Therefore, although both novels reflect a crisis and a revaluation of normative standards of masculinity for the Chicano community, the characters seem to embrace values that rely on ossified notions of gender. In truth, *Bless Me, Ultima* and *Heart of Aztlan* advocate masculinity ideals that respond to heterosexist hegemonic orders, with a clear distinction between "the masculine" and "the feminine." Even though

[11] Indeed, Tony's three brothers yet represent other models of Chicano masculinity that rely on assimilation into Anglo culture and the American dream. As Debra A. Black has pointed out, "it is clear that after experiencing the Anglo world at large, the brothers reject the old ways of their culture. Not only do they not intend to become part of an extended family, with their plans to move to Denver, San Francisco, Santa Fe, Las Vegas, or Albuquerque (62), they also reject their father in several important ways" (148). In effect, the novel points to this betrayal of the father figure when the three brothers decide to leave and make a life away from home, leaving their father alone with his dreams of moving to California together to work in the fields. As the novel points out, "the restlessness of his [the father's] blood had destroyed his dream, defeated him" (*Ultima* 67).

[12] See Debra A. Black work for a discussion of gender roles in Anaya's work. In addition, Köhler also points out that "Anaya establishes a binary opposition of social values derived from biological sex [...] The author does not challenge gender stereotypes; on the contrary, he emphasizes that dichotomy by asserting goodness with the Lunas, the feminine, and evil with the Márez, the masculine" (203).

both novels successfully capture the "readjustment" that male characters undergo when moving to a different geographical region (*Heart*) or to new linguistic and cultural spaces (*Bless*), that process culminates in a repositioning of men in spheres of power and a celebration of the same values of yore.

In conclusion, neither *Bless Me, Ultima* nor *Heart of Aztlan* put forward a new type of man who would question himself as such and articulate a more egalitarian, just and transformative gender identity in terms of standpoints and life choices. Even though both novels have the potential to flesh out characters that would perform non-hegemonic masculinities, they end up reinforcing and privileging male authority over other social subjects as leaders of the family and the community at large. We will have to wait, until the 1990s and the early days of the 21st century for Chicano/a writing to timidly but unapologetically produce male characters that can actually take the pulse of Chicana feminist thought and subvert heterosexist masculinity performances in Chicano culture.

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MISCELLANY

FORETELLING DARWINISM, REVISING RACE: POE'S SCIENTIFIC DISCOURSE IN "THE MURDERS IN THE RUE MORGUE"

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Abstract

Having recently celebrated the bicentenary of Edgar Allan Poe's birth, his tales still remain an invaluable source of ongoing interpretation. The first tale that conforms his detective trilogy, "The Murders in the Rue Morgue", has been analysed from multiple perpectives, especially taking into consideration the discourse of race as a main focus of attention. Nonetheless, detective Auguste Dupin's references to Georges Cuvier, an important pre-Darwinian French naturalist and zoologist, have often been unnoticed. This article aims at identifying pre-Darwinian concepts about selection and evolution in Poe's tale so as to facilitate readings of the tale in relation to Darwinism and evolutionary theories.

Key words: Edgar Allan Poe, Georges Cuvier, Charles Darwin, race, evolution, detective fiction.

Resumen

Habiéndose celebrado el bicentenario del nacimiento de Edgar Allan Poe recientemente, sus relatos siguen siendo un valioso recurso de incesante interpretación. El primer relato que conforma su trilogía detectivesca, "Los crímenes de la calle Morgue", ha sido analizado desde múltiples perspectivas, especialmente tomando en consideración el discurso de la raza como mayor foco de atención. Sin embargo, las alusiones que el detective Auguste Dupin hace a Georges Cuvier, un importante naturalista y zoólogo francés, precursor de Charles Darwin, a menudo han pasado desapercibidas. Este artículo pretende identificar conceptos precursores del darwinismo sobre la selección y evolución en el relato de Poe con el objetivo de facilitar interpretaciones del relato en relación al darwinismo y las teorías evolutivas.

Palabras clave: Edgar Allan Poe, Georges Cuvier, Charles Darwin, raza, evolución, novela de detectives.

Drawing on Toni Morrison's claim that "no early American writer is more important to the concept of American Africanism than Poe" (32), J. Gerald Kennedy's and Liliane Weissberg's seminal volume *Romancing the Shadow: Poe and Race* (2001) widely explored the cultural discourse of race in Poe's tales as a reflection

of antebellum America. Even if born in Boston, Poe lived in Richmond, Virginia, a southern state, for an extended period of his life, thus imbibing the surrounding perceptions towards race and racism. Critics such as Elise Lemire have referred to the general belief acknowledged in manuals and journals of the time whereby whites considered blacks to be more closely related to primates than themselves. In this respect, the pivotal presence of the ourang-outang in Poe's tale "The Murders in the Rue Morgue" has frequently and metaphorically been read as the epitome of race disrupting the order that Dupin manages to re-establish again at the end of the story.

Nonetheless, even if the tale reflects cultural perceptions of race at the time, it is important not to lose sight of Dupin's reference to the French naturalist Frederick Cuvier and his descriptive account of the primate of the East Indian Islands. Cuvier's volume is one of the many pre-Darwinian natural manuals of European origins to which the American readership had access. It is meaningful to notice that this tale has often been interpreted as the disrupture of the black race in America, as Elise Lemire notices, when the actions take place in a European environment and reassess European conceptions of the chain of beings prior to Charles Darwin. After all, the simian in Poe's story imitates its owner and even escapes from a locked closet to do so; an exhibit that may have urged readers to notice any similarities between monkeys and humans. Even if many interpretations of the story have been based on Freudian premises and the return of the repressed, taking Marie Bonaparte as a case in point, the figure of the ourang-outang may also be envisioned at a more literal level. Simians seemed to confirm the animal kingdom was hierarchical and continuous, so that monkeys began to be viewed as the missing link between humans and animals. In this respect, this article aims at reassessing critical studies of race and detect pre-Darwinian ideas about selection and evolution in Poe's tale after recently celebrating the bicentenary of both Edgar Allan Poe and Charles Darwin in 2009.

In 1839, two years before publishing his first detective story, "The Murders in the Rue Morgue," Poe issued an illustrated textbook on conchology under the title *The Conchologist's First Book; or, A System of Testaceous Malacology*. Even though the book was printed under Poe's name, the actual author was Thomas Wyatt, an English lecturer, who had written the original textbook entitled *Manual of Conchology*. Poe only wrote the preface and the introduction, and yet, it was agreed he would lend his name as the author of the book. Wyatt's volume had already been published by Harper and Brothers in an extended and richly illustrated edition that was remarkably expensive for young students of conchology, so that Wyatt decided to issue a cheaper edition. However, Harper and Brothers were reluctant to publish a second edition that would compete with sales of their first publication. As a matter of fact, they decided to include Poe as the author of this second edition to avoid copyright problems with the original book, and ease its circulation in the literary market, believing Poe's name would aid in popularising the book. Likewise, as Silverman asserts, Wyatt agreed to allow Poe's authorship because "he [Poe] needed money very sorely at the time" (138).

Even though Poe was not the actual author of the book, he introduced important changes in Wyatt's volume. In addition to editing and organising the

volume, he also created a new classification which differed from Wyatt's taxonomy, and contributed significantly to simplifying and condensing the original work. Nonetheless, for the purpose of this article, Poe's most important contribution in relation to Wyatt's manual was his translation of Georges Cuvier's passages from French into English. Wyatt's original volume included some excerpts written by the French naturalist and zoologist Georges Cuvier. Poe was fluent in French, and used his linguistic skills to analyse and translate Cuvier's scientific classification schemes with special regard to his accounts of animals. In this respect, as Stephen Jay Gould has noticed, Poe contributed significantly to simplifying and popularising scientific methodologies of analysis and arrangement in 19th-century America, thus introducing Wyatt's and Cuvier's manuals on natural history in the United States. As Alan Marcus contends, drawing on European precedents, the early history of science in America was dominated by two main issues: the first focused on individuals who were identified as great men and asked how they had reasoned when they achieved their greatness; the second concentrated on current knowledge and determined the relevant steps to be taken in the march that led to a particular enlightenment (334).

Poe's task as an editor and translator of Wyatt's book may have also exerted an important influence on his ideas about detection, and above all, the analytical skills for which his detective Dupin would be remembered ever after. Actually, Dupin unravels the puzzle of the murders in the Rue Morgue through explicit references to the French naturalist. When the perplexed narrator feels incapable of solving the deaths of Madame L'Espanaye and her daughter Camille, Dupin advises him to read a passage from Cuvier which he describes as follows:

> It was a minute anatomical and generally descriptive account of the large fulvous Ourang-Outang of the East Indian Islands. The gigantic stature, the prodigious strength and activity, the wild ferocity, and the imitative propensities of these mammalian are sufficiently well-known to all. I understood the full horrors of the murder at once. (Poe, *Portable* 367)

Thus, not only did Poe include an explicit reference to Georges Cuvier in his first detective tale, but it is also implied Dupin manages to solve the puzzle due to Cuvier's enlightening account of a simian. Poe studied and analysed Cuvier's theories to edit a second edition of Wyatt's original volume, and taking into consideration Poe's allusion to Cuvier's work in his tale, he may have also become an admirer of his theories.

Georges Cuvier, of humble origins, was a highly-respected self-made scholar, and due to his scientific contributions as a naturalist and zoologist, he became a major figure in natural science in the early 19th century. Even though Charles Darwin's theories have demeaned his contribution, Cuvier is still nowadays especially acknowledged for establishing the field of palaeontology by comparing living animals with fossils, thus proving that species become extinct in the course of time. Until Cuvier's theory in 1796, it was believed no species of animals became extinct because God's perfect creation could not allow any creature to disappear. Moreover, two years later, Cuvier would establish the principle of correlation of parts, which bears

a remarkably close resemblance with Dupin's method of analysis. In this respect, Cuvier described this principle in the following terms:

> Today comparative anatomy has reached such a point of perfection that, after inspecting a single bone, one can determine the class, and sometimes even the genus of the animal to which it belonged, above all if that bone belonged to the head or the limbs. [...] This is because the number, direction, and shape of the bones that compose each part of an animal's body are always in a necessary relation to all the other parts, in such a way that—up to a point—one can infer the whole from any of them and vice versa.

Cuvier thus contended that all parts of a being are necessarily connected to one another, and through the gathering of individual parts, it becomes possible to infer the wholeness of any being. Consequently, he concluded that no part of any being could be modified in isolation from the rest of its parts. Cuvier was critical of the gradualistic theories of evolution proposed by his contemporary Lamarck, which would ultimately end in Darwin's theory of evolution by natural selection and which involved the gradual transformation of one form into another. Instead, Cuvier argued that one fossil does not gradually change into a succeeding distinct fossil, but rather, a typical form appears abruptly and remains unchanged until its extinction. Cuvier was thus a creationist rather than an evolutionist, arguing that new types abruptly replace older ones in the fossil records, thus rejecting evolution takes place through slow changes in progress.

