

Annotated Bibliography
Masculinities in Wartime

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Masculinities and Femininities Theme
SSHRC Conjugal Slavery in War Time Project

Aug 4, 2016

Introduction

This annotated bibliography reviews existing literatures on masculinity in a variety of disciplines to help advance novel understandings of masculinity in wartime which move beyond current understandings of militarized and hegemonic masculinities. Fatherhood is identified as an important subject position that may help us understand and conceptualize the multiplicity of masculinities and advance alternate understandings of men's experiences and roles during conflict and periods of relative peace. The racial underpinnings of the conceptual framework of militarized masculinities as well as the limiting nature of resultant post-conflict interventions are also reviewed. The literature review is divided into the following interlinked sections:

1. Conceptual Underpinnings: Hegemonic and Militarized Masculinities (Theoretical and Applied)
2. Masculinities as Sites of Intervention
3. Critical Approaches to Hegemonic and Militarized Masculinities (Theoretical)
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Section 1: Conceptual Underpinnings: Hegemonic and Militarized Masculinities (Theoretical and Applied)

Dolan, Chris. 2002. "Collapsing Masculinities and Weak States - A Case Study of Northern Uganda." In *Masculinities matter! Men, Gender, and Development*, edited by Frances Cleaver, 57-84. New York: Zed Books.

Abstract: Men's lived experiences of masculinity are diverse. Despite this, men are often taught that they should aspire to and judge themselves by certain fixed ideas about what it means to be a man. In northern Uganda, men are expected to become husbands and fathers (preferably educated), provide for the material needs of their families, and ensure the physical protection of their wives and children. Yet it is difficult for the majority of men to fulfil these social expectations, especially in the northern Ugandan context of ongoing war and internal displacement. 50 per cent of the population is internally displaced and has limited access to subsistence farming, income-generating opportunities, education, employment, or legal and physical protection from the state. For men looking to marry, the absence of cattle (due to cattle raiding) or cash to provide bride payments is a serious obstacle. Where men do manage to marry and have children, their role as protector of physical security is severely compromised. This creates a gap between society's expectations of masculinity and the reality of what real men can achieve, which can result in widespread feelings of fear, humiliation and frustration, often expressed in violence against themselves and others. In other words, violence becomes the last resort for those who are unable to fulfil society's idea of what being a man is all about. Interventions therefore need to work with men to develop alternative masculine identities, and must simultaneously address the role of the state in undermining these alternatives.

p. 1

Much has been said about the ways in which masculinity allows men to exercise power over women. This paper is about the ways in which masculinity, as a set of ideas, allows men to exercise power over other men. It is also about the ways in which this exercise of power is both reinforced by and contributes to a context of violence and war. The paper does not seek to pretend that men do not resort to violence, rather it seeks to examine why they do so under some circumstances and not others, and how this is to an extent a politically manipulated process.

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Drawing on material from research in northern Uganda, this paper examines how in the face of the dynamic interaction between a model of masculinity and a context of violence, the possibility of developing alternative masculinities collapses. Unable to live up to the model, but offered no alternative, some men resort to acts of violence.

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Furthermore, weak states may perceive a benefit in this collapse of alternatives: the hegemonic model creates incentives for armed forces to exercise violence on the civilian population in ways which actively undermine civilian men's sense of self. This may contribute to the state's sense of control over both civilians *and* army, both of which are necessary for national and geo-strategic purposes. The role of the state in constructing and reinforcing this normative model of masculinity is therefore also examined.

p.3, Is there such a thing as 'hegemonic' forms of masculinity?

Firstly, does war reinforce a hegemonic model of masculinity – and does that model reinforce the war? Specifically, do notions of masculinity increase the likelihood of violence by non-combatant men, and do they make non-combatant men more vulnerable to violence by armed forces? Do notions of masculinity offer incentives to armed forces to use violence, and can this use of violence be perceived as of benefit to the state? What role does the state play in the promotion or collapse of alternative masculinities?

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it is necessary to distinguish between men's lived experiences of their own masculinities, which are necessarily multiple, and their lived expectations of masculinity, which are contained in a hegemonic normative model or set of ideas concerning what defines a man. The key example is probably marriage and fatherhood: not all men wish to or are able to enter into it (lived experiences), but they are *all* expected to become married at some point (lived expectations).

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The model is hegemonic in that it largely precludes alternatives and is buttressed by major forms of social and political power. It is normative in that men are taught they should aspire to and judge themselves by it, and state and society in turn judge and assess them against it - before either validating, or belittling and punishing them.

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it was apparent that a powerful admixture of pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial messages has led to a normative model of masculinity. This model rests on polarised stereotypes and models of what women and men are like, what they should do, how they

should relate to one another, and what their respective positions and roles in society should be.¹ At its simplest it can be described as based on sexist, heterosexist, ethnocentrist and adultist premises, and as entailing considerable economic responsibilities and a particular relationship with the state.²

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This contract between state and citizen is seriously undermined by a context of war, but in the northern Uganda context it is further undermined by a history of north-south opposition, and widespread perceptions of the role of ethnicity in previous periods of extreme violence and brutality. Under British divide and rule Acholi men were singled out for service in the military and the police, and under the Obote regime prior to Museveni's take-over they dominated the armed forces, and were widely blamed for the atrocities which occurred in the Luwero Triangle (one of Museveni's main areas of operation prior to 1986). This has left them with a reputation for militarism and violence which has been played upon by southerners to justify the harsh military control imposed on the area. It is also part of the portrayal of the Lord's Resistance Army which is alleged to be composed primarily of Acholi.³

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In the northern Ugandan context of ongoing war, heavy militarisation and internal displacement, it is very difficult, if not impossible, for the vast majority of men to fulfil the expectations of husband and father, provider and protector which are contained in the model of masculinity outlined.

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It is clear that in a context of protracted conflict non-combatant men's ability to achieve some of the key elements in the normative model of masculinity into which they have been socialised is severely reduced. They experience a loss of domestic and political power, they cannot exercise military power, and their capacity to create a family and then provide for and protect it has been much reduced. But does this make them more liable to violence?

¹ The workshop itself was male dominated, with 19 male and 5 female participants – as such what is presented here can be said with some confidence to reflect what men have been told about women

² This paper does not attempt to explore the historical development of this dominant model, though it is clear that it has been influenced heavily by Christianity, and more recently by elements drawn from the women's movement. For a discussion of how western ideals of masculinity 'have been exported through colonialism to mingle with local notions of masculinity' (Oxfam 1997: 4), see Cornwall & Lindisfarne (1994)

³ While it is the case that the majority of those forcibly abducted into the ranks of the LRA are Acholi, it is not clear that the entire leadership are Acholi, nor that they perceive themselves as an Acholi movement.

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The model of masculinity makes non-combatant men vulnerable to the use of violence by combatants, and the process of undermining men's sense of masculinity becomes a key channel for some men to exercise power over other men. In a sense interactions between combatants and non-combatants around masculinity are something of a zero sum game; the civilian's loss in masculinity is the combatants gain. In other words, it is possible for particular tactics to simultaneously reinforce the perpetrators' and undermine the victims' sense of masculinity.

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8. In what ways does the state benefit from the hegemonic model?

There are several major elements of the state's behaviour in the northern Uganda which suggest that this may be the case. At the most basic level, the state bears considerable responsibility for the social and economic conditions which make it difficult for individuals to live up to expectations of masculinity. Many acts of violence and abuse against civilians, including rape, abduction and looting, are not dealt with in any meaningful sense. Indeed, the state has itself been a frequent culprit, and has arguably used these practices as instruments of war at particular times.⁴ Furthermore, the state is directly responsible for the increasing militarisation of the war zone in the form of 'protected villages' – but also for failing to provide adequate protection within these.

At a more insidious level, the state has consistently promoted a militarist approach to dealing with the LRA (at least in terms of rhetoric and visible militarisation) which goes hand in hand with preventing the emergence of alternative forms of masculinity based on practices of negotiation, reconciliation and non-violence. Repeated calls for negotiation from people in northern Uganda have been as repeatedly ignored by the

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State. The President's frequent statements that he will not negotiate with Kony because he is a 'madman' also implicitly suggest that he regards those who would try to negotiate with Kony as mad. Similarly, the Government's approach to developing an amnesty bill in 1999 demonstrated a singular lack of commitment to the idea, despite the overwhelming support for it expressed by people in northern Uganda themselves.

From a more strategic perspective, it can be argued that the Ugandan state may see benefits in sustaining a context of conflict which helps to justify the maintenance of a large military force for deployment in other regional theatres of war (most recently the DRC and South Sudan). From such a perspective, addressing the situation of northern Uganda is not a relevant consideration, indeed, the creation of a context which empowers military and disempowers civilians may be seen as strategically justified. The selective way in which discipline is applied to soldiers who engage in acts of violence against civilians suggests that playing on soldiers' sense of masculinity is used both to reward them and to control them.

⁴ See, for example, the examples and discussions about the use of rape in Mozambique, Rwanda, Chad, Liberia and elsewhere in Turshen & Twagiramariya (1998)

Similarly, given a belief system which portrays the north as a threat to the south, the state may see benefit in the creation of a disempowered male population which turns violence on itself rather than against the state, and in the maintenance of a context of violence which justifies military intervention and the strengthening of army control over the civilian population in the area.

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Paradoxically the increasing heterogeneity of experience goes hand in hand with a further homogenising of expectations; while marriage and fatherhood, provision and protection become harder to achieve, they do not become less desirable as a result, in fact they become more desirable as they appear to provide anchors and points of leverage in the midst of economic, social and political uncertainty created by war. The attainment of different components of the model creates a hierarchy among men – and a man's position in this hierarchy is not completely fixed. Although it has become ever more difficult to do this in a civilian context, and levels of domestic violence bear witness to this, it remains possible in principle to attain a full masculine identity, and social expectations are fully in support of this. Individuals subscribe to the model for economic and psychological survival reasons, and their family have a vested interest in ensuring that they do so for economic security reasons. Militarism provides a route for some, with full support from a state policy of increasing militarisation and associated recruitment drives into both home guards and the army itself.

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Under these circumstances the space for multiple masculinities largely collapses. The destruction of education opportunities has removed one avenue for alternative forms of achievement, as has the destruction of an economic environment in which it is possible to become somebody through wealth. Attempts to promote alternative visions of how to resolve the situation are ridiculed both implicitly and at times explicitly; implicitly by policies of non-protective militarisation, explicitly by the utterances of various key leadership figures. Even if people were able to pursue one or more of these alternative sources of identity, a national level populist discourse which links key sources of identity (e.g. sexuality, nationality and being 'African') serves to further restrict the room for individual manoeuvre

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Secondly, the dominance of a single model of masculinity at the expense of multiple masculinities makes men more vulnerable to acts of violence against themselves and their families. As a UNESCO report suggests, 'Humiliation might not happen so easily if it were not for exaggerated ideas of masculine honour' (1997: 9). Promoting multiple models of masculinity along less sexist, heterosexist and adultist lines, would reduce the incentives for the use of violence by armed forces.

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Thirdly, this dominance can be taken as an indicator of a 'weak state', in several senses: a weak state lacks the political will and/or capacity to provide a context of security and protection of rights within which it would be less imperative to adhere to a normative model, and within which multiple masculinities could emerge. Also, a weak state will actively reinforce a model of masculinity as a political strategy in the absence of the mechanisms of legitimacy available to a stronger one

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Fourth, hegemonic models of masculinity are manipulated by states, notably by linking masculinity with other key markers of identity such as ethnicity and race. Interventions to work with men to develop alternative masculinities should not only challenge sexist, adultist and heterosexist assumptions and stereotypes which underpin the model of masculinity for individuals, but also seek to break the connections with ethnicity and race which provide politicians with so much leverage over individuals and groups.

Fifth, the fact that conflict reinforces a hegemonic model of masculinity both confirms and contests the notion that war results in a 'crumbling social fabric'. It confirms it to the extent that as the possibility of alternative masculinities is reduced so the number of threads which go to make up the social fabric is also reduced.

Anderson, J. L. (2009). Gender, Local Justice, and Ownership: Confronting Masculinities and Femininities in Northern Uganda. *Peace Research*, 41(2), 59-83.

Abstract: This article describes the livelihood structures of internally displaced men and women during Uganda's civil war, how these livelihood structures affect femininities and masculinities, and how they inform men's and women's opinions on transitional justice. It argues that insecurity and deprivation in northern Uganda's displacement camps during the country's twenty-four years of conflict have had a significant impact on the construction of masculinities and femininities in the region. Both men and women crave agency in their daily lives following this prolonged period of displacement and disempowerment. This sense of ownership refers to different forms of communal and individual reparation and the local practice of *mato oput*, a restorative justice process that has been criticized as gender insensitive. Acholi men's and women's support for the practice of *mato oput* points to the need to adopt a more thoughtful perspective on gender justice that balances international values with the ideas and desires of war survivors. Acholi men and women request control and ownership over justice mechanisms as an integral part of their conception of justice. Through examining such requests, this article analyses the ways in which Acholi men and women desire ownership and how a transitional justice process can extend and bolster this ownership.

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One of the primary findings from this research is that insecurity and deprivation in Uganda's IDP camps has had a significant impact on the construction of masculinities and femininities in the region. Men's and women's demands for transitional justice reflect these lived experiences and evolving gender roles. Having experienced such a prolonged period of displacement and disempowerment, both men and women crave agency in their daily lives as an integral part of their conception of justice.

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This article describes the livelihood structures of internally displaced men and women during the civil war, how these livelihood structures affect masculinities and femininities

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Before displacement, an Acholi man's livelihood came from agricultural activities, requiring the possession of land, a homestead, and the capital to buy tools and supplies. In the current camp situation, without access to land for farming, such a livelihood is unattainable. The militarization of the region exacerbates this loss of livelihood and further undermines Acholi men's masculinity by creating a sharp economic disparity between UPDF soldiers (the only people with an income in the area) and Acholi civilians.¹² According to Moses Chrispus Okello and Lucy Hovil, displaced Acholi men often abuse alcohol, are unemployed, cannot protect their families, and may abuse their loved ones in response to these social pressures.¹³

The Acholi man's former roles were to provide for his wife and children, to protect them from harm, and to serve as the patriarch of the family. All of these roles have been undermined in the IDP camps.

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"The role of "protector" for Acholi men is undermined by the fact that in Acholi experiences with violence, the UPDF forces sent to protect the displaced from the LRA are often perpetrators themselves.¹⁹ IDPs have reported that UPDF mobile units are most notorious for committing violent abuses against civilians.²⁰ These UPDF abuses include attacking and raping civilians while they garden and collect firewood, assaulting and raping civilians found in breach of curfews, killing civilians in camps due to disputes, and torturing civilians during detention.²¹ According to Adam Branch, "the Acholi have consistently demanded since the camps' inception that they be adequately protected or dismantled . . . [but] the function of the homeguard,²² the UPDF, and other paramilitary forces is not to provide protection to the camps, but to terrorize those in the camps into not doing anything about their lack of protection

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According to Chris Dolan, young men who are frustrated with the idleness and deprivation they face in the camps join the militia in response to their sense of hopelessness. This civilian protection strategy, an irresponsible substitute for proper government policing forces, has flooded the region with small arms and no formal accountability.²⁵

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Acholi men's sense of impotence has led to a vicious cycle of anger and abuse that has seen escalated rates of gender-based violence and extremely high levels of alcoholism in the camps.²⁷ According to Dolan, "Acholi men feel unprotected by the national army or rebel forces, and their lives are not valued. They become aggressive in self-preservation."²⁸ These physical manifestations of unmet ideals of masculinity are an attempt by Acholi men to regain control of their lives. The pre-displacement normative model of masculinity has remained static in a climate where everything expected of men has become extremely difficult to achieve; lived experiences and lived expectations differ profoundly.²⁹ Despite their lack of options, men are framed as failures for not living up to the idealized model of masculinity.

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Meanwhile, the reported rates and brutality of domestic violence have become progressively worse in the IDP camps of northern Uganda. According to Brandon Hamber, poverty can lead to the perception of emasculation, and it is often a central driver for violence against women in post-apartheid South Africa.³⁰ Okello and Hovil similarly found that in northern Uganda, domestic violence was linked to men's loss of power and their failure to provide for their families and pay school fees.³¹ Women's new roles and responsibilities in the camps

thus render them vulnerable to a physical backlash from their husbands, brothers, sons, and male friends who feel emasculated.

Women's daily activities of gathering firewood, collecting food, and fetching water also render them more susceptible to UPDF attack and rape.³² The UPDF denies that government soldiers are guilty of rape, perpetuating the pattern of silence and impunity that has characterized crimes against civilians in the camps overall.³³ The collapse of local justice mechanisms and the failure of local civil administration structures have further allowed rape and abuse to continue without redress in the region

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My independent fieldwork indicated that Acholi men's most significant requests for reparations involved cattle, money, and a means of generating income. This correlates with how their masculinities have been affected by

their protracted displacement in the IDP camps. As MP Betty Ocan related, "Acholi people have their savings in animals. Then all of this was removed, to make them toothless, powerless."⁵⁴ Displacement means the loss of land and livestock; this is the entire means of income for the household. While this affects the entire family, men's gender-role responsibilities as the economic providers of the family are disproportionately impacted. One of the key ways in which militarization has undermined civilian men's sense of

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their own masculinity has been to create a large economic disparity that favours the UPDF soldiers and disfavours civilians.⁵⁵ This sense of economic

inferiority is manifest in Acholi men's requests for cattle and cash above all else. As Hamber notes, men's identity can emerge from conflict more damaged than women's since women often develop survival strategies during war.⁵⁶ It is especially critical to understand how men want to address their compromised masculinity, since this will directly affect women's long-term empowerment and the ability of the household to thrive.⁵⁷ For Acholi men, an emphasis on income generating activities and livestock is a way of regaining dignity and meeting gender expectations in the post-conflict period

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As Robert Connell states, "'masculinity' does not exist except in contrast with 'femininity,' and no masculinity arises except in a system of gender relations." Just as men have lost job opportunities in the camp setting, women have absorbed more roles and have increased responsibilities. T

Christensen, A. D., & Rasmussen, P. (2015). War, violence and masculinities: introduction and perspectives. *NORMA*, 10(3-4), 189-202.

Abstract: The evolution and social constitution of masculinities are intimately linked to violence and to warfare as an organized field of violent practices. The present issues of NORMA explore the mutual influences between violence, war and masculinities, the forms these have taken in different social and cultural contexts and the implications for masculinity research. The issues cover a range of historical and current topics, cases and analytical approaches. The contributions fall into the following four themes: violent masculine rituals and how contemporary societies cope with extreme violence against women; popular written and visual fiction about war and masculine rationalities; gender relations in social movements of rebellions and national transformation and finally masculinity in civil society under conditions of war. In this introductory article we present the four themes and contextualise and summarise the contributions. In conclusion we discuss perspectives and challenges for the study of violence, war and masculinities.

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In the famous words of Carl von Clausewitz (1997), war is the continuation of policy by other means; it is a way of pursuing the interest of the nations and the organised groups in conflict with other interests.⁵

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War and masculinity in civil society: resistance and impact

One consequence of the gendered constructions of war and warfare is that the impact and significance of war for civil society and everyday life have been analysed much more in relation to women than to men. This is not only due to the fact that men much more than women have been absent from civil societies in times of war.

As pointed out by for instance Nira Yuval-Davis the difference is also related to the construction of women as mothers (in contrast to men as soldiers) which has deeply influenced the idealised notion of womanhood as well as manhood (Yuval-Davis, 1997).⁶ Whereas many studies have focused on children and women during war and conflict, only little attention has been paid to the role of men and masculinity in civil society under the conditions of war. When men's role in civil society has been included, it has primarily been as protectors whereas their roles as husbands, providers and fathers have been scarcely discussed.

p. 196-197

⁵ Clausewitz, C. (1997). On war. Hertfordshire: Wordsworth.

⁶ Yuval-Davis, N. (1997). Gender and nation. London: Sage.

In this issue the article 'Occupying Masculinities: Fathering in the Palestinian Territories' by Ravi Gokani, Aline Bogossian and Bree Akesson explores the relationship between fatherhood and war from the perspective of civil society. They highlight the conditions for being a father among Palestinian men living an everyday life characterised by occupation, imprisonment, violence and poverty in the occupied West Bank and annexed Jerusalem. Within the theoretical framework of hegemonic masculinity the article outlines three challenges and obstacles for fulfilling the role of fatherhood.

The first is related to the father as a breadwinner and thus to material provision as a hallmark for masculinity position role. Poverty, unemployment and the physical and mental state of the men (for instance after imprisonment or violence) affects this role, not only with regard to providing resources for families but also in taking care of relationships and practical responsibilities for the extended family and the community.

The second challenge is related to protection; here the findings indicate that the typical hierarchy between parents and children is levelled off due to the fact that the male head of the family is able to fulfil neither his own nor the family's expectations for protection with the result that both children and the fathers themselves experience their own vulnerability.

The third and last challenge concerns the fathers' capability to be masculine role models in their sons' construction of masculine identity. The findings show significant differences in the masculine identity between fathers and son. The fathers have lost the authority to be useful role models and at the same time the occupation and violence have forced the boys to 'become men before their time' which have resulted in impulsive, aggressive and volatile forms of behaviour and expression. The article underlines the importance of listening to the fathers' voices in such situations and to be aware of the fathers' multiple roles as providers, protectors and role models.

New Directions

p. 199

The research field on masculinity, war and violence is interdisciplinary and basically characterised by combining gender and masculinity studies with other disciplines such as anthropology, international development studies, military studies, cultural studies and media studies. This cross-disciplinary approach is fruitful in order to produce new knowledge. However, we will argue that there is a need for further development of contextualised theories in masculinity research in order to explain more deeply the nuanced relationship between war, violence and masculinity on different levels.

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We recognise the important contribution of Raewyn Connell in developing the concept of hegemonic masculinity as well as the many contributions to further developing the concept

(Connell, 1995; Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005; Messerschmidt, 2015). But we find that there is a need for new theories about masculinities and gendered power relations, context-sensitive theories that can further develop and supplement this grand overall theory on masculinity.

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It may be discussed, for instance, whether the framework of hegemonic masculinity is suitable for analysing the ambivalences and contradictions between on the one hand men in marginalised positions who are empowered for resistance (often using extreme forms of masculinity positions) and on the other hand men in the top of political regimes having military leadership.

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Another question is whether there is a risk of overlooking some important changes in gendered power relations because the concept of hegemonic masculinity operates with the basic assumption that prevailing hegemonic masculinities necessarily also legitimise patriarchal gender relations (Beasley, 2008; Demetriou, 2001). Here it has been argued that it may be possible to find contexts where masculinities that do not legitimate patriarchy unambiguously have become dominant in the sense of being the currently most honoured way of being a man (Christensen & Jensen, 2014).⁷ Because of this it may be difficult to use the concept of hegemonic masculinity to link it to structures and processes in different military context in sufficiently specific ways.

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Others pose more open questions, like the Danish journalist Jakob Sheik, who in a number of newspaper articles and a documentary novel (Sheik, 2015) has followed Danish ‘Syria warriors’ before and after their recruitment. In contrast to Khosrokhaver, Sheik emphasises the fact that these young people do not necessarily come from homes with limited resources or from strongly religious families. In fact they are ‘children of Denmark’, speaking the language fluently and brought up through the core institutions of the Danish welfare society, public day-care, the comprehensive school, football clubs, political parties and voluntary associations. According to Sheik, these young Syria warriors have little in common, so a debate trying to explain their behaviour as a result of a group identity characterised by traditional Muslim values is misleading.

⁷ Christensen, A. D., & Jensen, S. Q. (2014). Combining hegemonic masculinity and intersectionality. NORMA, International Journal for Masculinity Studies, 9(1), 60–75.

Sengupta, A., & Calo, M. (2016). Shifting gender roles: an analysis of violence against women in post-conflict Uganda. *Development in Practice*, 26(3), 285-297.

Abstract: Based on findings from a qualitative study in northern Uganda, this article explores factors leading to gender-based violence (GBV) in the post- conflict African context. The crisis of masculinity becomes crucial to understanding women's vulnerability to GBV. This crisis stems from the trauma of losing one's internal resources – socially constructed identity role and purpose, and one's external resources – wealth and productive assets. We find that armed conflict replaces the positive male identity as household head with a destructive model of masculinity. It is the interaction between negative masculinities and extreme poverty that characterises the prevalence of GBV in such conditions.

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Shifts in traditional gender roles

As the war intensified, it moved the burden of family maintenance onto women, who became the main providers. Men were either targeted for death or recruited by both the rebel movement and the state. As physical mobility of men became curtailed, women increasingly moved beyond the homestead to shoulder the responsibilities of their male counterparts, particularly in food provisioning.

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The war fundamentally changed the role of Acholi women by forcibly expanding their economic activities and increasing their mobility and visibility in the public sphere. Men, on the other hand, were forced to relinquish their primary duties and many were indoctrinated into a militarised and violent model of masculinity (Dolan 2002; Vess et al. 2013). The gradual process of physical and psychological demobilisation began as they turned to alcohol to assuage the state of shock. Ever since, alcohol has in turn reinforced and sustained the manifestation of negative masculinities (Ahikire, Madanda, and Ampaire 2012).

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Women were also the focal points for receiving relief aid, which further marginalised men in their role as providers. Household relations changed as women gained a sense of individual identity and confidence in their new role of breadwinners. Women now were inclined to demand an equal say in the household's economic decisions, though not with respect to the communal assets of their clan. War and displacement thus had a rapid and drastic impact on power structures within the household. In this loss of control over household material provisioning and decision-making, the embodiment of a 'positive' male presence, men stubbornly held on to the destructive power of violence (ibid.). The negative masculine attributes associated with Acholi men today – alcoholic, violent, abusive, dominating, and neglectful – to name a few, have over time become normalised.

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One must bear in mind that violence against women existed prior to the war; what changed are the safety nets and coping strategies available to women. Additionally, the space for intimate negotiation between women and men has been diminished.

p. 292

The crisis of masculinity

According to Dolan's study in northern Uganda (2002), the hegemonic model of masculinity always assumed the biblical superiority of men over women and children as absolute in Uganda and similar African contexts. The multiple armed conflicts created a gradual shift from traditional interpretations of manhood to alternative representations that are solely violent in nature. In war, the conditions of violent conflict manipulate and reinforce the hegemonic model, as does the state through militarisation and the establishment of refugee camps for non-combatants. Men and boys were therefore both victims and perpetrators of violence in the protracted conflict of northern Uganda. Such traumatic events have long-term repercussions not only on individual psyches but also on entire communities that witnessed, participated in, or were subject to these inhumane acts.