However, Cuvier's theories about extinction, the correlation of all parts to create a whole being, and his ideas of replacement of old species by new ones remained important contributions to the field prior to Darwin's theory of evolution. In the early 19th century, when Cuvier was a reputed naturalist, Darwin was merely a young student, and so was Poe, born in the same year. Even though Darwin did not publish his *Origin of Species* until 1859, he set on the journey to the Galapagos Island, which would prove decisive for his theories, in 1835, and published his initial findings in his volume *The Voyage of the Beagle* in 1839, that is, the very same year Poe published *The Conchologist's First Book* in America, with numerous references to Georges Cuvier.

Through Cuvier, Poe became acquainted with scientific reasoning and taxonomy, thus adopting a method of analysis that he would apply not only to his detective stories, but also to his particular way of conceptualising his craft and artistry. As he would later show in "The Philosophy of Composition", he was well aware of his creative method and the way to proceed in his writing to achieve the ultimate effect: "[n]othing is more clear than that every plot, worth the name, must be elaborated to its *dénouement* before anything be attempted with the pen" (*Portable* 549-550). Thus, it is only with a view to its final result that all actions in the tale should be considered beforehand, echoing Cuvier's thesis arguing that all parts of a being must be connected to one another. Drawing on Poe's scientific reasoning, the final effect of "The Murders in the Rue Morgue" is brought to light through Cuvier's passage on the wild and imitative nature of the East Indian simian and thus his work on comparative anatomy, *Leçons d'anatomie comparée*, published in

1800. Consequently, aware of this final effect from the beginning of the tale, it is possible to identify Dupin's, and thus, Poe's, methods of reasoning, which resemble some of Cuvier's theories.

In "The Murders in the Rue Morgue," the narrator widely discusses and praises the analytical method of the player in a game of draughts. Echoing Cuvier's principle of correlation of parts, which preaches each part of a body is in necessary relation to the rest, the narrator contends that each detail matters to the player, so that he is supposed to remain attentive and observant all through the game. Deprived of other resources, the analyst must identify himself with his opponent so as to anticipate his moves. Consequently, all chain of events taking place during the game is important for the analyst who observes and makes inferences until he manages to solve the puzzle. In this respect, as the narrator in the tale contends:

> The first two or three rounds having been played, he [the analyst] is in full possession of the contents of each hand, and thence-forward puts down his cards with as absolute a precision of purpose as if the rest of the party had turned outward the faces of their own. (Poe, *Portable* 335-336)

Likewise, in a game of draughts all moves are unique and have little variation, so that any advantage obtained must be due to a "strong exertion of the intellect" (Poe, *Portable* 334), which ultimately ends with the analyst's success, and his opponents' complete bafflement. In this respect, during the game, the analyst's powers of mind decode any change effected by the rest of players, indulging in a combination of observation and inference, until he is able to identify their procedure, and thus foretell their moves in advance. In clear analogy with Cuvier's creationist principles, those which claimed new species of fossils came into being abruptly, all players' moves take place suddenly and can only be retrieved by the analyst's superior intellect, which ultimately echoes Darwin's natural selection of the survival of the fittest. In this respect, the narrator's description of the analyst's procedure to observe, detect, anticipate his opponents' moves and take action seems to foretell Darwin's description in *The Origin of Species*:

> It may metaphorically be said that natural selection is daily and hourly scrutinising, throughout the world, every variation, even the slightest; rejecting that which is bad, preserving and adding up all that is good; silently and insensibly working, whenever and wherever opportunity offers, at the improvement of each organic being in relation to its organic and inorganic conditions of life. (70)

Similarly, the player observes each opponent, and carefully selects his moves accordingly, just as the detective observes each clue until the puzzle is deciphered. In this respect, the narrator's long introduction to the analyst's capacities of observation and inference when playing draughts also foretells Dupin's powers of reasoning later on in the tale. Thus, just as the player decodes his opponents' moves to win the game, Dupin's analytical method unravels the course of the narrator's thoughts. Through his observance and the associative workings of memory, Dupin manages to guess the narrator's mental moves by providing different links. Actu-

ally, Dupin mentions "the larger links of the chain run thus—Chantilly, Orion, Dr. Nichols, Epicurus, Stereotomy, the street stones, the fruiterer" (Poe, *Portable* 340). Dupin's explicit allusion to the links of the narrator's mental chain seems to foretell the evolution of the chain of beings, just as the narrator's thoughts evolve through association, through linking one event to another until its final resolution. In this respect, Poe establishes a parallelism between the analyst's course of thoughts, the player's observance in a game of draughts, and ultimately, the writer's procedure to create a text. Resembling a player of draughts, Dupin manages to retrace and re-enact the narrator's chain of events to guess his present thoughts. Furthermore, the narrator will echo Poe's procedures to write the tale, so that this process is repeated and reverberates ever after. The player, Dupin, the narrator, and by extension, Poe himself, observe, select, infer and act accordingly. They are all aware of the evolution of thought until its final resolution so that they never act until they have mentally gone through the whole procedure, thus employing an inductive method of analysis.

Dupin's analytical method is based on the observance of meaningful details, which he associates to create a chain of links that brings forward the solution of the puzzle. Nonetheless, in addition to these details, Dupin's creativity and imagination is also demanded. In this respect, the narrator mentions Dupin was a double character, as he was as resolute as creative. Dupin's bi-part soul, as the narrator mentions, also echoes Cuvier's theories as he argued all parts of a being are correlated, but chance is also necessary to ensure modification, and ultimately, evolution, as Darwin would prove. Darwin would contend natural selection, which takes place gradually and unavoidably, was responsible for the improvement and the evolution of species. In this sense, Dupin carefully selects details such as the criminal's undistinguishable voice, or the nail from the window, establishing an analogy between the course of his thoughts and that of natural selection. He actually mentions his deductions may "engender a suspicion which should give direction to all farther progress in the investigation" (Poe, *Portable* 357), and similarly, he also states "there was no flaw in any link of the chain" (Poe, *Portable* 360). This particular use of the language and his constant allusion to Dupin's analytical methods betray Poe's readings as regards the scientific method, as well as Cuvier's correlation of parts and views on evolution.

When Poe edited *The Conchologist's First Book*, he translated Cuvier's accounts of animals, among which there was an explicit reference to the East Indian simian that would later appear in Poe's tale. In his research, Cuvier mainly focused on a comparative analysis between the skeletons of living animals and fossils of extinct animals, to identify their similarities and provide a classification of the animal kingdom. Nonetheless, Cuvier rejected any gradual transformation of one form into another, as Lamarck and Darwin would later propose. Instead, Cuvier believed a particular type or species made an abrupt appearance in an environment, mainly through immigration, not creation. These theories bear a close resemblance with the simian's violent and sudden appearance in Madame L'Espanaye's chamber. Brought to France by a sailor, the simian has been removed from his natural environment, and escapes his master's dwellings. His innocent but wild nature is remindful of

the noble savage, especially taking into consideration Poe's personifying traits so as to describe the primate. Poe was well aware of the 'imitative propensities' of simians, as Cuvier claimed in his book, and accordingly, as the tale unfolds, the simian imitates his master's habit of shaving by "flourishing the razor" (Poe, *Portable* 374) over Madame L'Espanaye's face, and ultimately, killing her unwillingly.

The simian in Poe's tale has been the object of manifold interpretations, which have often ignored a more literal reading of his character. In her early psychoanalytical accounts, Marie Bonaparte interpreted the simian's murder of Madame L'Espanaye as the contemplation of the primal scene, thus associating the simian with the furious workings of nature and life-force. Thus, the simian impersonates the return of the repressed to disturb and destroy the order established. Much attention has also been paid to the simian's human-like features. His ability to imitate his master, as well as his need to conceal his murder as a result of fear and guilt, endow him with some personality of his own. In this respect, Cuvier's and Poe's depiction of the East Indian simian is not entirely different from the historical account of many of the African-American slaves living in Richmond, where Poe resided for many years. As Elise Lemire contends, manuals and journals of the time considered black people to be closely related to primates, and accordingly, the parallelism between primates and slaves led Elise Lemire to interpret the simian's murder as a scene of interracial sex. Poe was arguably aware of the notions of racial hierarchy in his lifetime as he lived in a slave society. Likewise, as Lindon Barrett noticed, Dana Nelson, in *The World in Black and White* (1993), already referred to the everlasting controversy whether Poe held pro- or anti-slavery sentiments. And yet, even though the parallelism established between primates and slaves during Poe's time has been widely acknowledged so as to interpret his tale, Cuvier's influence on Poe has often been disregarded.

After all, Poe had translated Cuvier's theories to include them in his *Conchologist's First Book* only two years before he published "The Murders in the Rue Morgue," and Dupin explicitly refers to Cuvier's accounts of the East Indian primate. Moreover, Cuvier's principle of the correlate parts reverberates along Poe's tale, especially through the narrator's depiction of the analyst's method, and Dupin's powers of reasoning and deduction. In this respect, Dupin's continuous reference to the links in a chain, while gathering all the clues, so as to reach the end of his process, bears a close resemblance with evolution, thus establishing a parallelism between Dupin's inductive method and Cuvier's scientific scheme. Dupin scrutinises and categorises all the witnesses, providing an accurate description of all of them, not unlike Cuvier's classification of species. Moreover, Cuvier's theory about the abrupt appearance of a new species due to immigration echoes the simian's disruptive presence in Madame L'Espanaye's chamber, once he is removed from his natural environment.

Even though Cuvier did not share Lamarck's views on evolutionary theories that would ultimately lead to Darwin's theory, his status as a naturalist and zoologist was never argued at the time. However, Poe's tale surprisingly even goes beyond to foretell Lamarck's, and later, Darwin's theory of evolution. In this respect, the sailor's simian is only brought on stage after Dupin's explicit reference through Cuvier's manual. Thus, the ourang-outang appears as the missing link of Dupin's

chain to solve the puzzle. The order established in the French quarter where Madame L'Espanaye and her daughter live is disrupted by a simian whose attributes are remarkably human-like. These women's inability or unwillingness to reproduce, and thus evolve and improve, is counteracted by the simian as a personification of the life-force. In this respect, as an unexpected predecessor of their own species, the simian punishes these women's for their stagnant state, while Dupin, like a scientist, echoing Cuvier's own procedure, observes the scene, takes notes, and presents his theory to solve the puzzle.

Moreover, taking into consideration Dupin's resoluteness and creativity, his inductive method appears not far removed from Poe's own systematic craft as a writer. Poe's personal interpretation of the evolutionary theories can also be perceived in his creative process as depicted in "The Philosophy of Composition." Actually, as Van Doren already pointed out, "Poe is trying here to apply the same faculties he used in deciphering a cryptogram or in working out a solution of the Mary Rogers murder case to explain the processes of artistic creation" (548). To conclude, it is thus possible to establish a parallelism between Cuvier's scientific discourse in natural history, and Dupin's inductive method which, all together, echo Poe's concern about analysis and effect. Poe felt the need to retrace the steps he had followed when creating a story so that each action would contribute to echoing its final resolution. Poe had his own theory of evolution which surprisingly echoed Cuvier's theories and foretold Darwin's theory in *The Origin of Species*, which would finally come to light almost two decades after Poe's publication of "The Murders in the Rue Morgue." In this respect, Poe's translation of the French naturalist's theories to edit *The Conchologist's First Book* was crucial to develop his scientific method and his concern about analysis. Likewise, as Poe's own double, Dupin, exemplified the cautious and rigorous methodologies of the scientist. Hence, "The Murders in the Rue Morgue" should not only be regarded as Poe's first detective tale but also as a meaningful display of Poe's scientific method which would later portray in "The Philosophy of Composition," thus determining his creative artistry ever after. After all, as a contemporary biographer, Peter Ackroyd, claims, Poe often confessed the power of his studies precisely lay in their "air of method."