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The fundamental crisis of masculinity in the post-conflict scenario stems from the trauma of losing one's internal resources – socially constructed identity and purpose, and one's external resources – wealth, lands, productive assets, etc. Dolan (2002) establishes the link between the upsurge of GBV and negative emotions such as deep shame or humiliation, anger, and frustration. He further points out that much of this violence is a result of "thwarting", which is aptly described as "the inability to sustain or properly take up a gendered subject position, resulting in a crisis, real or imagined, of self-representation and/or social evaluation" (Dolan 2002). The loss of male identity, primarily as provider and protector of the family, has led to both unrelenting abuse of the self (through alcohol and drugs) and of other persons considered inferior or weaker – women and children (Esuruku 2011). The prevalence of alcoholism has negated the space for negotiation and compromise between family members for ensuring the well-being of all, especially young children. In fact, the manifestation of negative masculinities and perpetual stress of poverty interact to create psychological pressures that result in frequent IPV and violence against children within households. This interaction characterises women's vulnerability to GBV in a resource-poor, post-conflict context. Figure 3 presents a framework for understanding women's vulnerability to GBV.

The experiences of armed conflict and displacement have led to a perversion of traditional practices in the face of extreme economic deprivation, and an absence of social structures obligating clan patriarchs to look after the well-being of women. For example, marriages are no longer common due to the high demands of bride price (Rujumba and Kwiringira 2010). The inability to marry and perform their expected roles has undermined men's identities and

their legitimacy within the clan. Instead, cohabitation is fast becoming the norm, although elders and the clan itself do not regard it as legitimate. Women and their children therefore remain outcasts, and socially and economically vulnerable. Similarly, polygamy today represents nothing more than having multiple sexual partners, unlike previous times when the man had a social obligation to provide for every woman who bore his offspring.

In essence, there has been a dichotomy of power and responsibility among men. While they have abdicated responsibility as household head and their positive role as provider and carer, they continue to claim their perceived rightful power by embodying a destructive model of masculinity. We observed that the roles of the women have also expanded, at the risk of worsening their health. Male partners of beneficiaries welcomed ACF's cash transfer intervention and the increased economic participation of women, as both lessen the perpetual psychosocial pressures on them to resume responsibility as household providers. However, any public or vocal demand for rights, or any open attempt by women to be authoritative figures, is misconstrued as highly defiant behaviour, a sign of being stubborn and "out of control".

Sa'ar, A., & Yahia-Younis, T. (2008). *Masculinity in crisis: The case of Palestinians in Israel. British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*, 35(3), 305-323.

Abstract: This paper argues that the Palestinians in Israel are undergoing a deep crisis of masculinity that is at once a reaction to, and a reflection of, their collective situation. Notwithstanding some important benefits that accrue to them as citizens, they are subjected to structural violence, which includes policing, racism, and discrimination. Their socio-economic conditions are poor, and their sense of identity and cultural vitality are on the defence. The paper describes several coexisting scripts of hegemonic masculinity and their inbuilt tensions and reads the seemingly inward-turned wave of violence as emanating from blocked paths to masculine performance.

Despite the abundant literature on Palestinian women, the discussion of Palestinians as a national collective tends to be blind to the double role of gender, and particularly of masculinity, as a model of and model for the production of cultural meaning. Masculinity therefore is an apt site for a critical reading of the situation of Israeli Palestinians, whence to view the vulnerable side of what is usually considered the hub of power and control.

Masculinity under occupation

p. 306

Our approach to masculinity is guided by the constructionist theory of gender. Treating masculinity as a social construction has several implications, which are by now well-

established in feminist literature. We review them here stenographically, borrowing from Robert Connell's presentation merely to position our analysis.⁸ In any given cultural context masculinity is never singular. Instead, various models of masculinity coexist and inform one another.⁹ These models are hierarchical and compete for hegemony.

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alongside the competition between various options masculinities are also divided, in the sense that masculine identities embody tensions between contradictory desires or practices. A fourth important aspect of masculinities is that they are collective. Masculinities are sustained and enacted by individuals, but also by groups, institutions, and cultural forms such as the mass media. Fifth, there is no necessary or automatic link between masculinities and men.

p. 307

In this respect, Esmail Nashif argues that Palestinian men tend to overdo their gender, and he marks 'overmanning' as a ritualistic response to the crisis of male productivity in the Arab world.¹⁰

p. 310

Several authors to date have presented grounded analyses of Palestinian masculinities. Julie Peteet and Esmail Nashif,²⁶ writing a decade apart, present ethnographic material on Palestinians living under occupation who are exposed to extreme measures of physical and mental oppression. Focusing on men who had been imprisoned, beaten and tortured, they both describe practices and rituals that are intensely cantered on male bodies. In both their analyses, masculinity is gained through endurance of severe physical and mental pain.

p. 310

The most significant finding in both studies is that practices of masculinity serve to transform humiliation into empowerment. Peteet interprets the public relating of confrontations with Israeli soldiers as rites of resistance, which transform not only the individuals who tell them, but also the larger social structure. Nashif shows how prisoners use their bodies as means of communication and for building communal relations within and without the prison. In these depictions, the condition of violent occupation is critical to the construction of masculinities

⁸Robert W. Connell 'Arms and the Man', in Ingeborg Breines, Robert Connell and Ingrid Eid (eds.) *Male Roles, Masculinities and Violence: A Culture of Peace Perspective* (UNESCO, 2000).

⁹See also Andrea Cornwall and Nancy Lindisfarne (eds.) *Dislocating Masculinity: Comparative Ethnographies* (London: Routledge, 1994); Maurice Berger, Brian Wallis and Simon Watson (eds.) *Constructing Masculinity* (New York and London: Routledge, 1995).

¹⁰Invited talk, MADA centre, Haifa, November 2005.

that enshrine militaristic notions of active and bloody combat.

p. 313

To be sure, there are other scripts of hegemonic masculinity too. Devout Islamic masculinity is probably the one most rapidly growing in popularity. This masculinity draws on classical sources, namely verses from the Qur'an and Hadith, which are adapted by contemporary religious leaders who highlight certain verses or stories and give them priority over others. Notwithstanding its own stake in authenticity, Islamic masculinity, like any masculinity, is neither static nor monolithic. The ongoing preoccupation with the desired balance between authentic culture, modernity, and claims for women's advancement and gender equality has yielded new forms of patriarchal masculinity among the Islamists also.

p. 313

Secular education is another important resource for successful masculine performance. Educational credentials are not necessarily seen as contradictory to virtuous Islamic masculinity, and may well be construed as complementing it. However, among a whole generation of secular, progressive intellectuals they often do represent a counter-model to the former.

p. 316

Masculine Symbolism

Three objects that recur in the discourse on a violence got out of hand, and which are particularly laden with masculine symbolism, are arms, cars, and dogs.

p. 322

The second issue is subjectivity. As outlined in the introduction, masculinity is dynamic and contradictory.

p. 322-323

In this paper we explored a discourse on crisis in the printed Arabic press in Israel, and read it using gender theory. We argued that the sense of predicament among the Palestinian citizens is implicitly articulated in terms of a crisis in masculinity. Their political-economic location does not allow the realization of militaristic masculinities, which hold gross hegemony in the area, while alternative scripts of less violent masculinities are also hardly viable for them. Growing numbers of men are incapable of supporting their families, men generally are barred from positions of effective political leadership, and more generally still, because of their interstitial position in the region, Palestinian Israelis are marginalized in terms of cultural production.

Lwambo, D. (2013). 'Before the war, I was a man': men and masculinities in the Eastern Democratic Republic of Congo. *Gender & Development*, 21(1), 47-66.

Abstract: Humanitarian interventions that confuse 'gender issues' with 'women's issues' ignore the complex nature of gender and its potential as a tool for social change. This article reflects on this issue, in the context of an analysis of the relationship between sexual and gender-based violence and hegemonic masculinities in the conflict zone of North Kivu province in the Eastern Democratic Republic of Congo. It draws on a research study focusing on the discrepancies between dominant ideals of masculinity and the actual realities of men's lives. As men try to enact masculine ideals of breadwinner and family head, the current political and economic context puts them under increasing pressure. Respondents drew a direct connection between the resulting sense of failure and unhealthy outlets for asserting masculinity, lack of productivity, and violence. They were critical of the fact that most programmes dealing with sexual and gender-based violence focus exclusively on supporting women. I argue here that such interventions do not recognise the interdependent and interactive nature of gender. Their antagonising effect is evidenced by the high level of men's resistance to programmes and campaigns promoting gender equality. The article further highlights the role of 'hegemonic masculinity' in creating a general climate of violence and conflict, pointing up the need for holistic approaches that empower men to make non-violent life choices.

Humanitarian interventions sideline men/masculinity:

p.49-50

While these programmes are packaged as 'gender-sensitive', they have sometimes been critiqued for pursuing a women-centred approach. Men (mainly military and local decision-makers) and male identity issues may be only marginally included in awareness campaigns and training sessions aiming to sensitise participants to gender issues. These trainings often fail to focus on men's needs, thereby missing the chance to tackle the complex nature of sexual and gender-based violence. For instance, both civilians and military have reported traumatic experiences of violent abuse (Johnson et al. 2010). Male survivors of violence have gender-specific needs for psychological care which are rarely addressed in sexual and gender-based violence programmes, and few of these offer men socioeconomic opportunities such as microcredit and training.

p. 50

violent masculinities linked to economic opportunity

Strains on men to be family providers in fractured economic systems are known to lead to experiences of humiliation and vulnerability for men and that psychosocial stress is known to induce violent behaviour (Teasdale et al. 2006). Violence and aggression is often a sanctioned way of asserting masculinity. Male refugees can face a range of challenges which

threaten their status as men, based on their inability to provide for, and protect, their wives and children (Turner 1999, 2–4).

Chief among the characteristics that reoccur across African masculinity research is the necessity of financial independence. This is reflected in the roles men are responsible for in the family. In their sweeping study on manhood in Sub-Saharan Africa, Gary Barker and Christine Ricardo state that: ‘the chief mandate or social requirement for achieving manhood in Africa for being a man is some level of financial independence, employment or income, and subsequently starting a family’ (2005, 55). These norms are maintained in rhetoric and socialisation regardless of the economic and social realities that pervade everyday life, often making such roles impossible to maintain. Men’s sense of failure often results in unhealthy outlets for asserting masculinity. Women’s increasing ability to exert economic influence and make choices based on their own needs can be seen as an additional threat to masculinity. Indeed, evaluations of livelihood programmes suggest that women’s increased decision-making power can lead at least in the short term to an increase in violence by men (Ray and Heller 2009).

Of course, men may be entitled to sentiments of anger and frustration, but they are

not entitled to violence. Treating violence against women as a ‘natural’ or ‘understandable’ effect of male disempowerment risks excusing it. As Helen Moffett argues, discussions that attempt to causally link rape to men’s experiences of oppression

involve several pitfalls: first, they generate discourses that often begin to resemble a series of ‘excuses’; second, in unproblematically detailing the degradation of masculine pride as the reason for the propensity to rape, such discussion offers no critique of patriarchal frameworks that shape such ‘pride’; and third, it unwittingly lays the blame for sexual violence at the door of those who were discriminated against. (2006, 134)¹¹

p. 51

Gender roles and relations are situated in specific geographies, temporalities, and ethnographies.

p. 52

Many of these supposed prerequisites for being a ‘real man’ do not withstand economic and social stresses, and are easily lost under unfavourable conditions. Their absence can be experienced as weakness and a loss of male identity, resulting in crisis. Masculinity is a constant enactment of power; it is nothing a man simply has or is, but rather a way of being that he needs to perform and assert. Men are expected to take on a leadership role based on

¹¹ Moffett, Helen (2006) “‘These women, they force us to rape them’”: rape as narrative of social control in post-Apartheid South Africa’, *Journal of Southern African Studies* 32(1): 129–44

delivery of assets and performance of dominant behaviour.

Male privilege is connected to responsibility a 'real man' earns his position of authority through non-violent leadership and the capacity to provide,

p. 52

Women co-create ideals of masculinity through the expectations they place on men.

p. 54 emasculation by war

War-related trauma also plays a role in reducing male productivity, as many farmers testify to feeling discouraged, exhausted, and even emasculated. A farmer in Kiwanja underlined this in an interview when he said: 'before the war, I was a man' (interview, Kiwanja, 2 March 2010). According to the respondents, a man can lose his masculinity. It is thought that he then becomes automatically reduced to the status of a woman. Masculinity is thus regarded as something precious that must be maintained through continuous performance in order to preserve male dominance. As farming has turned into an increasingly precarious occupation, it has come to be considered low-level work that bears the stigma of weakness. As a result, farming is increasingly feminised, with the majority of tasks in production, processing, and marketing reserved for women. A growing number of young, rural men today refuse to participate in any form of fieldwork.

p. 56

How to become a man gender education and social environment:

Masculinities in North Kivu are not homogenous; different social groups choose different points of orientation. Social class or profession seems to play a paramount role in the way men enact masculinity and view it. Other factors are availability of economic resources, education, and exposure to the world outside of the immediate community. For example, some rural boys are still initiated in the traditional sense, with the rites of passage as an important defining factor in their male identity. For boys growing up in urban centres, the influence of mass media or a university education can have an equally important impact. However, some general trends have emerged and are discussed here.

p. 58

In Eastern DRC, the most visible and harmful version of masculinity is the militarised variety. Nonetheless, the military experience was perceived by men in the research as disempowering, as it involves harsh living conditions, erratic income, and pressure to commit acts of violence. Combatants are able to achieve some economic and social gains that are inaccessible to many, but their supposed 'power' comes at a price. Joining a military group is also connected to social sanctions: 'I have never seen a family that respects a soldier, they will say of him that he has become a bandit' (interview, Goma, 4 February 2010)

p. 60

Sensitisation programmes fail to recognise men's specific interests and needs, offering little information on alternative ways of affirming male identity. Men feel put on the defendant's bench, as most sensitisations are based on the assumption that men are the perpetrators, not the victims, of violence.