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THE FUNCTIONAL STRUCTURE OF THE SENTENCE: EVIDENCE FROM NON-FINITE CLAUSES

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Abstract

Non-finite clauses are sentential constituents with a verbal head that lacks a morphological specification for tense and agreement. In this paper I contend that these clauses are defective not only morphologically but also syntactically, in the sense that they all lack some of the functional categories that make up a full sentence. In particular I argue that *to*-infinitive clauses, gerund(ive) clauses and participial clauses differ among themselves, and with respect to other subordinate clauses, in the degree of structural defectiveness they display, which goes from the almost complete functional structure of the infinitive to the maximal degree of syntactic truncation of participial clauses (analyzed here as verbal small clauses). I also show the significant parallelism that exists in this respect between English and Spanish non-finite clauses, pointing to the implication this may have for a cross-linguistic approach to the cartography of syntactic structures.

Key words: functional structure, non-finite clauses, syntactic defectiveness, cartography of syntactic structures, contrastive grammar: English/Spanish.

Resumen

Las cláusulas no finitas son constituyentes oracionales en los que el núcleo verbal carece de la especificación morfológica de tiempo y de concordancia. En este artículo argumento que la defectividad de estas cláusulas es no sólo morfológica sino también sintáctica, en el sentido de que carecen de algunas de las categorías funcionales que conforman la oración plena. En concreto defiendo que las oraciones de infinitivo con *to*, las de gerundio y las de participio se diferencian entre ellas, y con respecto a otras cláusulas subordinadas, en el grado de defectividad estructural que presentan, que iría desde la casi completa estructura funcional de las de infinitivo, al grado máximo de defectividad de las de participio (que se analizan aquí como cláusulas reducidas). También demuestro el paralelismo que existe entre las cláusulas no finitas del inglés y del español, señalando las implicaciones que esto puede tener para el estudio de la cartografía de las estructuras sintácticas en las distintas lenguas.

Palabras clave: estructura funcional, cláusulas no-finitas, defectividad sintáctica, cartografía sintáctica, gramática contrastiva: inglés/español.

1. INTRODUCTION

The analysis of the hierarchical structure of constituents has been one of the programmatic issues of Chomskyan generative grammar from its start. From the adoption of the so called X-bar theory after Chomky's seminal work ("Remarks"), the current assumption has been that syntactic structures are binary, cross-categorially uniform and endocentric (with a head or zero-level category projecting into a phrase). These restrictions initially applied to lexical projections (NP, VP, PP etc.) but later they generalized to other categories whose heads encode the grammatical information that "glues" the different lexical categories in the sentence: the functional categories. From then on, the sentence has been seen to comprise at least three layers, two of which are functional:[1]

a) The illocutionary layer (CP), which connects the propositional content of the clause to other superordinate clause or to the discourse.
b) The inflectional layer (TP), which places the event with respect to the utterance time or another reference time.
c) The thematic layer (VP), the lexical projection that hosts the verb and its arguments and adjuncts.

During the first years of the Principles and Parameters approach a good number of functional categories were identified and employed in the analyses; this eventually lead to a fruitful line of research on the cartography of syntactic structures whose aim is to draw maps, as precise and detailed as possible, of syntactic configurations. These cartographic studies have always run parallel to the Minimalist Program (vid. Chomsky, *Minimalist,* and subsequent work) and in a sense they are complementary, since Minimalism centers on the mechanisms of computation (basically external and internal Merge, and Agree), and the cartographic project on the inventory of categories involved in those mechanisms. Consequently, the Minimalist Program has paid special attention to the uninterpretable features in the functional projections, that is, those that are said to drive computations under the assumption that Movement (i.e. internal Merge) is triggered by the need to check and delete them. On the contrary, cartographic studies focus on the interpretable features that relate those syntactic computations to meaning and use, and they are primarily concerned with the number of functional categories relevant for the grammatical characterization of the sentence, their ordering and the possibilities of linguistic variation they allow for (both, within a language and across languages).

In this respect there is ample consensus that the core projections CP and TP can be divided into smaller categories which group in domains that share contextual information (termed "Prolific Domains" by Grohmann). In particular:

[1] From the seminal work of Abney's, nominal projections are also customarily analyzed as comprising a lexical structure and a higher functional structure.

a) The discourse domain: after the influential work of Rizzi ("Fine"), the illocutionary layer has been split into two obligatory categories: ForceP, which encodes the illocutionary force of the sentence, and FiniteP, which signals its tense/mood features. In between these, two optional categories can be projected: TopicP and FocusP, where topicalized or focalized phrases, respectively, are located.
b) The inflectional domain: Pollock was the first to argue for the need of more than a single inflectional head; in this respect there have been different proposals to articulate not only what Comrie (5) calls the "situation-external time" of the event (TP), but also its aspectuality or "situation-internal time"; see Demirdache y Uribe Etxebarría's work, and references therein, for details.
c) The thematic domain: After Larson's work, the VP has adopted a shell-like structure with at least two categories: vP, where the external argument of the verb is placed, and VP for the internal arguments. One should also include here the optional functional category VoiceP which, when headed by the feature [-active], forces the suppression of vP.

A full sentence will then consist of these three domains with at least these functional categories:[2]

(1) [ForceP [FiniteP [TP [AspP [vP [VoiceP [VP

The functional categories in (1) encode the basic grammatical information that makes up a full proposition; note that the order Modality-Tense-Aspect-Voice that follows from the hierarchical organization of these categories has been defended as universal by linguists like Tesnière, and is the one obligatorily displayed by sequences of auxiliaries in languages like English or Spanish:[3]

(2)

Aux $_{\text{Modality}}$	Aux $_{\text{Anteriority}}$	Aux $_{\text{Progr. aspect}}$	Aux $_{\text{Voice}}$	
may	have	been	being	blackmailed
debe	haber	estado	siendo	chantajeado

But to assume that the syntactic structure of sentences includes a number of functional projections as in (1), ordered in a precise way, also brings about two important additional predictions.

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[2] The number of functional categories defended in different works runs from 40 to 400, but here I only consider the core grammatical information in the sentence. For a comprehensive description of the numerous functional categories that have been posited in the relevant literature see Cinque and Rizzi, and references therein.

[3] This order of the grammatical information in the sentence may follow from certain semantic conditions. For example, modality must be evaluated over a complete proposition, including the tense specification, and this is why ForceP and FiniteP dominate TP; as regards TP, it must dominate AspP since tense is measured with respect to the assertion time, that is, the time interval over which the event takes.

The first is that, contrary to what is sometimes defended from other linguistic perspectives, all languages share a functional sentential structure and only vary in predictable ways, as stated in Chomsky's "Uniformity Principle" ("Derivation" 2). The strongest position one may take in this respect is that the order and the hierarchy of the functional categories is universal and, therefore, that languages only vary in terms of the particular features that make up those categories. Since, as noted (see footnote 2), a good number of functional projections seem to be required to express the relevant grammatical information, this strongest position will imply that all those functional projections are present in every language, even when there does not exist a morphological correlate for them. At the other end of the scale, the weakest position would assume that languages differ precisely in the particular functional projections they select from the universal inventory (and codify morphologically), or in the order these functional categories adopt. Of course, to determine which of these two positions is correct is a matter of empirical research, but much of the work done in the cartographic project has adopted the first one as the initial working hypothesis. For simplicity, in this work I will just focus on the core projections in (1) and assume, on line with the strongest position, that they are universal and have the following feature specification in both, English and Spanish:

(3) [ForceP$_{\pm assertion}$ [FiniteP $_{\pm realis}$ [TP $_{\pm past}$ [AspP $_{\pm perfective}$ [vP [VoiceP $_{\pm active}$[VP

The second prediction has to do with the possibilities opened in (1) to express a state of affairs (i.e. a proposition). One would expect that in the unmarked case propositions will be syntactically realized as full clauses with all the categories in (1), but that it could also be possible to have defective (i.e. truncated) clauses lacking one or more of these core projections. Here, as in every other aspect of syntactic computation, the working hypothesis cannot be that "anything goes," but that the syntactic instantiation of a proposition must be either as in (1) or as a proper subset of (1). This means that, together with (1), configurations like (4) or (5), but not (6), should be (universally) possible:

(4) [TP [AspP [vP [VoiceP [VP
(5) [AspP [vP [VoiceP [VP
(6) *[ForceP [FiniteP [SAsp [vP [VoiceP [VP

In (4) the two categories in the discourse domain (i.e. ForceP and FiniteP) are missing, and in (5) not only these, but also TP; the structure in (6) is ruled out since it does not constitute a proper subset of a full clause.

In what follows, I will set to test this prediction on non-finite sentences in English. I will show how they conform to the structures (1) (4) and (5), respectively, and how some of the defining differences among them follow form the fact that they exhibit different degrees of structural defectiveness. In section 3 I will briefly consider Spanish non-finite clauses to show how, despite their surface differences, they have the same basic cartography than their English counterparts, thus provid-

ing some empirical evidence in favor of the Uniformity Principle. Section 4 offers some conclusions.

2. THE FUNCTIONAL STRUCTURE OF NON-FINITE SENTENCES IN ENGLISH

The idea I would like to defend here is that non-finite clauses are not only morphologically defective (i.e lack a morphological specification for tense and agreement) but also syntactically defective, and that they differ among themselves, and with respect to finite subordinate clauses, in the degree of structural defectiveness they display. In particular I would like to propose that: a) *to*-infinitive clauses constitute full clauses with the core functional structure in (1) but with no optional functional categories in the discourse domain b) *-ing*-clauses can have the substructure in (4) (i.e. lack the discourse domain altogether and project up to TP) or that in (6) (i.e. project just to AspP), and c) participial clauses always have the substructure in (6).[4] Figure (1) schematizes the options:

FIGURE 1 FUNCTIONAL PROJECTIONS IN NON-FINITE CLAUSES

	Force P	FiniteP	TP	AspP	vP	VoiceP	VP
Full clauses							
To-infinitive clauses							
Gerund(ive) clauses							
Present/Past participle clauses							

2.1. *To*-Infinitive Clauses vs Gerundive Clauses

I have discussed elsewhere (Ojea, "Feature") that *to*-infinitive sentences possess a discourse domain with [±assertive] illocutionary force and [-realis] modality.[5] Syntactically, this implies that they can be introduced by a complementizer, under-

[4] I use the neutral term *-ing*-clause to group the three types of structurally different constructions I'll discuss below: gerundives, gerund clauses and present participle clauses. Note that my goal here is not to offer an exhaustive description of the syntactic properties of non-finite clauses, but just to highlight some relevant structural/semantic differences among them which can be adequately handled under a theory of syntactic defectiveness from the core clause structure in (1); exemplification will thus be restricted to non-finite clauses in verbal domains.

[5] To simplify, I adopt the traditional distinction realis/irrealis as the parameter that regulates mood selection (see Giannakidou for a detailed discussion of this division). Note, incidentally, that the nonrealis nature of infinitive sentences relates them, both semantically and syntactically, to subjunctive sentences.

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stood as the lexical realization of FiniteP (*for*, in English), or by a WH-constituent which, in the standard analyses, moves into ForceP:

(7) I'd prefer for you to stay there
(8) I wonder where to leave the dog

To assume that *to*-infinitive clauses possess the three Prolific Domains that make up a full clause apparently contradicts my proposal that all non-finite clauses exhibit some degree of defectiveness. This defectiveness does nonetheless exist and is manifested in that *to*-infinitive clauses lack the optional projections in the discourse domain, that is those which host topicalized or focalized constituents, namely TopicP and FocusP; accordingly, topicalizations or focalizations will be possible in *that*-clauses but not in *to*-infinitive clauses:

(9) *He wanted during the holidays to write a book
(cf. I promise that during the holidays I will write a book)
(10) *He told me on no account to write such a book
(cf. He told me that on no account should I write such a book)

With respect to *-ing*-clauses, they lack a discourse domain altogether and this is why they are incompatible not only with topicalized or focalized phrases, but also with any complementizer or WH-phrase:

(11) *He remembers during the holidays / on no account leaving the dog in the kennel
(12) *He remembers that/whether/for leaving the dog in the kennel
(13) *He remembers where leaving the dog

They nonetheless possess a full inflectional domain, with specification of tense, aspect and voice. The projection of the former could be put into question given that –*ing*-clauses do not codify any tense distinction morphologically, but it should be noted that they do have a temporal reading (anterior, simultaneous or posterior to the temporal information of the matrix sentence and very much constrained by the meaning of the main verb), and, therefore, they can be said to possess a specific tense-chain and, accordingly, TP[6]:

(14) I remember leaving the door in the kennel (anterior reading)
(15) She enjoys reading books aloud (simultaneous reading)
(16) Mary worried yesterday about coming to dinner tonight (posterior reading)

[6] The example in (16) has been taken from Pires (71)

The fact that *-ing*-clauses only project up to TP (as in (4)) makes them sentential structures with an unmodalized reading which is clearly evident in the contexts in which they compete with the *to*-infinitive:

(17) a. I like going to the coast in July (= actual habit)
b. I'd like to go to the coast in July (= potentiality)
(18) a. He tried hiding the letter (= actual fact)
b. He tried to hide the letter (= attempt)

There is one point to consider here. Argument-positions (i.e. subject and object positions) are canonically occupied by nominal constituents (DPs) or full clauses. One would then expect that *–ing*-clauses, defective as they are, should not be a possibility here. Arguably *-ing*-clauses can function as subjects or objects in English because the *–ing* form in this language is a descendant of both, the Old English present participle and the verbal noun, eventually collapsed into a single form (vid. Denison; Fanego). This is why in present day English one can still find *–ing*-clauses which do have clear nominal properties together with others that don't. I'll use the term "gerundive clauses" (in the sense of Milsark 611) to refer to the former, and I'll assume that they constitute mixed categories where the TP constituent eventually projects into a DP (specific proposals in this respect can be found in Baker; Abney; Milsark; Panagiotidis and Grohmann; Ojea, "Propositional").

As expected, these gerundive clauses exhibit a complete DP-like behaviour, and not only allow their subjects to be in the genitive Case (typical of nominal specifiers; cf. *his* in (19)), but also invert with the auxiliary in direct questions (20), contrary to what happens in the case of other sentential subjects (21):

(19) His writing the book so rapidly has been astonishing
(20) a. Finding a cage for all those birds will be difficult
b. Will finding a cage for all those birds be difficult?
(21) a. To find a cage for all those birds will be difficult
b.*Will to find a cage for all those birds be difficult?
(cf. Will it be difficult to find a cage for all those birds?)

Also note that gerundive clauses can function as complements of a preposition, a syntactic position restricted to DPs (and forbidden to full clauses) in English:

(22) Mary escaped before Peter / telling the story
(23) *Mary escaped before that she told the story / to tell the story

Therefore, *-ing*-clauses in English can be syntactically characterized as defective structures which project up to TP but may in some cases be recategorized into DPs due to the nominal origin of the suffix *–ing* in this language.

2.2. Gerund Clauses vs Past Participial Clauses

With respect to past participial clauses, I will contend here that they exhibit a still bigger degree of structural defectiveness. On the one hand, they are unmodalized structures which lack a discourse domain and do not constitute full clauses. This means that they will be restricted to non-argumental positions; they can, for example, function as external adjuncts, a position that can also be occupied by non-nominalized *-ing*-clauses (I'll term these "gerund clauses" to distinguish them from the gerundives above):[7]

(24) Shocked by Peter's attitude towards the issue, they fired him
(25) Disapproving Peter's attitude towards the issue, they fired him

Apart from the difference in voice between the past participle and the gerund clause (passive in the former), these two constructions also exhibit a difference in their temporal specification that offers an interesting clue of which can be the functional structure in each case.

As non-finite clauses, tense in not morphologically codified in any of them, but gerund clauses allow for a temporal reading (anterior, simultaneous or posterior to the matrix sentence) which suggests a tense-chain whose operator is distinct from that of the matrix tense, though dependent on it (i.e. constrained by the meaning of the main verb and the temporal information of the matrix sentence):

(26) Walking down the main street, I saw an impressive building (simultaneous reading)
(27) Reaching a sunny spot, we got ready for lunch (anterior reading)
(28) She closed the book, leaving it on the table (posterior reading)

Gerund clauses may then be said, as gerundive clauses above, to project the category TP, and therefore to have the structure in (4), repeated here as (29):

(29) [TP $_{\pm \text{ past}}$ [AspP $_{\text{-perfective}}$ [vP [VoiceP [VP

It is precisely the fact that gerund clauses project TP that makes them compatible with the perfect auxiliary *have*, currently understood as a modifying element inside a T-chain (Gueron and Hoekstra 87):

(30) Not having read that book, I cannot comment on it

[7] Gerund clauses (vs. gerundives) do not project a DP layer, and therefore they do not have the external distribution of DPs or allow for subjects in the genitive Case (cf. *Their disapproving Peter's attitude towards the issue, they fired him).

Contrary to this, the temporal reading of past participle clauses is always strictly connected to the aspectuality of the construction, understood both in terms of the lexical aspect of the verb and of the [+perfective] grammatical aspect of the form. In this respect, when the participial verb is telic, the perfective aspect focuses the limits of the event which will then be understood as complete (i.e. it has reached its limit before the event in the main clause takes place) and therefore anterior to the main clause:

(31) Once cooked, the food must be kept in the refrigerator
Persuaded by our arguments, they voted for the proposal

On the contrary, if the participial verb is atelic there is no limit to be reached, and the event can be seen as simultaneous to that of the main clause:

(32) Accompanied by her mother, she entered the concert hall
Located in the city centre, the new cinema is very popular

Therefore, past participle clauses cannot be said to have a T-chain of their own since it is just their internal temporality (i.e. aspect) that determines the final reading that will be obtained with respect to the matrix tense. If one takes the existence of a distinct T-chain as a requirement to project TP, this means that past participle clauses are structurally more defective than gerund clauses and have the functional structure in (6), repeated here as (33), with the values [+perfective] in AspP and, when construed on transitive verbs, [-active] in VoiceP (the latter forcing the suppression of the external argument):

(33) [AspP $_{+perfective}$ [VoiceP $_{-active}$[VP

As expected, the lack of a T-chain in the case of past participial clauses prevents the presence of the auxiliary *have* in the construction, and therefore one must resort to a gerund clause to obtain a perfect passive reading:

(34) *Had been warned by his attitude...
(cf. Having been warned by his attitude...)

2.3. Present vs Past Participial Clauses

Past participle clauses and *–ing* clauses are also syntactic alternatives when they function as integrated adjuncts, referring back to the subject or the object of the main clause:

(35) Liz was lying by the pool reading a novel
(36) Liz was lying by the pool surrounded by noisy children

Significantly, *-ing*-clauses always have a simultaneous reading with respect to the main event here, which, together with the impossibility to have the auxiliary *have* in these cases (cf. *Liz was lying by the pool having read a novel), leads to the conclusion that in these contexts they do not project TP and have the same degree of structural defectiveness as past participle clauses. In other words, the two constructions are in these cases structurally equivalent, differing only in their grammatical aspect (and, with transitive verbs, also in voice); to distinguish the *–ing*-clauses in these adverbial uses from gerund(ive) clauses above, one can quite accurately label them "·present participle clauses" since they constitute the [–perfective] [+active] counterpart of past participial clauses[8]:

(37) [AspP $_{+\text{perfective}}$ [VoiceP $_{-\text{active}}$[VP past participle clauses
(38) [AspP $_{-\text{perfective}}$ [vP [VoiceP $_{+\text{active}}$[VP present participle clauses

It is interesting to note that the syntactic position that participial clauses occupy in (35) and (36) can also be occupied by a non-verbal predicate which refers back to one of the arguments of the main clause:

(39) Liz left the room *angry*

This type of secondary predication constitutes the basic form of a proposition in that it is the smallest projection that contains a predicate and its subject (covert in the case of (39)). This is why constructions of this sort have been labeled Small Clauses (SCs) in the generative tradition, and a great amount of attention has been devoted to investigating their internal structure. From the seminal work of Stowell, it has been standardly assumed that the subject and the predicate of the SC form a syntactic constituent, but there is no consensus as to which is the categorial status of that constituent, that is, the syntactic node that dominates it.[9]

What is significant in this respect is that SCs and present/past participle clauses have exactly the same syntactic distribution. Thus, together with the position of integrated adjuncts (as in (35), (36) and (39)), they share the possibility to appear as the complement of a group of subordinators which include *if, as if, as though, once though, until, when, while* or *with* (see De Smet for details):[10]

(40) With your shirt hanging out, you look quite shabby
(41) With the mortgage paid, they could afford to go abroad for their vacation
(42) With the children so sick, we weren't able to get much work done

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[8] This distinction between the gerund and the present participle has been frequently kept in the grammatical tradition (cf. Jespersen 86; Schybsbye 61, among others)

[9] The idea that the SC is a syntactic constituent has been advocated by linguists like Chomsky (*Lectures*; *Barriers*), Kitagawa or Aarts among others; for an alternative view, see Williams.