Onyango, E. O. (2012). *Manhood on the margins: Failing to be a man in post-conflict Northern Uganda*. MICROCON research working paper 68. Brighton: Institute of Development Studies, MICROCON.

p. 2

Any impact the war may have on social relations directly influences gender identities since they are deeply rooted in the social values, customs and beliefs. Wars dislocate spaces within which many social relations are constructed and the resultant changes often affect people's relationships. Such changes often confront gender roles and influence the hitherto known power structures. For men, it usually touches on the spaces where they derive their power, and in so doing, strike at the very foundations of interpersonal relations between men and women.

p. 3

This paper attempts to understand the complexity surrounding men's social life especially in constructing what they consider manhood. It argues that realization of manhood depends upon the influence of distinctive social spaces that men are always in dialogue with. This is part and parcel of everyday life and social interactions that categorizes individuals and attaches them to some specific form of distinctiveness.

Camp life in N.Uganda p.5-6

The camps predestined confinement where men were not allowed to move out, sit in groups or even interact freely. The situation for many years were characterized by a form of 'social torture' (Dolan 2005), and for men in particular it was a kind of 'enforced domination' (Finnstrom 2003). They in fact lost the freedom within which they sketched their relationships and independence, a loss that continuously affects every aspect of their lives.

p.6

The magnitude of maltreatment, living under constant fear and insecurity (HURIFO 2002; Finnstrom 2003; Dolan 2005) that men were subjected to greatly interfered with the social spaces men utilized in their everyday lives. They for instance lost the freedom to navigate their positions at the helm of familial relationships effectively redefining their individual as well as group relationships. Indeed, amidst these changes the gender disparities seemed to be amplifying by the disempowering effect of war on men¹¹.

The notion of manhood among the Acholi

p. 6

Manhood is generally defined as the state of being an adult male being, usually made in fulfilment of certain traits such as; courage, energy and strength often considered being manly. Manhood therefore, is achieved and not merely ascribed when one is born male. It pertains to one's assumed behaviour and feat accomplished that in specific ways conform to the social group's characterization of manhood (Connell 2003; Gilmore 1990; Pollack 1998). Attaining manhood is judged by the society at large and does not necessarily come through one's own convictions.

p. 7

Among the Acholi, the society have explicit expectations of a man and the roles that men perform are continuously evaluated to determine whether they meet those expectations. Manhood is a relational construct, a man is only man through the lived experiences that makes others (other men and women) to agree one is a man or not. It also points to power relations as an important step in the social process that men have to wield through to be able to not only express a given role but also demonstrate the power embedded in manhood. That is to say, there exists some clout among men which makes them feel, they are 'men'.

p.7

The notion of manhood brings up what society expects of male adulthood, usually structured along some societal standard form of behaviour that Dolan (2002) calls the normative model. Dolan argues that the model is normative in the sense that it is what men are taught they should aspire to and judge themselves by, and in the sense that it is against this representation that men are evaluated, and then either validated, or belittled and punished (Dolan 2002:1).

In a discussion about what makes an African man Baker and Ricardo (2005) argues that the main social requirement for achieving manhood in Africa involves achieving some level of financial independence, employment or income, and subsequently starting a family. Quoting a young man interviewed in Lira in northern Uganda, they put it thus; "To call oneself a man it is simplest after (one is) married with children. No children and you are still a boy" (Baker and Ricardo 2005). This premise in the conceptualization of manhood in the African and more importantly in the Acholi context draws us to a discussion of some of the often overlooked aspects of gender analysis; when does a man become a man? And does it really matter when men can no longer become men in the sense they perceive?

p. 8

Most of the qualities associated with manliness are attributed to valour and self-reliance¹². It involves being able to; influence decisions; win over respect and be able to move things one's own way. So manhood is not just about physical characteristics, it goes beyond transiting

from childhood to adulthood and involves exercising certain peculiar social power. Further than meeting the requisites for the normative model of masculinity, a man must let somebody see that he wields the clout known of men. It is a socially prescribed position attached to one's relations in the family, diverse social groups as well as the community. As one man put it, for the Acholi, a man is only a man when he is able to have "a voice as man, be in charge and be able to dispense punishments" to either a woman or the children in the family that he is the definite head. It means the man must have power; the ability to influence predispositions, ways of thinking, attitudes, beliefs, and actions.

p. 9

Thus when it comes to losing manhood, various aspects of social relationships particularly the man's social capital such as companionship of friends, support and sense of community with fellow men are withdrawn from the 'lesser' man. He is subject to the most importunate emotional tension, loneliness and apparent seclusion to let him learn a "lesson." A

p. 10

Marriage as a significant marker of manhood According to Dolan (2005), the Acholi have three main strands of the masculine roles; marriage, provision for, and protection of the household. Dolan argues that the entire socialization of young men into masculinity begins at a very early age and is bent on constructing the differences between men and women. Thus the net product of this process is the adult married man who is a fully constituted "married provider." In fact, a man only becomes a man when he has married and fathered children (Finnstrom 2003). Marriage then becomes a significant marker of manhood.

p. 26 changing social spaces for men

With the economic power of the family sliding to the women, as well as the critical role of decision making going to the women, men as the culturally sanctioned heads of families seem to lose their grip on the household. No one in the household appears to succumb to manly control and they can no longer wield power. The changes in men's social space that the civil war cultivated, including the shifts in gender roles and relationships, has in effect altered the ways in which men and society at large look at men's position and roles. As a result, men appear to seek confirmation of their masculinity in many other ways; some of which involve reckless drinking, introverted behaviour and domestic violence.

[Myrttinen, H. \(2005\). Masculinities, violence and power in Timor Leste. *Lusotopie*, 12\(1-2\), 233-244.](#)

Abstract: This article sketches some of the manifestations of violent masculinities which

were visible in the Timor Leste conflict from 1975 to 1999. While concentrating on Timorese actors, it points out that this does not in any way mean that Timorese men are inherently more violent than others. In fact, the vast majority of the acts of violence during the conflict were committed by members of the occupying Indonesian security forces. After a brief thematic and historical introduction, the article examines manifestations of violent masculinities within the pro-independence Falintil guerrilla, the pro-Indonesian militias and the civilian population.

As the end of the conflict has not meant an end to, but a “domestication” of violence with extremely high rates of domestic and gender-based sexual violence, the article further examines the impact of the post-conflict situation on violent manifestations of masculinity.

p. 234

The reason why this article concentrates on men and particularly on violent masculinities is that by looking at the perpetrators of violence, I hope we can begin to learn more about the roots of violent conflict. The inherent danger of this focus is of course that, once again, the story of women and the role they played and continue to play remains untold. In order to avoid this, I shall try weave in the story of Timor Leste’s women into my article. Primarily, however, I shall look at men. As Robert Morrell¹² argued for South African history:

«It is true that South African history has been written as a story of men. But it is not true that South African history is about men. The difficulty lies in the notion of man. Essentialist conceptions of man are the problem. Man is considered to have an essence – aggressive, violent, acquisitive, insensitive, unemotional. What is not problematized is his social identity. What is not acknowledged is the social construction of masculinity.

Thus, as strange as it may sound, men have become almost as neglected a category as women.

Concepts of Violent Masculinity

p. 237

Masculinities, like femininities, are actively constructed and are neither fixed nor monolithic. They can often be contradictory, sending different messages to different audiences. As I have argued elsewhere¹³, violent masculinities can be regarded as enactments which have the aim of reassuring the male himself and «his» side while simultaneously intimidating the «other» side into submission. These enactments are limited spatially and temporally – a policeman can, for example, wield his power and torture detainees during the day, be simultaneously subservient to his superiors and can be a loving father and respected member of his village

¹² R. M., *From Boys to Gentlemen – Settler Masculinity in Colonial Natal 1880-1920*, Pretoria, University of South Africa Press, 2001: 9.

society in the evening.

p. 238

A common denominator for violent masculinities is that «manliness» is equated with the sanctioned use of aggression, force and violence¹⁶. Extreme cases can be labelled as enactments of hypermasculinity. In this context, I use the term to indicate a type of masculinity that is based on an overt display of physical strength and the readiness in the use of violence and of heterosexual prowess, or, as Mosher¹⁷ defines it, «a personality construct reflecting extreme involvement in and acceptance of the traditional male gender role», a system of ideas

«forming a worldview that chauvinistically exalts male dominance by assuming masculinity, virility, and physicality to be the ideal essence of real men, who are adversarial warriors competing for scarce resources (including women as chattel) in a dangerous world»¹⁸.

Violent masculinities in the post-conflict situation

p. 242-243

As several Timorese and Indonesian observers have argued³⁶, the patriarchal social structure, the years of conflict and the militarised education given during the Suharto-era have left many men with no other tools at their disposal for airing legitimate social, economic or political Martial arts groups and veterans' organisations have become pools for disgruntled men and form a very real potential source of instability³⁷.

p. 244

As constructs, these violent masculinities can therefore also be deconstructed or demobilised. As the case of Timor Leste shows, this does not happen automatically after a conflict ends. Levels of domestic and sexualised violence remain high and men espousing potentially violent enactments of masculinity, be it disgruntled youths or ex-Falintil or members of the new security forces, remain a source of social instability.

Section 2: Masculinities as Sites of Intervention

Laliberté, N. (2016). 'Peace begins at home': Geographic imaginaries of violence and peacebuilding in northern Uganda. *Political Geography*.

Abstract: While there is an acknowledgment of the importance of geographic and historical context in contemporary feminist scholarship on the relationship between domestic violence and warfare, there remains an assumption that mainstream narratives will tend to separate these forms of violence or, if connections are acknowledged, warfare will be given primacy. Based on ethnographic research in northern Uganda, I demonstrate how the presence of Orientalist narratives of violence in peacebuilding programs disrupts these assumptions by not only drawing connections between domestic violence and warfare but prioritizing domestic violence. I argue that these narratives of violence, and their associated geographic imaginaries, contribute to uneven geographies of intervention – geographies in which racialized bodies and intimate spaces are associated with war and thereby seen as appropriate sites for peacebuilding. By engaging with peacebuilding programs as sites of geopolitical negotiations in which variously scaled actors are vying for position in the post-war landscape, I argue that the tendency for peacebuilding programs to focus on a singular site of intervention – 'the Acholi home' – says less about the centrality of this site to the creation of peace than it does about the centrality of this site in maintaining the networks of mutual legitimization amongst peacebuilding partners.

p. 1

The goal, in this down-scaled version of the liberal peace, was to stabilize the region enough to ensure its integration into national and international political and economic systems. Yet of the various approaches to building peace and creating stability that post-war interventions could have taken, many chose the same focus: to fight interpersonal violence in domestic spaces and community settings.

This focus on the home as a site of peacebuilding is counter to trends identified by feminist scholars in other contexts in which mainstream narratives, if they do acknowledge of the connection between domestic violence and war, tend to give war primacy (Cuomo, 2013; Enloe, 2000; Pain, 2015). Historically, peacebuilding programs have drawn upon a simplistic 'war story' in order to determine their site of intervention, a gendered story in which women on the home front are separate from the conflict between men on the battlefield (Cooke, 1996). On the surface, the shift to domestic spaces in the peacebuilding programs in northern Uganda is in line with calls by feminist scholars and activists to make explicit the connections between domestic violence and war (Cockburn, 2004; Enloe, 1989; Sjöberg, 2006). However, unlike Pain's (2015)¹³ call for an intimacy-geopolitics in which domestic

¹³ Pain, R. (2015). *Intimate war*. *Political Geography*, 44(January), 64–73.

violence and military warfare are understood as connected yet neither is privileged, peacebuilding programs in northern Uganda produced the home as the primary site of post-war interventions.

p. 1 The Acholi home is site of intervention

. I shall show how a core assumption of the peacebuilding programs – that there is a violent masculinity amongst the war- affected population that needs to be addressed at its source, the home – is a continuation of racialized narratives of the war.

p. 2

To build this argument, I engage with peacebuilding programs as sites of geo- political negotiations in which multiple actors are vying for position in the post-war landscape. I argue their ability to agree upon a site of intervention – in the case of northern Uganda this is the rural home of the prominent ethnic group, the Acholi – says less about the centrality of this site to the creation of peace than it does about the centrality of this site in maintaining the networks of mutual legitimization between peacebuilding partners. As I shall demonstrate, professional peacebuilders – variously scaled as national, international, and local – all deployed racialized, gendered, and classed narratives of violence to inform the development of peacebuilding programs and secure their influence in the region. These multiple narratives perpetuated different geographic imaginaries of where violence was located – from ‘Africa’ to ‘the North’ to ‘the village’. It is my assertion that the rural Acholi home became the primary site of peacebuilding interventions because it emerged as the common site of violence within these imaginaries.

The narratives of violence upon which these interventions are based are reminiscent of what Narayan (1997) refers to as the ‘death by culture’ Orientalist narrative in which racialized women are in need of saving from the mortal threat posed by their primitive cultures. By examining the practices of Sati and dowry-murders in India and domestic violence in the United States, Narayan (1997)¹⁴ makes evident that siting violence in the homes and communities of racialized others is thus not a new project. However, analysing this project as it is adopted and adapted by variously scaled actors in post-war geopolitical negotiations allows for insights into how development-style programming undermines the possibilities of an intimacy-geopolitics as envisioned by Pain (2015). In the case of northern Uganda, I argue that peacebuilding programs perpetuated Orientalist mindsets that contributed to uneven geographies of intervention – geographies in which racialized bodies and spaces are associated with war and thereby seen as appropriate sites for peacebuilding.

p. 2

In this paper, I use these lessons to explore how the idea of violence as geographically

¹⁴ Narayan, U. (1997). *Dislocating cultures: Identities, traditions and third world feminism*. New York: Routledge.

separate from the location of peacebuilders was promulgated.

Violence and place

Geography is not destiny any more than culture is, and as such the possibility of violence being bound in place is only accomplished through the fearful and malicious imaginings of circulating discourses. – Springer (2011, p. 97)¹⁵

p. 3

In his analysis of how place-bound narratives of culture are used to perpetuate the idea that ‘Asian’, ‘African’, and ‘Islamic’ cultures have a predilection towards violence, Springer (2009, 2011) argues that discourses of place-bound violence are self-fulfilling Orientalist prophecies. They identify certain expressions of violence as ‘irrational’ and therefore uncivilized while simultaneously tying such expressions of violence to particular cultures and places. As he notes, the literature promoting the idea of ‘cultures of violence’ (Curle, 1999; Jackson, 2004; Rupesinghe & Rubio Correa, 1994) fails to engage critically with the concept itself, offering neither a clear definition nor comprehensive analysis of its dynamics. Nevertheless, the discourses of ‘cultures of violence’ permeate popular media depictions and policy mandates which perpetuate the idea that particular peoples and places are inherently violent (e.g. the Western narrative of Islamic violence that underscores the tendency toward Western militaristic interventions in western Asia).

p. 3

This logic is evident in the Government of Uganda’s National Development Plan (2010) which states, “Certain elements in Uganda’s traditions, culture and religious norms are not supportive to modern approaches in society and have, therefore, limited economic growth and structural transformation” (p. 31). Given that the north has the lowest levels of economic development and prosperity in the nation (Government of Uganda, 2007), such statements implicitly point to northern Uganda as the national other.

p. 3

Discourses which site violence in particular places and amongst particular people are spatialized processes of othering. These processes rely upon racialized narratives crafted by dominant power blocs to maintain “cultural and moral legitimacy, and political and economic hegemony ... to restructure communities, regions, and nations...” (Woods, 2002, p. 65). According to Omi and Winant (1994, 55), projects of racialization are “simultaneously an interpretation, representation, or explanation of racial dynamics, and an effort to reorganize and redistribute resources along particular racial lines.”

p. 4

¹⁵ Springer, S. (2011). Violence sits in places? Cultural practice, neoliberal rationalism, and virulent imaginative geographies. *Political Geography*, 30(2), 90–98.

The creation of such racial projects are historically situated processes by which human bodies and social structures are represented and organized using 'race' as well as ethnicity as social markers of difference. I stress the correlation between these two concepts because it is difficult to disentangle the racialization of 'the Acholi' from their construction as an ethnic other within the nation-state. I use the term racialization to highlight the process of creating difference along lines of both racial and ethnic difference, a process that is intimately intertwined with Orientalist logics in the context of international development programming (Mollett, 2011; Springer, 2009).

p. 4

One final point regarding my use of racialization as an analytic tool is the acknowledgment that where gender is not explicitly considered, masculine racial identities tend to be privileged (Walter, 1999). In such cases, gendering exists through the assumption of masculinity as an unmarked norm. Thus, the designation of the Acholi as a 'martial race' or 'genetically violent' is predominately in reference to Acholi performances of masculinity.

p. 5

In addition to a lack of national reconciliation projects, there is also a noticeable absence of calls for accountability for international actors, such as the United States, which played a significant role in militarizing the region (Branch, 2011; Dolan, 2011; Mwenda, 2010). Instead, peacebuilding programs in northern Uganda focus on building the capacity of war-affected populations by providing them with non-violent conflict resolution training and encouragement to address their lack of development through entrepreneurial leadership (Government of Uganda, 2007; International Alert, 2008; Oxfam, 2008).

p. 6

In an effort to change this narrow view of masculinity, such programs reinforced the idea that Acholi men are violent unless educated otherwise. This applied to expression of violent masculinity associated with violent interpersonal conflicts in the community as well as domestic violence. There was a notable absence of interventions focused on other (i.e. positive) aspects of Acholi masculinity, including pride in resolving conflicts through negotiation and reconciliation (Dolan, 2002).

p. 6

Critical work on masculinities in the region demonstrates how the increased militarism of the Acholi male population during the war did not (obviously) result from their primordial nature, but, rather, was a response to the limited options available for them to realize their masculinity within a war-torn region (Dolan, 2002). Making the connection between this war-driven reduction of opportunities and interpersonal expressions of violence, Dolan states:

the disjuncture between expectations [of masculinity] and the ability to live up to them go hand in hand with widespread feelings of fear, intimidation, humiliation, frustration and

anger, often expressed in violence against the self and others, in the forms of alcohol abuse, suicide attempts and domestic violence... (p. 71).

Effects of the war that continue into the post-war period, such as poverty and economic change, have been shown to have ‘de- masculinizing’ effects on men (Barker, 2000; Thompson, 2002). In addition, the militarized and violent masculinities glorified as a means of performing masculinity during the war (Dolan, 2002) continue into the post-war landscape

p. 8

Throughout this paper, I have purposefully avoided reinforcing the binary between war and peace because, as Ross (2011, 198)¹⁶ argues, “failure to recognize the violence of peace permits that violence” and attempts to realize social justice would be better served by focusing on power and equity than drawing a line between war and peace. Thus it has been my project to trace narratives of violence that span times of supposed war and supposed peace.

p. 9

However, in this paper I argue that when combined with racialized narratives of violent masculinity, such advocacy has the potential to discursively isolate rather than connect domestic violence to other forms of violence. This work serves as a reminder of how seemingly progressive attempts to prioritize domestic spaces and everyday experience social fabric are reinforced – at least as ideas if not in practice.

[Sharoni, S. \(2008\). De-militarizing Masculinities in the Age of Empire. *Austrian Journal of Political Science*, 37\(2\), 147-164.](#)

p. 147

Inspired by Cynthia Enloe’s assertion that “everything that has been militarized can be demilitarized” (Enloe 2000, 1), this article seeks to untangle the relationship between men, dominant conceptions of masculinity, and the processes and practices that are at play as masculinities become militarized and deployed together a war. To examine the prospects for de-militarizing masculinities, one must begin to pay close attention to how masculinities have been constructed. That is, what are the main processes and practices that are involved in encouraging boys and men in a particular society to view the military in general and the war in particular as a key stepping- stone in their identity formation?

p. 148

¹⁶ Ross, A. (2011). Geographies of war and the putative peace. *Political Geography*, 30(4), 197–199.

The project of de-militarizing masculinities in the age of empire involves a critical examination of several discourses and practices: 1. the hegemonic discourse of masculinity and the justifications for war that the empire invokes and on which it depends; 2. the discourses and practices which promote militarization as a central aspect of masculine identities; and 3. discourses of resistance which reject hegemonic discourses of masculinity and their militarization. Grounded in both feminist and non-feminist literature on masculinity, militarization, and war, the article's primary focus is on discourses of resistance used by men who are re-thinking their relationship to the military in general and to war in particular.

p. 148

To gain a more nuanced understanding of the processes and practices involved in resistance to militarization, I have argued that we must listen to the stories of soldiers who have become aware of the toll militarization has taken on their lives and have grown critical of war more generally. T

p. 149

Feminist Theorizing about Men, Masculinity & Militarization

Soldiers are not born, they are made; and part of what goes into the making of a soldier is a celebration and reinforcement of some of the most aggressive, and most insecure, elements of masculinity: those that promote violence, misogyny, homophobia, and racism (Whitworth 2004, 3).

Over the years, feminists have written extensively about men and the effects of their identities and behaviour on women, society, and politics. Nevertheless, until recently, masculinity, in its multiple manifestations and especially as it is experienced by men in various political contexts, has been relegated to the margins of feminist inquiry. In recent years feminists who study gender in/and international politics have made a consistent effort to address issues of men and masculinity from a feminist perspective (Zalewski/Palpart 1998). Still, most analyses focus on the effects of men and particular constructions of masculinity on women's lives. This is especially evident in the feminist scholarship on gender and militarization. What has been largely missing is field work that engages critically the way in which men embrace and/or resist dominant constructions of masculinity and their deployment by militaries as well as by other power structures. Indeed, until recently, the experiences of men whose masculinities become mobilized and often highly militarized when a conflict escalates have been largely neglected. Sandra Whitworth's analysis of Canadian peacekeepers is a noteworthy exception (Whitworth 2004). Still, there has been little or no attention paid to men who either resist militarization from the outset or change their views and relationship to violence and war during the course of the conflict. While some attention has been paid to these issues in the non-feminist literature on war, such analyses tend to be one-dimensional, focusing on the act of resistance to war itself, rather than on the potential deeper identity transformation of the men who refuse and resist war (Hallock 1998; Kingston 2006; Laufer 2006).

p. 149

Feminist scholars' relative lack of attention to men and especially to men's resistance to militarization may be related, at least in part, to the ever present need to document the experiences and struggles of women that have been neglected and marginalized for decades. As a result, when men are mentioned in the literature, it often seems that they are treated as a monolithic entity, even if this is not the intention of the author. This tension is particularly evident in the body of feminist literature on gender, war, and peace. Pioneered by feminists in the fields of Peace Studies and Peace Research, this seminal body of scholarship established that a critical examination of gender relations and roles has much to contribute to the study of war and peace (Brock-Utne 1989; Boulding 1976; Reardon 1985; Ruddick 1989). At the same time, it was broadly interpreted to suggest a relationship between women and peace, and men and war (Forcey 1991; Sylvester 1989; 1991).

p. 150

At present I would argue that most feminists who work on issues related to gender and militarization would concur, as I do, with Henri Myrntinen's conclusion that "depicting women as being essentially peaceful and men as essentially violent reinforces the hegemonic, patriarchal models of masculinity and femininity, and simultaneously obscures many patterns of dominance and violence" (Myrntinen 1996, 43)¹⁷.

p. 150

The term "militarized masculinity" has been used widely in feminist literature to refer to the processes and practices that turn ordinary men into warriors. Feminist literature on the topic underscores the fact that in most cultures to be manly means to be a warrior (Enloe 2000; Whitworth 2004). As a result, the link between masculinity and propensity to violence often seems unquestionable. One reason for this quagmire lies in the tendency of scholars and journalists alike to treat men's aggression as the cause rather than as a symptom of violence and war. Such analyses rarely pay attention to social, political, and economic conditions that define structural violence and often trigger physical violence. Along these lines, the conventional literature on war limits its definition of violence to physical violence, that is, the use of force and its implications, which can be clearly observed. Structural violence, on the other hand, is not always visible. It may include political violence, such as a lack of democracy and human rights, or social violence in the form of racism, sexism, homophobia, and economic violence, which can manifest itself in such conditions as poverty, homelessness, and unemployment.

p. 150

¹⁷ Myrntinen, Henri (1996). Disarming Masculinities, in: Disarmament Forum, 4, <http://www.unidir.org/pdf/articles/pdf-art1996.pdf>.

As wars and violent conflicts do not just happen, but are rather the result of policies maintained by governments and state bureaucracies, a conceptualization of violence that includes structural violence is crucial to a feminist analysis of militarization. To understand how masculinities become militarized and how they can be de-militarized, we must examine the larger historical, sociopolitical, and economic context within which individual and collective identities are formed and transformed. Along these lines, I suggest that while wars and violent conflicts tend to heighten the construction of militarized masculinities, they may at the same time open up space for critical exploration of different notions of manhood and their relationship to violence and war.

p. 150

While it is understandable that the study of men had to be pushed aside to create space for the study of women and their experiences, it is impossible to understand, let alone transform, the interplay between gender and militarization if the diverse experiences of men remain unexamined. Conventional theorizing on gender, war, and peace may backfire because, despite the powerful critiques of militarized masculinity, they include little or no analysis of the experiences of men. As a result, militarized masculinities are treated as the norm, thus reinforcing the social and political status. The growing body of anti-sexist/pro-feminist literature on men and masculinity challenges this simplistic equation, illuminating the diverse experiences of men and the multiple, often competing, conceptions of masculinity which shape them (Connell 1995; Digby 1998; Haywood/Mac an Ghaill 2003; Kimmel 1987; 1995; Lingard/Douglas 1999; Messner 1997). In recent years, the ground-breaking theoretical work on men and masculinities by pro-feminist men has inspired several empirical studies based on extensive field research around the world (Cleaver 2002; Jones 2006; Ouzgane 2006; Pease/Pringle 2001; Seidler 2006).

p. 151

Most feminist and pro-feminist scholars and activists insist that it is important to distinguish between the terms “men,” “male,” and “masculinity.” Further, many prefer to use the plural form “masculinities” over “masculinity” to underscore that being a man is neither a monolithic nor a static position. Most attempts to classify the literature tend to converge on broad categories ranging from men’s traditional social roles to new masculine expressions based on equal gender relations (Lingard/Douglas 1991). To capture differences among men, the plurality of masculinity and its fluidity, it is useful to think about masculinity as a discourse and examine it in relation to power structures. As Greig et al. point out, “misogyny, homophobia, racism and class/status-based discrimination are all implicated in a ‘politics of masculinity’ that is developed and deployed by men to claim power over women, and by some men to claim power over other men” (Greig et al. 2000, 2).

The treatment of masculinity as a discourse of power is particularly useful to the examination of the militarization and de-militarization of masculinities, especially in times of war. Once men become aware of their own social locations in relation to other groups, they have the potential to change both the meanings and the behaviours that define them as men, including

their relationship to war and militarization.

Theidon, K. (2009). [Reconstructing masculinities: The disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration of former combatants in Colombia](#). *Human Rights Quarterly*, 31(1), 1-34.