[10] Examples (40) and (41) are from Quirk et al (1003), and example (42) from Huddleston and Pullum (1267)

And SCs and present/past participles may also appear in the so called absolute constructions, that is, as propositional modifiers with a subject in the Nominative Case and no subordinator connecting them to the main clause (Huddleston and Pullum 1265-1268):

(43) His hands gripping the door, he let out a volley of curses
(44) This done, she walked off without another word
(45) His face pale with anger, he stormed out of the room

What the distributional equivalence of the three constructions suggests is that present/past participle clauses can be understood as a subtype of SCs, which, under this view, can be verbal ((35)-(36), (40)-(41), (43)-(44)) or non-verbal ((39), (42) an (45)). This in turn implies that, if my analysis of present/past participle clauses in (37) and (38) is correct it should generalize to non-verbal small clauses as well, that is, they should all be understood as syntactic constituents dominated by the functional category AspP. Significantly, an analysis of SCs along these lines has been defended quite consistently in the literature, thus providing further support for my underlying assumptions (see, among others, Chomsky, *Barriers*; Kitagawa; Hernanz, "Sintaxis"; Demonte; Jiménez, and the references they give).

3. THE FUNCTIONAL STRUCTURE OF NON-FINITE SENTENCES IN SPANISH

Summarizing what I have defended so far, non-finite sentences in English can be structurally understood as clauses that exhibit a degree of structural defectiveness which goes from the almost complete structure of *to*-infinitive sentences, to the small clause nature of participle clauses:

(46) To-infinitives: [ForceP$_{\pm assertion}$ [FiniteP$_{-realis}$ [TP$_{\pm past}$ [AspP [vP [VoiceP [VP
(47) Gerundive: [DP [TP$_{\pm past}$ [AspP$_{-perfective}$ [vP [VoiceP [VP
(48) Gerund: [TP$_{\pm past}$ [AspP$_{-perfective}$ [vP [VoiceP [VP
(49) Present/Past participle: [AspP$_{\pm perfective}$ [vP [VoiceP [VP

If one assumes the strongest form of the Uniformity Principle as the initial working hypothesis, the expectation is that non-finite clauses in other languages should display similar patterns of functional defectiveness, and also exclude forbidden configurations like (6). To test this prediction it is necessary to undertake detailed studies of the corresponding structures in different languages and, therefore, I can only contribute to the task here to a small extent by pointing out the significant similarity between English and Spanish in this respect.

Beginning with infinitive sentences in Spanish, empirical evidence seems to support the idea that, as the *to*-infinitive in English, they possess all the core functional projections of full clauses but lack the optional categories ForceP and

FocusP in the discourse domain, thus disallowing topicalized or focalized constituents (examples from Hernanz, "Periferia" 265, 266):

(50) *Lola cree algo haber hecho mal
(cf. Lola cree que algo hemos hecho mal)
(51) *Juan quiere *UN FERRARI* comprarse
(cf. Lola dice que UN FERRARI se compraría Juan)

As for gerund and participial clauses, they do not have the discourse domain and thus cannot appear in subject/object positions (where only DPs or full clauses are allowed). Note, in this respect, that structure (47) is not possible in Spanish since the *-ndo* form in this language has never had a nominal origin (cf. Bassols De Climent):

(52) *Aprendiendo idiomas se ha convertido en una necesidad
(cf. Aprender idiomas se ha convertido en una necesidad)
(53) *Odio levantándome temprano
(cf. Odio levantarme temprano)

Significantly though, *-ndo* clauses in Spanish may exhibit, as their English counterpart, a different degree of defectiveness depending on the non-argumental position they occupy; if they are external adjuncts, they project up to TP, and are thus compatible with the auxiliary *haber*:[11]

(54) Habiendo alcanzado un acuerdo, se levantó la sesión

On the contrary, in the contexts in which they alternate with past participle clauses (i.e. in those cases where they are participial), they only project up to AspP, that is, constitute a verbal small clause in alternative distribution to other verbal or non-verbal small clauses:

(55) Encontró a Juan leyendo un libro/atado a un árbol/muy triste
(cf. *Encontró a Juan habiendo leído un libro)
(56) Con los niños leyendo en su cuarto/dormidos/callados, pudimos continuar
(cf. *Con los niños habiendo leído en su cuarto, pudimos continuar)

All these facts point to a striking coincidence between the two languages in precisely the point at stake here: the defective structure of non-finite clauses (parallel, or probably due, to their morphological defectiveness). This in turn means that the differences that obviously exist between English and Spanish here

[11] A reading of posteriority, equivalent to that of (28) in English, seems to be totally impossible in Spanish (Bello 322), and this can be connected to the impossibility for suffix *-ndo* to signal future in any context, not even in analytical progressive forms (cf. *El tren está saliendo a las doce)

will have to be explained in terms of the particular features that make up the functional projections in each language, as, for example, those that determine the morphological Case that the subject in the non-finite clause can check (see (57) for the possibilities in argument position), or the order it occupies with respect to the non-finite verb (cf. 58):

(57) a. I want [PRO/him to be happy]
b. I remember [PRO/him/his leaving the dog in the kennel]
c. Quiero [*PRO* ser feliz]
(58) a. Lunch finished, they all went out
b. Terminada *la cena*, todos se marcharon

CONCLUSION

I have argued here that non-finite clauses are syntactically defective and that many of the semantic and structural differences among them follow precisely from the different degree of structural defectiveness they display.

In particular I have proposed that *to*-infinitives can be treated as clauses that lack some optional illocutionary projections (FocusP and TopicP). A unitary analysis of *-ing* clauses in English is not possible, though, probably due to the historical development of the suffix -ing, and therefore I have distinguished between gerundives (TP projections exhaustively dominated by a DP node), gerunds (TP projections) and present participles (AspP projections). As for participle clauses, both present and past, I have analyzed them as AspP projections, suggesting that they constitute a particular type of small clause.

Finally, I have maintained that non-finite clauses in Spanish can be approached under the same lines and that both languages coincide in the relevant structural details, a fact that supports a uniform cartographic structure across languages.

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INTERVIEW

SMALL PRESS LEGENDS: S.A. GRIFFIN

Abel Debritto
Brown University

S.A. Griffin lives, loves and works in Los Angeles. He drives too fast, sleeps too little and thinks too much. His heart is a wheel that breaks for cubist impulse. He believes that God is an ambidextrous cheeseburger that paints mustaches on the moon while the sun cries Mary. Married to a wonderful librarian from New Jersey, proud father of a son who says hello to the world with his wild guitar, and owned by three spinster cats, his life has been the journey of the book less travelled by, which really has made all the difference. Co-editor of *The Outlaw Bible of American Poetry* (Thunder's Mouth Press, Firecracker Award), Griffin has been publishing and editing poetry on his Rose of Sharon imprint since 1988. He is a Cadillac wrangling Carma Bum progenitor, rolling with that gang of literary misfits on the road and off from 1989-2009. Named Best Performance Poet for the *LA Weekly* by Wanda Coleman. Griffin is an active member of the curatorial staff at Beyond Baroque Literary Arts Center in Venice, California, and in July of 2011 became the first recipient of Beyond Baroque's Distinguished Service Award. A practicing slacker, in 2010, he created The Poetry Bomb, a 7 foot tall, former Vietnam era practice bomb converted into an art object and then stuffed with almost 900 poems from around the world in an effort to create civil disagreements, the project culminating in The Poetry Bomb Couch Surfing Across America Tour of Words 2010 between

April-June of that year. Widely anthologized, his most recent collections of verse are *Numbskull Sutra* (Rank Stranger Press) and *They Swear We Don't Exist* (Bottle of Smoke Press). In October of 2011 Griffin was honored to edit and write the introduction for *All Your Misplaced Utopias* by Scott Wannberg published by Bottle of Smoke Press shortly after his friend's passing.

A.D.: *Do you remember the first time you put your words on paper?*

S.A.G.: The first time I put my words on paper I probably was a teenager. The first things I tried to write were prose.

A.D.: *Whatever happened to those writings?*

S.A.G.: I have no idea. It's interesting because one of the earliest things I wrote was a prose piece for school, a piece about flying, and I had never flown in my life. I turned it in and the teacher was kind of ecstatic over the piece, she said that the imagery was fantastic and I got an A on it. I started writing poetry right about the same time, and the early poetry which I did is horrible because most of my early education was all classic poetry, so I was writing everything in classic form, and what most of us do is, we copy the masters, so I spent a lot of my time teaching myself by copying the masters in terms of poetry and most of it is pretty bad. It rhymed and it was stupid stuff.

A.D.: *Do you remember your first publication ever?*

S.A.G.: I really don't know what my first publication would be. Some of my earliest poems that were ever published would probably all be in *Shatersheet*, but I don't know if I was published anywhere else before that. Was there something published when I was in college? Don't remember, but I was writing this really existential stupidity when I was in college, really horrible. What happened was, I was on the staff of the college journal and I had submitted some of my poetry, and you submitted anonymously. I was on the panel, and I gave them my poetry and they didn't know it was mine and they didn't even read it, and I watched them as it went around the table, they just checked it off, "no good," and they didn't even read it! I left, never came back. When they found out what happened, they gave me an "A" because they realized they'd fucked up. But it was good for me. See, in terms of writing, rejection is extremely important because you learn what not to do, and not that you're trying to please people, but when I began writing in the early 80s, I submitted poems to maybe fifty journals or something. I was rejected by every fucking one of them, and I said, "This is stupid, I just need to learn how to write and when I learn how to write well enough people will ask *me*," and that's pretty much the way that it's been ever since. I rarely submit anything to anyone.

A.D.: *So rejection was good at the time?*

S.A.G.: It was good. I come from a place that is a little tough and so rejection doesn't necessarily bother me because it's all part of the process and that's how we learn. We learn by falling down and getting up and so that's the way that I approached my writing. I needed to be good enough so that somebody would pay attention.

A.D.: *Despite constant rejection you kept on writing. Why?*

S.A.G.: Because I care about the writing. The publication was nice. Yes, it's a nice affirmation, but I was always much more interested in developing the craft. The real reward, and this is a raging cliché, the process is the great reward. When you're sitting all by yourself in the middle of the night and shit just comes out. It's a fantastic feeling and it becomes very euphoric. It is like a dream of flying and you're untouchable and you know it, it's a fantastic feeling that cannot be matched by anything else.

A.D.: *After so many years writing and publishing—and this is a cliché too—which are the highlights of your career?*

S.A.G.: One of the highlights would be going to the Water Espresso Gallery in Hollywood for the first time. I'd reached the point where I'd been writing for a couple years very, very earnestly. I was writing compulsively, I couldn't stop, and it wasn't very good but the point was, I was doing it. So I wanted to go to a reading and I wanted to put it out there to see what kind of response it would get. I went to the Water Gallery and there were a few people, maybe a dozen people, it was very geeky, but that's where I started hearing other people. For the first year that I read in public, I very deliberately read with no expression at all, because I wanted to make sure that the words were doing something, and so you learn how to (write) as a performer. You should learn how to read your audience very well and you can read the audience just by the way they respond, don't respond, how they shift in their chairs, or scratch their faces. And that's what I did that first time, that first year, I really paid intense attention to this.

The other thing that happened early on was getting involved in *Shattersheet*. That's how I learned about small press publications, how I learned about editing, how I became really connected to the Los Angeles community because *Shattersheet* was publishing all these people. So now I'm reading them and I'm finding out who they are, what they write about. The next thing probably would be forming The Lost Tribe, which is a performance poetry ensemble. They came out of the Water Gallery, the idea being making what we were doing as poets accessible to people, which really was the point, the accessibility of what we were doing: taking it off the page and making it more alive. The Lost Tribe fell apart and then reformed in 1989 ostensibly as The Carma Bums, which was the antithesis of The Lost Tribe, and then we "really" started touring, going around the country.

A.D.: *You keep talking about performing, touring and going to poetry readings. Do you think your career as an actor has had any impact at all on your writing?*

S.A.G.: It doesn't have much to do with the writing. One of the reasons I go by S.A. Griffin is because I did start writing poetry and I didn't want anybody to know—and it worked for a really long time—that I was an actor. I didn't want anybody to know I was an actor because I wanted people to be sincere about what I was doing as a writer. As a performer, yes, of course, my professional background has a lot to do with what I do as a performer. The

acting still to this day I don't think has much to do with my writing, it's pretty separate, but now of course people *will* know, it's all over the Internet.

A.D.: *Were there any other highlights after The Carma Bums?*

S.A.G.: Going to Denver to work on a Perry Mason movie of the week changed my life, which became the inspiration for The Carma Bums. I went to the Mercury Café for a reading and I read some of my poetry—this is '88, I think—and I met Ed Ward. Ed Ward came up to me after the reading and Ed is kind of one of the main movers and shakers there in Denver as a publisher. So what Ed did was, he took me under his wing and we hung out and partied a lot, and he introduced me to everyone in Denver. More importantly, he introduced me to—believe it or not—the Venice Beats because when Venice imploded here in Los Angeles they migrated to Denver. So Tony Scibella, Frank T. Rios, Stuart Z. Perkoff, they were all out there in Denver and they kind of continued on with what they were doing here in Venice in Denver. So even though we didn't really know about them here in Los Angeles (by the time I came along) they were alive and well in Denver, and so then through Ed I hooked up with everyone in Denver and then came back to Los Angeles, and then ultimately became very good friends with Tony Scibella and became directly involved with the Venice Beats here, and to this day I really kind of carry that forward in my own way. Then *The Outlaw Bible of American Poetry* was a big deal, and it was probably one of the worst experiences of my life creatively. However, it's out there and it works.

The entire book was created and edited via email, the Internet and telephones. Kaufman was in San Francisco, I was in L.A. and Neil Ortenberg, the Thunder's Mouth publisher, was in New York. Once the contracts were signed, to put it mildly, Kaufman and I just didn't get along. The first thing Kaufman said to me over the phone the day after we signed the contracts was, "My name should be first on the book." "Why?" "Because... I'm older than you!" "Good, I'm bald." It was all directly downhill from there. I had also struck a deal with John Martin to include Charles Bukowski in the book; but that got screwed all to hell jeopardizing friendships and reputations in the process. After that, I never worked with Kaufman on the project again, only Ortenberg, arguably the third editor. In all, I felt a tremendous responsibility to get the ball over the goal line, otherwise, it is quite possible that a lot of those lesser known poets that I had brought into the book wouldn't have made it, would not have been read or heard, and for myself, that is what the book was all about; providing a platform, giving voice to those small press, obscure voices in the greater world so that they too, could be a part of the conversation.

A.D.: *How come you got involved in that project?*

S.A.G.: I got involved in the project because Jack Micheline died, his passing being the true genesis of the project. What happened was, I wrote a eulogy. I knew Jack fairly well. I had produced a number of shows for him, some of the last shows he did in Los Angeles when he was alive. Jack would always

talk about being honest, and I when I had the privilege of hanging out with Allen Ginsberg, I wanted Ginsberg to tell me what poetry was, or what he thought poetry was. So finally, after a number of hours, the conclusion was that poetry is candor. And so with these things, when Jack died, I wrote an honest eulogy for Jack. It got published in a few places receiving quite a bit of very positive response, and Kaufman read it. Alan knew Jack Micheline as well, so Alan contacted me and we began a correspondence over email and then during the course of that correspondence I said, "Gee, I've always wanted to do an anthology of California writers like Jack who never got their due in life, that never really got recognized the way they should have." Then Alan responded, "Yeah, me too," and that's how it started.

Originally, *The Outlaw Bible* was called *The California Bible of Vulgarian Poetry* the idea being we were vulgar, unacceptable, and then it ultimately got pitched to the big boys and Neil Ortenberg and Thunder's Mouth picked it up. The title got changed to *The Outlaw Bible of American Poetry* and it became national as opposed to regional. We were contracted to have it done within six weeks from beginning to end. We were supposed to collect all the material, get all the rights, edit everything and have it done within six weeks, but it took about a year and a half.

A.D.: *After talking about the highlights of your career—and this, yet another cliché—were there any downfalls, any low moments where you thought writing was not your true crutch?*

S.A.G.: Because of why I do it, I don't think I ever really had those moments. I never did this to make money, I never did it to be famous. I did it because I literally couldn't stop myself. I had to be writing. I don't know why, still to this day I can't explain it, it was just something that triggered inside of me and I had to do it. So no, I don't think I really had moments where I've really sat down and thought, "Why am I doing this?" I might say, "Who cares?", but writing when I do write for me is a pleasure, it's probably more than a pleasure. It's self-affirmation because I enjoy the process so much and nobody fucks with me. See, as an actor people fuck with me, whatever else I do somebody is gonna fuck with me because that's a business. This is not my business. I don't care what anybody thinks about me from the outside, I can tell you from the inside. It's not a business. If I never make a fucking dime, I don't care. So therefore, this expression of the process for me is really pretty much nothing but pleasure and it's very exciting when it goes well.

It's a very solitary thing, but you're experiencing it, that's all it matters. And I do believe that it's something that comes through you. You get out of your own way and it just comes through you. It's an odd sort of sense of responsibility, it is as if, "Yeah, I'm doing it, but there's something else coming through me." I just learned how to move my fingers well enough that when it speaks to me it comes out okay.

A.D.: *After having your poetry published in several small press magazines such as Shattersheet, what moved you to put out your own little magazine?*

S.A.G.: I think it's just more of a natural progression than anything else. Most of what I do as a publisher has been trying to reach out and be a part of the community, create community and help myself and others to be a part of the dialogue, whatever that dialogue might be. I do think that on some level, as a poet, you're always trying to be a part of whatever that dialogue might be.

A.D.: *Which was the first magazine that you ever put out?*

S.A.G.: The first magazine that I ever put out was probably the broadside with Rafael Alvarado, *(Sic) Random Vice & Verse*. It started out as something called *The Piece of Paper*, and I think Garth Grinde was involved in it along with Berndt Reigel. *The Piece of Paper* lasted for about a year or something, then Rafael kind of took over and he brought me into it, and over time it became a periodical and we dropped "random" so that it was now *(Sic) Vice & Verse.* We did it as a broadside for about eight years and then for about a year and a half we did it as a magazine.

The thrust of the magazine, the core the magazine was always poetry. However, my thrust with *(Sic) Vice & Verse* was to reflect the symbiosis of the arts and even the sciences, but specifically the arts. We always had poetry, fiction, art, photography, reviews and it all came together in the same magazine. I think we did a pretty good job of it actually it got a great response. Rafael and I had a big falling out. Once the money got involved shit changed, I was pretty much putting all the money into the magazine. We weren't really making any money off the revenues, we were getting freebies, books, and coffee and shit.

A.D.: *Didn't you even break even?*

S.A.G.: It was free, we gave it away. A part of my sickness is that I want to give everything away. All these things I produced over the years, all these hundreds and hundreds of readings and events, I've never taken any money for the readings, ever. The Carma Bums trips too, since I had produced all of them, T-shirts, everything. So I've lost money, I've more than likely lost thousands and thousands of dollars over the years. But I did it willingly, and I have always had a good time doing it.

A.D.: *That's interesting. Why do you think the small press has been bringing out so many books and magazines knowing beforehand that even breaking even was a long shot?*

S.A.G.: Number one, I don't think most people understand that. When they get involved they think, "Oh, nobody's really done this right, I'll be the first person that will do it really right, I'll show everyone how to do it," and they burn out really fucking fast. They last a couple of years at best and they're gone. You see them come and go all the time here in Los Angeles. People get off the damn bus and they say, "Here I am, I'm gonna change the world," because that's what you do, you have a tiger by the tail. So that's number one, people think that they're going to reinvent the wheel. The other thing that happens is, what motivates you, why you do this. So for most people—and I won't judge it and say there are right and wrong reasons—the reasons that they would do something won't sustain them.

Most of the people that succeed in small press do it because they just have to do it. Some people do make money in small press, and more power to them. But like with myself over the years, in regards to the publishing, I've kind of broke even. There are a few things that I've done that really sold and I've actually made money on. People want to be heard. They want to be part of the dialogue, they want to be in on the conversation. People have a need to be heard and seen.

A.D.: *Are you saying it's an ego trip?*

S.A.G.: No, it's not an ego trip. In other words, something is happening all around you and you just want to be heard. This is "my" opinion, this is how I think *we* could do something. This is what I think is "going on." Art reflects life. I think it does, whether you like it or not, whether it's populist or not. I think that art in general does reflect what's going on. As any sort of creative person, as you compulsively fall into it, I think that's what you do, you absorb what's going on, you wring yourself out with it. I think that's why, generally speaking, small press exists and why it won't go away because it's the only way that we can contribute and be a part of the conversation. But, yes, there's a lot of people, and you could even argue the majority of people that get involved in anything, whether small or large, there's a lot of ego involved.

A.D.: *What's your take on the if-you-scratch-my-back, I'll-scratch-yours philosophy that seems to pervade most of the small press?*

S.A.G.: That certainly exists, no doubt about it. Why is it any different than it's been throughout history? Who are the first people you turn to? Your friends and family. Going all the way back to that Water Gallery reading, and the Lost Tribe guys, and those people who are still with me today, they become the core of what is it you do. Because, yes, they are the first people that you publish. When we did *(Sic) Vice & Verse* the core group of people that we leaned on always were our friends because, why are they your friends? You agree with them, on some level you have agreements. Why do you have agreements? The agreements aren't just personal, but they're also professional, they're also creative. We want people to hear them, like early on we published Eric Brown, Scott Wannberg, Doug Knott, Ellyn Maybe, Mike Burner, Mike Mollett, Rafael Alvarado, Laura Laurel Ann Bogen, Linda Albertano, all these people that were around us that people might've known here in this community, but we wanted to get out there into the greater world. Also, what I always tried to do as a publisher, especially in the form of the magazine, I wanted to bring together the known and the unknown. In other words, small people that nobody knows about married to the people that people really did know about so that they would pay attention. We still try to do that to this day.

A.D.: *Some magazines clearly belong to a literary movement, and others, as The Outsider back in the day, do not mind mixing styles and schools. How do you feel about this?*

S.A.G.: I don't think we ever had a school of poetry that we could basically put ourselves into. The only thing that I probably wasn't publishing was formal poetry, in other words, the old, rhymy stuff.