Abstract: A key component of peace processes and post-conflict reconstruction is the disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration (DDR) of ex-combatants. I argue that DDR programs imply multiple transitions: from the combatants who lay down their weapons, to the governments that seek an end to armed conflict, to the communities that receive—or reject—these demobilized fighters. At each level, these transitions imply a complex equation between the demands of peace and the clamour for justice. However, traditional approaches to DDR have focused on military and security objectives, which have resulted in these programs being developed in relative isolation from the field of transitional justice and its concerns with historical clarification, justice, reparations, and reconciliation. Drawing upon my research with former combatants in Colombia, I argue that successful reintegration not only requires fusing the processes and goals of DDR programs with transitional justice measures, but that both DDR and transitional justice require a gendered analysis that includes an examination of the salient links between weapons, masculinities, and violence. Constructing certain forms of masculinity is not incidental to militarism: rather, it is essential to its maintenance. What might it mean to “add gender” to DDR and transitional justice processes if one defined gender to include men and masculinities, thus making these forms of identity visible and a focus of research and intervention? I explore how one might “add gender” to the DDR program in Colombia as one step toward successful reintegration, peace-building, and sustainable social change.

What are the salient links between weapons, masculinities and violence?

Without redress of political and economic grievances, are young men, in particular, are prone to seek out new forms of militarized work?

How might we enrich both theory and practice by exploring the ways in which militarized men are produced and militarized masculinities performed?

p.5:

“how violent forms of masculinity are forged and sustained”

“militarized masculinity-that fusion of certain practices and images of maleness with the use of weapons, the exercise of violence, and the performance of an aggressive and frequently misogynist masculinity”

p.5

R.W. Connell approaches the concept of masculinities as a "configuration of practice[s] within a system of gender relations" (Connell, 2005, p.84).¹⁸ This practice approach allows the researcher to capture how individuals practice an embodied politics of masculinity that draws upon a diverse cultural repertoire of masculine behaviour, which in turn is informed by one's class, ethnic, racial, religious, and other identities. While emphasizing the relational aspects of gendered identities and their malleability, Connell also draws attention to the unequal field of power in which all genders are forged. Thus in any given context there is a "hegemonic masculinity"- "the masculinity that occupies the hegemonic position in a given pattern of gender relations, a position always contestable" (Connell, p. 76). Hegemonic masculinity obscures alternatives-not only the alternative masculinities that exist in any given cultural context, but also within each individual.

Judith Butler has argued, gender is not only a social construct but a performance as well-less a state of being than a process of becoming.¹⁹

Generally, she says (p.14-17)

Economic grievance makes men more prone to join the paramilitary, as do lack of civilian employable skills and earning capacities

Masculine identity is intrinsically tied to the function of being able to provide

p. 16

Joining an armed group as “a rite of passage”, a way to achieve an acceptable degree of masculinity which has been compromised by a lack of earning capability

p. 16

The absolute majority of these men come from poor backgrounds; for some of the young men, joining the guerrilla meant they had food, a gun, and a uniform. For those who joined

¹⁸ [Connell, R. W. \(2005\). *Masculinities*. Univ of California Press.](#)

¹⁹ [Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* \(1990\).](#)

the paramilitaries, the above benefits were supplemented with a monthly wage.

p. 16

In the complex scenario of violence that characterizes Colombia, cycling through an armed group is a rite of passage for many young men.

p. 17

A limited legal labour market, and a cultural economy that fuses weapons, masculinity, and power, grabbing a gun is not necessarily an aberration.

p. 17

Indeed, for members of the poorest social classes, a pervasive "gun culture" blurs the line between combat zone and home front. In conversations with demobilized combatants, we made a point of asking why they had joined. For ex-combatants from the FARC or ELN, the primary reasons given for joining were: via an acquaintance who convinced the person to join (21 percent); because they lived in a zone controlled by an armed group and entering the ranks was quasi-natural (36 percent); recruited by force or threat (9 percent); or economic motivations (9 percent).

With ex-combatants of the AUC, their principal reasons for joining were: via an acquaintance who convinced the person to join (29 percent); because they lived in a zone under paramilitary control and joining was "just what you did" (17 percent); recruited by force or threat (14 percent); or economic motivations (27 percent).

the large 21% and 29% from above indicates a more relational reason for joining armed group (this is not sufficiently explained via economic or security reasons presented this far)

p. 17

"Combining "lived in a zone controlled by an armed group" with "entered via an acquaintance" demonstrates that these young people grew up in contexts in which alternatives to war were almost invisible"

p. 17:

I use the term "young people" deliberately; 65 percent of these ex-combatants entered an armed group when they were still minors. For example, "Ramon" spent four years with the AUC in Monteria. When asked why he joined the group, he responded with a shrug: "Boredom. But more than anything because where I grew up-they had weapons, and everyone really respected them. They paid really well-they let you take vacations. It's not like

the guerrillas where you're dying of hunger and they don't even let you visit your mom. Besides-where I grew up, the state doesn't exist. Monterfa is puro paraco (under paramilitary control)

p. 17-18: In the economy of war, both men and women contribute to militarized masculinities

It is also worth noting that these former combatants live with images of a "militarized masculinity"-both the men and the women. This was especially true with the ex-paramilitaries, who explained that joining the AUC allowed them to "feel like a big man in the streets of their barrios," to "go out with the prettiest young women," and to "dress well," privileges the insist would not have been possible without carrying a gun.

p. 18:

This militarized masculinity is part of a performance, and the audience comprises not only the other men with whom each man struggles for a place within the armed group's hierarchy but also the young women who seek out these gran hombres (big men) as desirable partners in an economy of war. This desirability underscores the role of women in "making men."

p. 18

Cynthia Cockburn notes that male dominant systems involve a hierarchy among men-thus producing different and unequal masculinities-and that these masculinities are always defined in relation to each another and to women.²⁰

p.29:

In his analysis of gender and war, Joshua Goldstein notes that women often actively participate in facilitating men's militarized masculinity.²¹

Women are also attracted to such men, because of the protection they guaranteed (against a backdrop of lack of protective services by the state)

p. 21

Being a "good man" includes protecting and providing for one's family; thus, setting down one's weapon may be emasculating in several senses. The young women are drawn to the gran hombres, who have the power of acquisition as well as the capacity to provide security in a violent public context. So they hide guns in the house "just in case."

Militarized masculinities as the hegemonic masculinity is a route to power:

²⁰ Cynthia Cockburn, *The Gendered Dynamics of Armed Conflict and Political Violence*, in [*Victims, Perpetrators or Actors? Gender, Armed Conflict and Political Violence*](#) (Caroline N. O. Moser & Fiona Clark eds., 2001).

²¹ [Joshua S. Goldstein, War and Gender: How Gender Shapes the War System and Vice Versa \(2001\)](#)

Loss and grief are possible reasons to demobilize, p.15:

he paused and began telling me about the cold of the mountains, the lack of food, and the close friend who had died at his side. "A tear escaped me when I saw him die. I risk my life for 450,000 pesos a month. Friends die and you can't do anything."

Implications for DRR, p. 18:

One goal of the DDR process should be demilitarizing the models of masculinity that these men and women have, particularly when these men have so little access to civilian symbols of masculine prestige, such as education, legal income, or decent housing.

p.30

"And how might maleness be reconstructed following periods of violence?"

p. 32: "Carving out space to be a civilian and to act like one is crucial and of course, would require the Colombian state to guarantee some level of security."

Creation of alternative masculinities in the realm of the nuclear family:

p. 30-31

Given the importance of family, this could be a point of departure for discussing ways of caring for, providing for, and protecting loved ones. Being around to participate in raising one's children and see them grow into adulthood is a powerful incentive. At one of the collective demobilization ceremonies in Apartado, when small children went running across the soccer field to throw their arms around the men standing in rows before the pile of discarded weapons, I heard several of the children say, "Papa, stay with me and don't ever go back to el monte." Family offers a key incentive to remain a civilian, but it must also be an area in which the DDR program intervenes to help ex-combatants script new possibilities.

p. 31

Additionally, most of these men were not taught how to be loving partners or fathers. A number of them commented to me how difficult it was to suddenly find themselves living with crying babies and female partners who want more than the social role. The idealized image of family may contrast sharply with the reality of living together, and the tensions this provokes frequently turn violent.

While recreating the family, as a space to demilitarize models of masculinity, by encouraging alternative masculine roles, has challenges:

Domestication of violence:

p. 21: However, the fantasy of family frequently conflicts with the reality of returning to one's partner and children, which often results in a "domestication of violence" following war.

p. 21: One enduring impact of the militarization of daily life and the forging of militarized masculinities is an increase in domestic violence, a phenomenon noted in many post-conflict settings. Thus, the security these men provide vis-a-vis public acts of violence may force women to accept a great deal of abuse in their personal lives. Indeed, as I reflect upon my interviews with the staff of the DDR shelters that accommodate nucleus families (family units), one constant concern was how to address the high level of domestic violence that characterizes these couples.

Political economy of masculinity:

p. 22: The militarized masculinity they perform results from combat training, which includes both bodily and emotional indoctrination. In addition, it reflects a broader class dynamic that has led me to think in terms of a political economy of masculinity.

p. 23: Their bodily capital-and the high premium placed on physical force and prowess with a weapon-may be all they have to trade on the labour market. However, when these "entrepreneurs in bodily capital" attempt to transition from combatant to civilian, their bodies are an obstacle. An analysis of how specific social worlds invest, shape, and deploy human bodies-and the concrete, incorporating practices harnessed to these ends-reveals that these men embody their violent pasts in enduring, albeit often unconscious, ways.

p. 24: Over the course of these interviews, I came to assume that the technique du corps these men learned as part of their transformation into combatants was something unconscious, a result of being surrounded by other combatants.⁸⁰ Certainly that is part of the story; their bodies reflect what they see in those around them. "Mario," however, explained that they are trained how to use their bodies because "It's the body itself that can betray you."

Accessing full range of emotions:

p. 27: In militarizing themselves they also have attempted to limit the range of emotions to those best suited for the combat zone.

Emotions, of course, are also gendered, and gaining access to a wider range of emotions is also a component of demilitarizing these men. One way to open up space for alternative masculinities to emerge is by assisting these men in accessing a full range of emotions beyond those that made them "combat ready."

I am convinced that one reason these former combatants have been so willing to speak with me is that they can "let down their guard," at least for a few hours. Thus, the reintegration process must include corporeal and sentimental re-education.

Access to justice:

p. 30: the desire to avenge the death of a family member may have prompted the individual to join an armed group; in other cases it is something of a family tradition to head off to war in the ranks of either the paramilitaries or the guerrillas; in still other cases, soldiering was an escape from a miserable home life.

13) How to make visible the young men who were not involved in violence?

p. 33: They practice an alternative masculinity, and it is important to find out how they have managed to do so.

In a suggestive article on Sri Lanka, Jonathan Spencer traces the life history of one young man who did not accept the moral arguments of any armed party to the conflict and refused to participate. Spencer insists on the need to understand the agency behind both violence and non-violence, asking, "What are the circumstances which allow a space for the nonparticipant?" (Spencer, p. 120).²²

p. 33: Did Jefferson's involvement in an active diocese of the Catholic Church allow him to construct and maintain a non-violent identity? Where are the other social spaces in which violence is not a central component in the construction of manhood?

p. 33. How might the DDR program make these young men and their non-violent options more visible, valued, and desirable?

p. 34

It is an anthropological maxim that masculinities and femininities are culturally constructed and variable. I foreground that here: what is constructed can be transformed. This will require an interdisciplinary approach that uses

the tools of psychology, political science, anthropology, and economics to analyse locally and regionally salient notions of gender and violence. Transforming the hegemonic, militarized masculinities that characterize former combatants can help further the goals of both DDR and transitional justice processes. By doing so, adding gender might contribute to building peace on both the battlefield and the home front.

How might we include strategies designed to actively reconstruct what it means to be a man? (though: how is telling a man how to be a man any less problematic in telling a woman how to be a woman?)

²² [Jonathan Spencer, On Not Becoming a "Terrorist": Problems of Memory, Agency and Community in the Sri Lankan Conflict, in Violence and Subjectivity 120 \(Veena Das et al. eds., 2000\).](#)

Need to design strategies for changing the configuration of practices that signify not only what it means to be a man, but also what it means to be good at being a man.²³

Williamson, C. (2016). Genocide, masculinity and posttraumatic growth in Rwanda: reconstructing male identity through ndi umunyarwanda. *Journal of Genocide Research*, 18(1), 41-59.