A.D.: *What you did in high school?*

S.A.G.: Yeah, what I did in high school. I would suggest the reason is, it just didn't float my boat or what was being sent to me was just not very good because it was so much about the need to follow form and so little about the content that most of it didn't work. For me what was important was that it spoke to me. I couldn't care less who wrote it, I couldn't care less what school they belonged to. I really cared about what they were writing, what they had to say. Generally speaking, yes, most of it would be open verse, confessional, Meat, Beat. Mike Bruner, who is at Georgia State University where he is involved in rhetoric and communication theory, has been trying as an academic to name us, name what it is we've been involved in. It's hard to name what you're doing as you're involved, very difficult to name something as it's happening. Sometimes it happens, it's pretty rare, but generally it's an afterthought. We can look back and we can find commonalities that we could put a label on. The idea is to bring these voices together as one thing and present it to people so that they get it out of their head that they have to belong to a school, that they have to basically be one thing. So for me to bring people together and to inspire disagreements which can bring about real agreements drives a lot of what I do in terms of the community forum. Me personally, as a poet, not necessarily so, but as a publisher, as an organizer, as a producer, it really means a lot to me that I can bring different people together and hopefully they can disagree on something.

A.D.: *Out of all those voices that you tried to put together, did you look up to any of them? Did they have a long-lasting influence on your work?*

S.A.G.: Oh, absolutely. My friends and my peers have probably more influence on me than anybody else. Outside of the names that we all know, like the Beats and Charles Bukowski, in terms of the people that I've published that nobody might not really know that they've come to know: Scott Wannberg, Ellyn Maybe, Laura Laurel Ann Bogen, Wanda Coleman, Dennis Cruise, Harry Northup... the list is pretty big. I do think that they have an impact on people outside of the community, especially Ellyn and Scott, they really broke in big time, Laurel Ann has too, and Laurel is a teacher as well. We have a number of great teachers here in Los Angeles who are poets: Holly Prado, Jack Grapes, Gerald Locklin, Laurel Laurel Ann Bogen, and Austin Strauss. These people have extended what they know into the realm of teaching and they have had a huge influence on many people that have come up, like some of Laurel Ann's students, Brendan Constantine and Claudia Handler. As a child you fantasize about what you're going to be when you grow up and who you're going to be running with and who you might really be as a person. Although I might not ever reach those fantastic goals I had as a child, I've gone so far beyond those goals because when I see who I get

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to run with, who my friends are, I'm just blown away that anybody would call me poet. It really is mind blowing to me.

A.D.: *In which ways does small press matters and makes a difference? Do you think some of the authors who hit the big time such as Charles Bukowski or Wanda Coleman would have become similarly successful without their small press "education"?*

S.A.G.: I think small press obviously matters because it exists. I would argue that the majority of people that read poetry are involved. When you put it all together, each of these little pieces, it's huge. And it's not just here in America, it's around the world. I think the reason small press really does matter and gets the response it gets is because ultimately it's probably more honest than the larger publishers. The larger publishers are involved in money, and not that money is dishonest by its nature, money has no nature. People do. And so a lot of it is groomed for success and so they would not be interested in much of what we're doing. We have success on the small press level, but we would never have success on a large scale because most people would look at it and say, "What the hell is this? Who are these weird people? What are they saying to me? I don't understand." So I think small press then matters to the small world, which is ultimately the greater world we live in.

A few years ago I interviewed Mary Kerr who is a documentary filmmaker in the San Francisco East Bay, she made this documentary about the Beat art/poetry scene in San Francisco and Venice. I interviewed her about the film and it was the first place I ever heard this -the Chinese refer to it as "wild history": We live and we write about our wild history, the honest history, the history as we experience it, and because it's unfettered by the big press or the publishers it remains fairly honest. It's the people's voice, it's the people's history. We have a responsibility to be a popular voice of the people, and I think that's exactly what we do. We provide the wild history and so we fill in all those great gaps that the big publishers have no interest in at all because there's no money in it. There's no real money in small press, but there are many rewards. Right now there are these kids that are doing something called *Guerrilla Pamphlets* and they're all high school kids and we're directly involved with them. They're publishing the works of all these poets, like the most recent issue has Scott Wannberg, Jason Ryberg, Billy Burgos and Dan O'Neill, who is a cartoonist and artist who has one of the oldest cartoon strips in America called *Odd Bodkins*, and Dan lets me send them *Odd Bodkins*. The point is, if you can affect change on that level, even though people aren't aware of it, it's kind of like that analogy of the butterfly beating its wings on the one side of the planet and then it becomes a hurricane or a weather front on the other side of the planet. So that's really the satisfaction of knowing that we have small change and, again, collectively the small press becomes huge.

A.D.: *I gather from your words that the small press scene is very much alive here in Los Angeles. Do you think the digital age, where people read ebooks in their iPads and print books are becoming obsolete collectibles, will turn the small press into*

a really small, elite movement or even destroy it, however alive it might be in places like L.A.?

S.A.G.: The digital age certainly is becoming much more a part of our lives and will ultimately bring about the demise of print, and I do think it's happening, there's nothing we can do about it. It becomes an economic question. I think economics will basically push in the direction where pretty much everything will be digital. It's gonna be kind of that future world where you hold something in the palm of your hand and that will be "your world." Everything will be realized this way, and as the character of the human experience changes and goes into this technology, people won't even remember a fucking book. They won't even care about a book, it's already happening. Not in popular literature. Danielle Steele will always be here, they'll always print her books and put them in the airport. The same thing with Stephen King. But in this world we're talking about, yes, I agree with you, the books themselves are objects, they're artifacts. Mostly they will exist as art, not really as literature.

A.D.: *Does it bother you as an author?*

S.A.G.: Not really. Here's what's happening: in the 80s the DIY [Do It Yourself], and you can argue the mimeo revolution brought this about before, made it possible for anybody to be a writer and a publisher, and it really picked up serious steam in the 90s with xerography and stuff like that. This is exactly what's going on with the digital revolution. Everybody can do it. It doesn't mean it's good or bad, it just means there's more of it. The problem as you might say with the digital format is this: What happens to it? Five years from now, will exist anywhere? Will people be able to find it? That's one of reasons why I believe in print, because print will continue to exist and it will be transferred into other formats, it will be recorded digitally.

I think, too, that what's going to happen very soon is this: as our political landscape changes around the globe—it's happening very fast, things are moving at warp speed now, they are shifting very radically—what's going to happen is this idea of revolution, this idea of subversive, of alternative whatever. There's nothing subversive about the Internet. You turn it on and the whole world sees it. If you know anything at all about digital technology, you could hack it, you could steal it. There's probably nothing more subversive that I can hand you outside of a book. It's very personal, it's very sensual and then *you* can pass it on to somebody else and nobody knows where it's gone. To me our role as small press will be to continue to pass along the news in a form that cannot be corrupted, that cannot be stopped. But getting back your question on the other side, I don't see it as a bad thing. I can't. I can only see it as being what it is, it's an explosion of information and that might make it more difficult to ferret out the good stuff because there's so much to go through. So then, what do you pick and choose?

A.D.: *To me, it's a double-edged sword: the small press reaches a limited audience, and you would think that by publishing on the Internet you would reach more*

people, but there's so much information out there that I wonder if you actually reach a larger audience.

S.A.G.: I think you do reach more people on the Internet. What's happened on the internet is this—and I've been involved in the internet since the mid 90s: at the beginning the internet was literally like this great black place, this void, and you would wander through this void and you would find things, and just like anything else it grows, and now it's this overcrowded piece of real estate where you have to work to find what it is you want to find because it's too crowded. What's happening on the blogs and the Internet seems to be this: People are only interested in agreements. So therefore, again, to your point, how many people read it? A couple hundred? A couple of thousand at best? The people who don't agree with you don't care at all.

A.D.: *So it goes unnoticed.*

S.A.G.: It goes completely unnoticed. However, if I give you a book and you like the cover of the book, or it's a personal thing, you might be compelled to look at that book, but on the Internet everything has become very polarized. And again, part of my job or what I try to facilitate as a publisher, is to bring people together through disagreements if I can. I think the poem especially can really do that, it can facilitate disagreements because, like a great piece of art, it's cross-cultural, it's cross-generational. A great piece of art speaks for hundreds of years, like great literature does, too. It keeps living throughout the years and, generally speaking, it becomes even greater because it becomes that much more appreciated because people go: "Oh, I understand why people have been reading this or looking at this all these years." And again, with the internet the problem is, where is it going to be in five years? The life of digital information is a very critical thing right now because it's obvious that this explosion is here to stay and it's moving unbelievably fast, and in order to keep up with that information and store it in such a way that it can be retrieved again in five more years, what are we doing? So a lot of these people that are publishing only on the internet, I think we'll find in the next few years they don't exist anymore.

A.D.: *While we were talking, I kept seeing the Poetry Bomb behind you, but I deliberately refrained from bringing it up as one of your career highlights because I thought it would be a singular topic to end this interview. Could you please elaborate a bit on what the Poetry Bomb means?*

S.A.G.: For many years I just wanted to take a real bomb and fill it full of poetry, I don't know why. It was after 2001 and after the twin towers incident when I really started moving on this. After many years, in 2009 in the middle night I went on Craigslist, I put the word "bomb" in there and four hits came up. The first one, I sent the guy a message saying, "If you still have this, please call me first thing in the morning," and he did. So for $100 he delivered it to me. It's a little over seven feet tall, a Vietnam era, MK240, one hundred pound practice bomb. It's a real bomb, a practice bomb, what that means is it didn't have any ordnance in it, and they would drop it so that they would

learn how to hit a target. So this was really utilized, it's got flat surfaces, it's got bent fins, it was really used, which is extremely important to me. It took me about five or six months with the help of a number of people to convert it into the art piece that it is. What I've done is, I've collected poetry from all over the world from everybody that wants to be a part of it, and I put it inside the bomb. So there's about 900 poems in there now from all over the world, people from literally three to ninety, all walks of life, all religions and beliefs, in America people representing wars from World War I to the present, living and dead, the ashes of seven humans and two dogs. Then I took it on a five-week tour around the entire United States last year [2010]. It took me five weeks. I traveled almost 11,000 miles. The point of this piece is really this: I use poetry as a way to hopefully bring people together and get them to disagree. During the performances, first I would let other people do their reading. They would do an open reading -primarily stuff that they wanted to put into the bomb. After they did the open reading then I would do my presentation, talk about what the object was and how it happened and then I would read poems from inside the bomb by other people. That is primarily what I did, share the poems of other people.

A.D: *Was it well received or did they think you were nuts?*

S.A.G.: Of course! Some people thought I was nuts. Most people believe that everything must have a real reward, that you must be making some money. I guess you could argue, I'm just selfish, it makes me feel good, but the real point to the bomb was when I would do my spiel, at some point I would point to the object and I would say, "War, the art, artifice and artifact of war were created to invent and enforce agreements. Hopefully, what I have created is something that will inspire disagreements. If we don't learn to disagree right now we are lost forever. We won't exist." The other thing I was telling people is, "Anybody can do this, please do something." That's what I said at the end of every show, "Do something, don't wait for somebody else to do it. You can do it, please do something." I was really trying to inspire people through poetry to create, to write at the very least, to do something and become active.

Srinivas Aravamudan. *Enlightenment Orientalism: Resisting the Rise of the Novel*. Chicago: Chicago UP, 2012. 358 pp.