Abstract: While the experiences of Rwandan women during and after the 1994 genocide have been studied quite extensively, little attention has been paid to the lives of men. Through an analysis of their testimonies, this article explores how Tutsi men experienced the 1994 genocide and how it has affected their identities. The analysis identifies three time periods where different versions of masculinity are expressed: the early stages of the genocide, where a predominantly warrior/military identity persisted; later stages of the genocide, during which men became aware of their vulnerability and the extent of the genocide; and the post-genocide period, in which masculinity has been rebuilt through the ideology of ndi umunyarwanda, the notion of Rwandanness or Rwandicity. Post-genocide male identity draws heavily on precolonial military values such as patriotism, dignity, unity and the importance of a strong army; however, the idealism of warriorhood has been lost. The emphasis of masculinity post-1994 appears to be on a shared culture and language and collectively working for one's country, not fighting for it. Indeed, there appears to be a complete aversion to violence of any kind, which, it is argued, is a form of posttraumatic growth. Another positive aspect of the change in male identity is the rejection of former colonial influences and their ideas in exchange for more authentic cultural expression and self-acceptance. The form of ndi umunyarwanda adopted by the men in this study is distinct from the government's version of this ideology, however, as these men reject the idea of forced apologies and reconciliation. In light of these findings, the article discusses the practical implications for those engaged in social work with survivors, and also calls for a more nuanced discussion of post-genocide Rwanda and the concept of Rwandicity

p. 42

The genocide was as much a crisis of masculinity as it was one of ethnicity. Political stagnation, economic decline and civil war had left Hutu men suffering from unemployment, insecurity and the remnants of an inferiority complex. According to Marc Sommers, drought, displacement and food and land shortages combined with the invasion by the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) and ensuing civil war 'made poor, unemployed male youth easy pickings for those organizing the genocide'.⁵ Exploiting the weaknesses of young Hutu men, the orchestrators of the genocide were able to persuade them to participate by promoting the Interahamwe through idealized masculinities and by referring to the killing as 'work'.⁶

²³ [Michael Herzfeld, The Poetics of Manhood: Contest and Identity in a Cretan Mountain Village \(1985\) for a discussion of "performative excellence."](#)

p. 42

Tutsi masculinities were also in crisis as Tutsi men became the objects of a witch hunt.⁷ In propaganda, the RPF rebels and their Tutsi ‘accomplices’⁸ were depicted as ‘creatures from another world, with tails, horns, hooves, pointed ears and red eyes that shone in the dark’.⁹ Women were also targeted in extremist propaganda,¹⁰ but as Jones notes, Tutsi women were actually considered less Tutsi than Tutsi men, or at least ‘capable of being “liberated” from their ethnicity by rape and forced concubinage’ because of the patrilineal transference of ethnicity.¹¹ According to Erin Baines, while women and girls were often ‘spared’ until the final stages of the genocide, ‘Tutsi men and boys, including male infants, were among the first to be killed’ because they ‘represented the future enemy’.¹² Indeed, in Jones’ view, the extermination of males served as a kind of ‘vanguard for the genocide as a whole, an initial barrier to be surmounted and “threat” to be removed, before the remainder of the community is consigned to violent death’.

p. 42

Taking the first-hand testimonial narratives of Tutsi men as its corpus, this article examines the impact of the genocide on masculine identity. Paying particular attention to processes of posttraumatic growth, the article seeks to gain an understanding of men’s lived experiences during the genocide, and how they have since reconstructed their identities. Posttraumatic growth is the tendency of some individuals to establish new beliefs about themselves and the world, and build a new way of life that is experienced as superior to the previous one in important ways.

p. 42

To date, no study has investigated the impact of the genocide on Rwandan male identity, yet factors such as personality, social class, ethnic group, religion, culture and gender have all been found to affect the ways in which posttraumatic growth takes place.

p. 42-43

Potential differences in the way men and women respond to trauma might be linked to the relationship between gender and victimhood. As Heru argues, the term ‘victim’ is ‘preferentially applied to and adopted by women’ because feminine identity is often viewed as synonymous with victimhood in patriarchal culture. For example, in much nineteenth- and early twentieth-century western literature, women were revered for their selflessness, and were covertly ‘encouraged to find their solution in the extinction of self, the transcendence of personality, the loss of subjectivity and the state of victimhood’. The same could be said for Rwanda where, as Burnet notes, women are ‘viewed negatively when they gossip, are loud and overly emotional’ and positively ‘when they are reserved, submissive, modest, silent, and maternal’. Masculinity, on the other hand, tends to be defined as powerful and aggressive;

thus, for Heru, victim status has the potential to negate masculinity. Men who adopt this identity may be considered less manly and encounter prejudice and ostracism. Given that in Rwanda, even the word *umugabo* (man) is synonymous with being ‘strong’, the impact of victimization on Tutsi male identity was undoubtedly significant, and is accordingly the focus of this article.

p. 43

Through an analysis of men’s testimonies, it will be seen that precolonial notions of male strength and invulnerability were ultimately decimated during the three months of violence in 1994. Since the genocide, however, Tutsi masculine identity has been reconstructed through the ideology of *ndi umunyarwanda*, the notion of Rwandanness or Rwandicity. An official *ndi umunyarwanda* programme was launched by the Rwandan government in 2013 with the aim of reconciling Rwandans in advance of the twentieth anniversary of the genocide. It consisted of a set of public meetings in which young Hutu (particularly men) were encouraged to apologize for genocide crimes. According to President Kagame, ‘the point of this campaign is to focus on what unites us, our Rwandicity, and eradicate the things that divide us and caused the genocide’.

p. 45-46

1. Early stages of genocide: persistence of a warrior identity

(a) Genocide viewed as war: ‘We are the youths that are ready to fight’ Despite the assault on Tutsi masculinity in the years leading up to the genocide, a warrior identity among Tutsi men nonetheless appears to have been deeply ingrained. The military had played a pivotal role in Rwanda’s precolonial society, not only as a means of protection and expansion, but also as the very basis of socio-political organization. While Filip Reyntjens refers to post-genocide Rwanda as ‘an army with a state, rather than a state with an army’, this was even more the case in precolonial times, when every adult male (Hutu and Tutsi) belonged to the army (*ingabo z’uRwanda*). According to Frank Rusagara, war was considered ‘a legitimate social function supported by the binding national feeling of Rwandanness through an extensive institutional infrastructure’. Before being conscripted into the army, young male Rwandans would attend *amatorero*, military schools, as a matter of national duty and initiation into adulthood. Here they would learn ‘war dances (*imihamilizo*), archery (*kurasa*), shield tactics (*ingabo*), fencing/sword tactics (*kurwa- nisha inkota*), and the use of different types of spears (*gutera icumu*)’. Young recruits would also be educated in Rwandan cultural values, including discipline (*imytwarire*), courage (*ubutwali*), and patriotism (*gukunda igihugu*). Perhaps the most important ideal, in Rusagara’s view, was that of *ubucengeri* (martyrdom). This was the act of sacrificing oneself by shedding blood or even dying for Rwanda, to become *umucengeri* (a martyr). Thus, the aim of the precolonial education system was to transform young Rwandan males into patriotic soldiers, prepared to fight and die for their country. Many elements of this precolonial warrior identity can be detected in men’s descriptions of the early stages of the genocide.

For example, at the beginning of their accounts, men frequently refer to the genocide as *intambara* ('war' or 'battle'), and most recount how they began by fighting back against the killers. In GR's testimony, he recalls attending a meeting of Tutsi at which it was agreed: 'We are the youths that are ready to fight'. For those who were still children at the time, such as EG, it was older male family and community members who would fight in their place: 'The youth and men around there would then defend us'. In both cases, the term *abasore* (young men) is translated as 'youths', but the original terminology suggests that those responsible for defence were exclusively male, reflecting Jones' finding that 'gendered role expectations dictated the behaviour of Tutsis' during the genocide.

p. 46

(b) Perceived invulnerability: 'We could guard our sector' For several of the men, their knowledge of and skills in traditional weaponry (archery, use of spears) led them to a perceived sense of invulnerability. As a member of the Abamere clan, for example, EB states, 'we could guard our sector' because 'people in that clan were good at using bows and arrows'. For others, it was the belief in traditional masculine values (strength, courage) which led them to this sense of invulnerability. TK recalls, 'at the time, I thought the people I was fighting with were untouchable since they were strong men who were energetic and who fought with courage'. Similarly, GR was advised by some RPF soldiers not to leave the parliament building. Despite their warnings, GR explains, 'I did not care; I felt old enough, a young man, and I thought there would be no problem. I was motivated to fight for the country, so I went out.' The justification for GR's invulnerability—being 'a young man' (*umusore*)—suggests that simply being male implies an ability to protect oneself. GR's reference to fighting for his country also alludes to the precolonial martial ideals of *ubucengeri* (martyrdom) and *gukunda igihugu* (patriotism).

p. 53-54

Conclusions

In summary, the journey for most of these men has involved the transformation from strong *abagabo*—an identity associated with traditional militaristic values of good conduct, strength and patriotism—to dehumanized, animalistic life forms, many of

whom were on the verge of suicide. Every element of previously held beliefs about male power and invulnerability was eventually destroyed during the genocide. Yet one of the paradoxes of posttraumatic growth is that vulnerability can lead to strength. As Lawrence Calhoun and Richard Tedeschi put it, 'people can get stronger by confronting weakness', although the concept of what is considered 'strong' might have to change. Calhoun and Tedeschi suggest that the acknowledgement of vulnerability is a form of 'subtle strength', one that recognizes the value of 'endurance, acceptance, expressiveness and support-seeking—tendencies that may have previously been seen only as vulnerabilities'. Many

elements of ‘subtle strength’, notably the awareness of vulnerability, may be found in the form of masculinity that has emerged since the genocide.

It would appear that the reconstruction of Rwandan masculinity incorporates many growthful elements. Although it draws heavily on the military values of the past, including patriotism, dignity, unity and the importance of a strong army, there is one notable difference: the emphasis on nonviolence, rather than on war and aggression. It would seem that the new masculinity in Rwanda recognizes and acknowledges the pain and suffering caused by the genocide, and could thus be considered a form of posttraumatic growth or ‘subtle strength’.

Another positive aspect of the change in male identity is the rejection of former colonial influences and their ideas. Instead, there is an emphasis on developing one’s own country through hard work, unity and a shared, indigenous language. It could be said of Rwanda, then, that it has engaged in a process of what some postcolonial theorists would term ‘interior vision’.

Rwandicity (Rwandité in French) is analogous to the concept of Créolité (Creoleness), which emphasizes authentic cultural expression and self-acceptance. Jean Bernabé, Patrick Chamoiseau and Raphaël Confiant argue that, as a postcolonial people, Antilleans are ‘caught in the trick of cultural dependence, of political dependence, [and] of economic dependence’, much as Rwandans were prior to the genocide. For these authors, interior vision is the examination of one’s own culture, with ‘a new look capable of taking away our nature from the secondary or peripheral edge so as to place it again in the centre of our- selves, somewhat like the child’s look’. Given Rwanda’s continued dependency on foreign aid, it would seem that a complete escape from outside spectators and influence could not be possible.⁸⁰ However, as the men’s testimonies suggest, the country does appear to have found a certain authenticity: a new identity based on its own indigenous values, myths, customs and language.

Porter, A. (2013). ‘What is constructed can be transformed’: Masculinities in post-conflict societies in Africa. *International Peacekeeping*, 20(4), 486-506.

Abstract: There is a tendency to label gender as a woman’s thing. But masculinities are spoken in relation to femininities. How we construct these masculinities is the issue. We need to construct them in such a way that no-one gets hurt, no-one gets oppressed.

This article explores masculinities in post-conflict contexts in Africa and the need for their transformation. It commences with an examination of the constructs of masculinity and masculinities, and presents perspectives on masculinities in Africa, including possible sources of gender conditioning on the continent. The article then reviews the main roles that men play and the various conditions that confront them during and after violent conflicts in Africa, and examines particular features and challenges that men and their masculinities face

in African post-conflict societies. Lastly, the article reviews some practical interventions that aim to transform masculinities in various contexts, and suggests possible avenues towards more effective and sustainable transformation.

p. 487

The Constructs of Masculinity and Masculinities

Literature on the mobile and social nature of masculinity and the 'male sex role' began to arise from the disciplines of social psychology and sociology arguably even before the emergence of the women's rights movement. This literature recognized and explored the possibility that men's actions and behaviour are not static, and have the propensity to change. During the 1970s this literature expanded greatly, identifying the roots of men's oppressive behaviour as grounded in role norms. A notion of 'hegemonic masculinity' arose. This notion held that a specific configuration of social practices – not just a set of expectations or an identity – allowed men to perpetuate power over and subjugate women. It assumed that not all men acted out hegemonic masculinity – indeed it maintained that perhaps only a minority did so – but that all men aspired to its standard, and ranked themselves against it.

p. 487-488

Considered to be an amalgamation of social behaviours and actions that produced gender-based hierarchies, and the force which reinforces these hierarchies, hegemonic masculinity validated the domination of women by men worldwide. The conception held that those men who did not overtly demonstrate masculine dominance, but who nonetheless benefitted from patriarchy, enacted a complicit masculinity. Hegemonic masculinity 'meant ascendancy achieved through culture, institutions, and persuasion'. However, the notion also contained the optimistic suggestion that hegemony could be contested: that a new, less oppressive form of masculinity could perhaps arise and become hegemonic, and that therefore, one day, gender hierarchies could disintegrate entirely. The concept of hegemonic masculinity has since been deconstructed and discarded with the finding that multiple configurations of masculinity exist in time and space. Although it is arguably rather an ethnocentric construct, scholars such as South African Kopano Ratele have argued, along with feminist thought, that the notion usefully brought to light the reality that manhood – as opposed to maleness – is a social practice that appears in a multitude of forms.

p. 488

For almost a decade, research and work related to manhood have largely recognized the plurality of ways of being a man – and therefore now almost universally speak of 'masculinities' rather than 'masculinity'. The field recognizes that masculinity is not a 'fixed entity embedded in the body or personality traits of individuals ... [but that] masculinities are configurations of practice that are accomplished in social action, and therefore, can differ

according to the gender relations in a particular social setting'. Views on the extent to which masculinities should be considered as regional and comparative diverge. Some scholars hold the belief that it is important to understand masculinities in regional and comparative terms;¹⁸ some maintain that versions of manhood are so diverse that they must not be categorized in such a way; and others, such as Raewyn Connell and James Messerschmidt, support a more nuanced understanding that sees regional and local versions of hegemonic masculinity as informed by global processes.

Masculinities in 'Africa':

p. 489

Barker and Ricardo note that in Africa masculinities differ greatly between rural and urban settings, and between ethnicities, and have changed greatly over time. There are specific and different types of masculinity associated with being farmers, warriors and cattle-herders, for example. These scholars note that Islam and Christianity have shaped versions of manhood in Africa, as has the influence of the West.