Aravamudan has written a useful, wide-ranging, engaging, and thought-provoking study of what she calls Oriental "imaginative fictions" and their role in resisting the rise of the novel. Her book examines several English and French Oriental fictions written or translated in the Enlightenment period. It is evident that she has written it with the heat of conviction as well as the warmth of advocacy of both the writers and the Orientals, a paradoxical dual purpose. The way she approaches her topic and her capability of criticizing narrow views of Orientalism and looking beyond them make even familiar arguments seem fresh. However, what is unequivocably certain is that in a field that has received a lot of scholarly invigoration in recent years, the amount of original contribution expounded by her argument is minimal. For instance, Ros Ballaster's *Fabulous Orients: Fictions of the East in England 1662-1785* (2007) covers the same period—but limited to England—and presents a parallel argument regarding the double meaning of these fictions.

I certainly agree with Aravamudan's argument pertaining to the European connotations of these fictions. I find good reason to suppose that I have seen in these works much of what she has seen. She offers passionately to advocate a reading that was certainly my conviction; the room for such duality in interpretation, in these representational tales, is definitely there. Regrettably, when she attempts to convince her reader that Enlightenment Orientalism was equally about the West as it was about the East and ascribes to the writers what is hard to digest, I am obliged to part company. Her point is that "the new Orientalism that developed throughout the eighteenth century was not as restricted by limitations of the biblical studies." Unfortunately, she does not present the context in which the rise of the set of values she describes is to be situated and explained. Therefore, her characterization of these works in this way seems an overstatement and leaves her reader ambivalent toward this statement. Scholars as well as general readers, reading her book, may observe that she has, inconveniently, wrought these works to serve her ends.

Likewise, I find Aravamudan's conception of the Oriental process somewhat vulnerable and lacking in persuasion. In spite of what she suggests, it is difficult to accept her notion of this process in its entirety and drop the counter argument launched by Edward Said against which she has declared her argument. This difficulty begins in the Introduction— taking it as a starting point: "Enlightenment interrogation was not innocent... but it was not just bent on the domination of the other but also aimed at mutual understanding across cultural differences, for Enlightenment the self was under critique as much as the 'other'."

At this point the reader is asked to mix water with fire, for the contradiction between mutual understanding and domination and between domination and self-critique is strikingly obvious. The reader knows well that Orientalism was a one way process. The Europeans wrote about the Orient. They did not introduce the European culture to the peoples of the Orient,

nor did the Orientals endeavor to introduce their culture or to write about Western culture (Occidentalism) to make mutual understanding a plausible goal of either party. On the other hand, the denotative meaning of domination clashes with the connotative meaning of mutual understanding (unless this understanding is venomous in its intention and is meant to reinforce domination and make it more feasible).

Moreover, to acknowledge that Orientalism was partly bent on "domination" is to acknowledge that the Occident was the superior opponent, bearing in mind that the feeling of superiority and self-critique are rarely found as partners. The outcome, predictably, is that Aravamudan finds herself unable to solidify her position, for establishing a concrete premise based on her consolidating understanding of Orientalism becomes problematic. To avoid this hazardous path, she wisely backs away and contains herself to the argument that "imaginative fiction [...] defined European understandings of cultures that were seemingly foreign but that shared the past in ways that needed expert explanation."

Her retreat is a prudent move because it enables her to exercise an unshakable control over her analyses rather than being led into incoherent and vague discussions achieving no considerable progress in any dimension. Her contention with this goal is reinforced by her announcement that the relationship between the Occident and the Orient in these works "needed expert explanation." Even though this complacency comes at the expense of the subtlety of her earlier statement, it certainly keeps her on the safe side but fails to redirect scholarly debates about Oriental fiction. Aravamudan is herself an actor in the fictions she analyzes to her reader and she shares, as Said does, the values of those whom she advocates. Sometimes, her admiration of Oriental values suggests that she may be, at heart, on the side of Said; simultaneously, she is not clumsily apologetic at all.

I also have a problem with "Enlightenment Orientalism," a key phrase in the book and used, for assertion, in her title. Enlightenment is usually associated with reason and experience whereas, in contrast, dogma and tradition characterize Orientalism. The combination just does not seem sound albeit she says that her study "takes the modifier Enlightenment to qualify *Orientalist* fiction as its main target." "Enlightenment Orientalism" is reiterated throughout the book with the air of a kind of defensive triumphalism, as if it were blasphemy to doubt its use and as if it were self-explanatory. It is indeed possible to make out what Aravamudan means by it, but she does not defend it by stating and solving the problematics of its use; and there are problems. In theory, Enlightenment and Orientalism do not meet and neither one was part of the vocabulary of the period. Aravamudan seems to have combined the two terms to convey the message that European writers approached the Orient in a rational way. It might be agreed for argument's sake that the writers she has advocated did hold the views she ascribes to them under the rubric "Enlightenment Orientalism." But still there is a problem because she does not recognize the fact that many of those writers had their own cultural prejudices and even political loyalties, for some of them held authoritative political positions. That is to say, they did not write these fictions as adherents of the Enlightenment, but more probably motivated by political agendas. It might be possible, though I suspect it would be uneconomic, to employ the phrase as a strictly analytical expression in describing these fictions, though I have explained why it cannot be used to describe the relationship between the two spheres. But she employs it as both an analytical and a concrete phrase. Since the phrase is without an established concrete meaning in English, the analytical uses are held to justify using it as the name of a concrete reality. Mystification begins, and there is something disturbing about the repetition of "Enlightenment Orientalism" in an attempt to drown out any challenge to its meaning.

Resisting the Rise of the Novel is the subtitle which provides the distinctive focus for the book, however, also deprives it of an ability to focus on the distinctness of the drama of the period. Aravamudan's primary concern here is to analyze the function and effect of the Oriental tale; she is not concerned with the parallel texts found in the forceful drama of the Enlightenment.

The book is satisfactorily informative, the material covered is broad, and the style is graceful. Since no extravagant claims have been made, the book appears to work inductively, favoring presentations which proceed from details to modest conclusions. Happily, no one can deny the merits of the friendly, wide-ranging, and even homespun effect. Aravamudan proceeds in her chapters, as she says, "thematically through time." She divides her book into two parts. Part 1, titled "Pseudoethnographies," consists of the first two chapters. Chapter one examines Oriental fictions by Marana, Behn, Galland and Defoe. It stresses the notion that the novel was not "central" or was not "the specific national genre," as it is usually assumed. Whereas chapter two elaborates on works by Montesquieu, Goldsmith, and Hamilton. It draws out on the proliferations of the search for singularities, "as expressive of difference" in the Oriental tale and the effect of making singularities a feature of the genre. Part 2, titled "Transcultural Allegories," includes chapters three, four, and five. Chapter three dwells on Oriental tales and Orient-related fictions by Fontenelle, Bidpai, Swift, and Voltaire. It examines three kinds of trans-cultural fictions—interplanetary, intercultural, and interspecies—to show that Enlightenment Orientalism looked "beyond national realism and identity politics." The fourth chapter loosely reviews the works of Prévost, Crébillon, and Diderot in the Oriental fiction genre. It is supposedly meant to explore different aspects of libertinism and sexuality and their combined role in "developing forms of fictional subjectivity, both Orientalist and domestic." But the outcome is modest. In the fifth chapter, Manley's, Haywood's, Sheridan's, and Smollett's Orient-related fictions are addressed. The focus of the chapter is on the superiority of the transcultural allegory to national realism. Finally, a conclusion that unexpectedly does not assess Aravamudan's achievement in her book, but roughly reviews Benjamine's essay on Nikolai Leskov and the role of Joyce's writings in showing, contrary to Benjamine's statement, that the "generativity" between the near and the far is still alive.

Undoubtedly, from her earlier works (particularly *Tropicopolitans* and *Guru English*), Aravamudan established herself as a scholar of Orientalism par excellence. These works seem to have exhausted her weightier ideas, for this book, more or less, appears self-reassuring and self-congratulatory when, in fact, there is little progress achieved in the Oriental argument across this body of material. Nevertheless, on the role of the Oriental tale in resisting the rise of the novel the work is pertinent. The holistic contextualizing provided by the discussions in this book illustrates the competition between the Oriental tale and the rising novel, and thus to some extent reshapes our view of the history of the novel. But amidst its instructive array of cultural details, the flaws in Aravamudan's work are easily identified. A plot summary of some of these tales, sometimes extending to two pages, with flimsy analysis to follow, is an obvious flaw which results in the reader being left wondering to where the summary is leading. Occasionally, Aravamudan's voice is stifled by the voices of the many scholars she cites. The author also falls into what she disapproves of in Said's thought—that the relationship between the Occident and the Orient is based on hegemony. In her turn, she accuses the novelists of exercising hegemony on both the reader and the novel to turn the latter into a bourgeois biography. A statement I dislike and deem as unscholarly in this regard is her saying that the readers in that time were herded by some writers "like so many stray cats into the national realist enclosure."

Even though the book is not an extraordinary and profound contribution to the core of the Oriental debate, we cannot help coming to like it, for all its flaws, and appreciating it for all its analyses. It remains a book worthy of reading, a book that considerably lives up to the statement, though a modest one, made in the introduction. *Enlightenment Orientalism* effectively demonstrates the ways in which what was to become a dominant genre debased the Oriental tale and imposed itself on the reader. Aravamudan is quite effective in her discussions of the linkages between the then popular Oriental tale and the emerging domestic novel—one of the indisputable strengths of this her study. Moreover, she does, convincingly and with expected authority, show how Oriental tales

played a significant role in shaping the literary marketplace of Europe during the Enlightenment period. On the whole, her criticism is superior to that of some contemporary scholars which, instead of discovering what the debates might have been about, is resolved into the fury of cultural loyalties and made to reinforce the misunderstandings it attempts to dispel.

Mohammad Ahmed Rawashdeh

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Listed below are the referees who reviewed manuscripts for *RCEI 66* (April 2013). We express our gratitude to their work and generosity.

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Ana I. Zamorano Rueda (Universidad Nacional de Educación a Distancia)

Received, Acceptance, and Publication Dates for articles in *RCEI* 66:

– *Eric Anderson*. "Theorizing Masculinities for a New Generation." Received for Publication: May 28, 2012; Acceptance for Publication: September 7, 2012. Published: April 2013.

– *Josep M. Armengol*. "The Politics of Masculinity and/as Emotion: Walt Whitman's Celebration of Male Intimacy in the First Person." Received for Publication: October 11, 2011; Acceptance for Publication: January 27, 2013. Published: April 2013.

– *Abel De Britto*. "Small Press Legends: S.A. Griffin." Received for Publication: July 18, 2012; Acceptance for Publication: December 3, 2012. Published: April 2013.

– *Isabel González Díaz*. "Memories that Turn into Tall Tales of Magic Rings and Men Caring for One Another: An Interview with Michael Messner." Received for Publication: October 10, 2012. Accepted for Publication: November 2, 2012. Published: April 2013.

– *Jeff Hearn*. "Contradictory Male/Masculine/Men's "I"s: The Unwriting of Men, and the Concept of Gex." Received for Publication: October 29, 2012; Acceptance for Publication: December 21, 2012. Published: April 2013.

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