Colonization has certainly played a negative role in shaping masculinities on the continent. It has been argued that the models of masculinity that exist in formerly colonized societies are particularly normative; based on sexist, heterosexist, ethnocentrist and adultist tenets; and require considerable economic responsibilities and a specific relationship with the state.³⁰ Nigerian scholar Egodi Uchendu describes, for example, the experience of Shona men as compelled by the colonial context of Zimbabwe to internalize a masculinity aimed at affording them inferior status in relation to colonial officers.³¹ Uchendu maintains that British patriarchal masculinity was projected by warfare and phallocentrism, features that were then incorporated into Shona societies. Colonial occupation of Zimbabwe promoted masculinities centred upon weapons, and encouraged Shona men to construct new identities grounded in Western notions that endorsed war-like qualities.³² Similar negative impacts of colonization on masculinities have also been found in post-conflict contexts elsewhere on the continent. Efforts to transform masculinities in societies that have experienced colonization and then post-independence conflict must therefore be aware of the role that colonization has played in constructing gender identities, and ensure the deconstruction of these identities during gender transformation programmes.

p. 490

how state influences masculinity

It has been suggested that in some African countries masculinities have been manipulated deliberately by states for their military and political purposes. British scholar Chris Dolan maintains that in northern Uganda the state not only possesses substantial responsibility for the socio-economic contexts that make it difficult for men to attain socially required standards of masculinity, but also is responsible for increased militarization of the 'war zone'

through its creation of ‘protected villages’, although it does not sufficiently protect those who inhabit them. Another way in which the state may influence norms of masculinity in post-conflict settings is through the means by which it chooses to resolve conflicts. Dolan suggests that the reluctance of the Ugandan government to negotiate with Joseph Kony, of the Lord’s Resistance Army (LRA), or to use other non-violent approaches to address this conflict, may have repercussions for the ways in which ordinary men in Uganda deal with conflict. The state’s apparent perspective that non-violence or reconciliatory approaches are weak may suggest to the country’s male citizens that to deal with conflicts through negotiation or other forms of non-violence is also weak. This possibility is important for understanding and transforming masculinities both in Uganda and in other post-conflict contexts in Africa in which negotiation or other non-militaristic means of addressing conflict have been treated disparagingly by the state. More research needs to be undertaken on this issue.

p. 490

Barker and Ricardo identify three central requirements of manhood in Africa: achieving some level of financial independence; employment or income; and later starting a family.³⁶ Marriage is also considered to be an important feature of manhood in many countries on the continent. These standards of masculinity are reiterated by women as well as men; by societies as a whole, and, as mentioned earlier, even by states.

[Vess, J., Barker, G., Naraghi-Andertini, S. and Hassnik, A. \(2013\). The Other Side of Gender: Men as Critical Agents of Change. USIP](#)

Abstract: In the context of violent conflict, men have often been perceived through a singular lens as perpetrators of violence. This oversimplified approach fails to address the full gamut of men’s experiences in conflict, including as witnesses, victims, survivors, and perpetrators. This report aims to complement and further the work of the women, peace, and security agenda through a discussion of the formation of male identities, drivers of conflict, and the effects of conflict on male identities. Understanding the varied perceptions and experiences of men and how they can positively contribute to peace and security efforts, this report recommends better inclusion of male issues and their experiences in the shaping of gender-sensitive peace and security policies.

p.1

Men are usually perceived to be the primary perpetrators of violence in times of war. Research indicates, however, that men are not inherently violent. This shift in understanding is contributing to a recognition that men are also victims and witnesses of many forms of violence, including sexual and gender-based violence. In expanding our perceptions about

men's experiences, further studies indicate that this may help stop the cycle of violence. In this way, men can become critical agents of change to end these multiple forms of violence.

p. 2

Biology and Violence A significant body of research examining the possible biological or genetic bases for violence among men has found only limited evidence that men are more inherently violent than women. Higher levels of testosterone have been linked to higher rates of aggression in men and boys, but the results are relatively inconclusive—and aggressive impulses do not always translate to violent behaviour.⁴ At most, testosterone may trigger aggressive tendencies. Stress, violence, and experiencing feelings of domination also cause testosterone levels to rise.

p. 3

The body of research on male identity and conflict is vast; as all conflict is gendered and violence is often carried out by men and boys, all conflict literature has something to say about it. However, we know comparatively less about male identities as drivers of peace and the ways in which socialization may play a significant role in moving away from violence and toward more peaceful ways of solving differences. A more nuanced understanding of the roles and expectations of both men and women, however, can begin by recognizing that men and boys can be—often simultaneously—perpetrators of multiple forms of violence, witnesses to and victims of multiple forms of violence, and agents of change and peace. This recognition, in turn, can help us better understand why men become combatants and perpetrators of sexual and other forms of violence and how violent conflict—including sexual violence and abuse—affects men. We must examine what conflict and post conflict expectations are placed on men, how men's identities are shaped by norms and structures within their communities and societies, and how these may change during and after conflict.

p. 3

Male Identities and the Drivers of Conflict

Men's sense of self-worth, derived from providing for and protecting their families, is often radically altered during conflict, as families are separated, livelihoods are lost, and trauma experienced. Thus, masculinities both shape and are shaped by conflict and post conflict life.

Many factors contribute to men engaging in violent conflict. Some of these factors are structural and contextual, and some are individual and psychosocial, and they overlap and interact in several ways. All of the factors that drive conflict, however, are part of men's lived experience and thus can be understood through the lens of male identities. Men's senses of accomplishment in living up to social mandates—or frustrations at not fulfilling them—in interaction with contextual and individual factors, can help explain why men become combatants—as well as which men fight and which do not.

As mentioned above, without falling into the trap of assuming violence is inherently a more male trait, it is important to understand conflict as mostly being violence perpetrated by men and boys against other men and boys. The World Health Organization estimates that men are three to six times more likely than women to commit homicide and that males of all ages represent 80 percent of homicide victims.⁶ The 2011 Global Burden of Armed Violence report found an annual average between 2004 and 2009 of 55,000 direct conflict deaths—primarily of men—and 396,000 deaths by intentional homicide, of which an estimated 83 percent were men.⁷

p. 4

Economic Frustration

Economic independence and providing for one's family can be an integral part of masculine identity. Men who are unemployed, lacking in both income and social recognition and status, are more likely to be violent and participate in armed conflicts.⁸ Large-scale unemployment can "create a large pool of idle young men with few prospects and little to lose" by joining armed groups.⁹

Before the civil war in 1989 in Liberia, young men's inability to accrue property or money, which were held almost exclusively by local chiefs, escalated feelings of disempowerment and resentment and culminated in the recruitment of young Liberian men into armed groups. Conflict there offered a pathway to socially recognized manhood that was no longer accessible in civilian life.¹⁰ In Rwanda and South Sudan, young men frequently have been financially unable to purchase the commodities necessary to become socially regarded as men—that is, to marry, to start a homestead, or to achieve status within the community. In Rwanda in 2007, the rising cost of roof tiles, required to build a home and find a wife, resulted in boys dropping out of school in search of employment that either did not exist or required more education to obtain.¹¹ In South Sudan, where a bride's dowry is paid in cattle, cattle raiding has become a violent yet viable recourse for young men and a coming of age ritual in its own right.

p. 4-5

Traumatic Indoctrination

Many armed insurgencies in Africa have drawn on or tapped into the traditional socialization of boys and young men as warriors, using elements of these traditional rites in their own brutal indoctrination.¹⁴

Insurgency groups in northern Uganda, Liberia, and Sierra Leone recruited youngest sons and younger boys to their ranks—those who were more likely to feel powerless and be most susceptible, malleable, and traumatized by violent indoctrination. In northern Uganda, Liberia, Sierra Leone, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), initiation into

armed groups was mostly traumatic, involving the forced use of violence against family members and threats of murder for noncompliance. The initiation rites for boys and girls abducted into the Lord's Resistance Army in Uganda involved killing their own community members, relatives, or parents.

p.5

Militarization

In conflict states, militant groups, as well as other nonstate and even state actors, often recruit frustrated and vulnerable young men. Such militarization of youth takes many forms, sometimes concealed in systems of power and state institutions, in which undertones of nationalism and patriotism are ubiquitous.¹⁶

It is common for militant groups to use their ideologies to justify the violence they commit. This violence, in turn, may become a daily part of the lives of the men who are members and can remain so even if the group loses its ideological focus. Most Loyalist militia groups in Northern Ireland were founded for political reasons or for community defence and recruited members with similar motivations. Later on, especially after the peace process succeeded, many of the groups, along with some splinter Republican groups, turned to drug dealing and organized crime to sustain themselves.¹⁷ In apartheid-era South Africa, the socialization of young men in some parts of the anti-apartheid movement referred specifically to using weapons to achieve freedom. In the African National Congress, the AK-47 became a visible symbol for the liberation movement. With the end of apartheid and the realization that long-standing economic inequalities would not be remedied quickly, crime and violence rose, sometimes related to gangs—and as Xaba states, many accounts of this violence have discussed the “heroes of yesteryear who have become the villains and felons of today.”

p. 6

Post conflict Masculinity: Visible and Invisible Wounds

Gender roles are not static: Masculine norms differ across cultures, change over time, and are affected by changes in social, political, economic, and security conditions. Crises and fragility can accelerate such changes. In crisis and post conflict settings, it can thus become increasingly difficult for many men—particularly young men—to fill their socially prescribed roles and functions. Problems that existed before conflict can be exacerbated by new ones that conflict and widespread trauma leave behind. Men may face loss of identity and difficulty in navigating shifting gender norms. Ex-combatants in particular may be dealing with problems associated with demobilization, internalization of violent norms, mental health issues, drug and alcohol abuse, and the fallout from sexual violence they experienced during conflict. All of these repercussions have enormous effects on families and communities, in particular on women, who often must absorb new and multiple roles as caregivers, head of households, and protectors of the more vulnerable—thus, inverting traditional societal gender roles.

p. 6

Loss of Identity

Limited access to employment opportunities, the destruction of rural livelihoods, displacement, and other changes brought about by transition put men in uncharted terrain, where their skills are no longer valuable or their ability to earn a living is limited. In Kosovo, the unemployment rate for the overall population lies between 40 and 45 percent. Some Kosovo Liberation Army veterans believe the veteran unemployment rate to be as high as 80 percent, as many of these men are unable to join the labour market due to disability, war trauma, or war injury. For many in the North Kivu province of the eastern DRC, the traditional identity of a man is one who earns his position through nonviolent leadership and the capacity to produce, provide, and protect. As the conflict takes away men's ability to fulfil these expectations, men face humiliation and loss of personal value.

Data from IMAGES in DRC found that after twenty years of conflict, the number of men who cannot fulfil societal expectations to provide for their families is extremely high—nearly double the number before the conflict. More than half the population lives on less than one dollar per day, and 75 percent of men reported being ashamed to face their families because they could not provide for even their basic needs. This financial stress, compounded by men's inability to perform their perceived duties, may lead men to cope with their perceived loss of self through “alcohol abuse, irresponsible behaviour towards one's family and peers, lack of productivity and violence.”²⁹

p. 6

Shifted Gender Norms

Traditional gender roles may be altered after conflict, as women may have performed many traditionally masculine household tasks in the absence of a partner. Gender ratios also can be skewed due to higher male mortality.

Among Burundian refugees in a Tanzanian refugee camp, both men and women spoke of a breakdown in traditional norms, in which women did not “respect” their husbands and traditional gender relations were distorted in the forms of “old men marrying young girls and old women marrying young boys, people generally marrying too young, infidelity, polygamy and prostitution.” These breakdowns were exacerbated by the poverty of the camps in which the UN High Commissioner for Refugees was seen as a “better husband” than Burundian men.

p. 7

Demobilization

As mentioned above, being a fighter and possessing a weapon offers male combatants not only a source of protection and income but also a symbol of manhood. After a war ends, giving up weapons and going through disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration processes can strip men of their identities, social and support networks, and means of guaranteeing security. Many low-income, young Burundian men in camps for internally displaced persons feel demoralized. For them, their sacrifices have not brought any benefits, and their displacement and poverty will never allow them to marry. These beliefs reflect and multiply their frustrations, despair, and shame.³¹

The inability to reintegrate socially can lead ex-combatants to re-form their groups, sometimes peacefully and sometimes not, to regain a collective sense of identity. In Nicaragua, male ex-combatants formed gangs in part to “recover the sense of self-worth, importance and social value that [they] had experienced as soldiers but that they lost as a result of unemployment, poverty and disillusionment.”³² In Croatia and some other settings, they have organized mostly to call attention to their needs and demand social services and government benefits.

p.7

Many ex-combatants have internalized norms that condone violence or been traumatized into accepting lethal and brutal violence as normal. Armed insurgencies, other forms of semi organized violence (e.g., gangs, vigilante groups), and conventional militaries have created generations of men whose manhood and profession revolve around violence, and the shift from a highly militarized identity toward a civilian identity can be difficult for many men, particularly if they were recruited at a young age and subjected to violent initiation rituals intended to break familial and communal bonds.

p. 10

Understanding men’s lived experiences in conflict and seeing men as gendered beings whose lives are shaped by social norms, as women’s are, in no way takes away from the women, peace, and security agenda; it enhances that agenda by engaging men as allies in achieving equality and empowerment for women, while at the same time addressing the gendered realities, traumas, and stresses that men and boys face in conflict. Long-term peace and stability can only be achieved by understanding how militarized male identities are constructed and how they can be deconstructed—for the benefit of women, men, and societies as a whole.

[Kaufman, M. \(2013\). How Save the Children can transform the role of fathers and improve the lives of children. A report to Save the Children](#)

p. 2

The world is seeing the beginning of dramatic changes in the roles, expectations, and practices of fathers and male caregivers—a shift that promises to have a dramatic impact on the lives of children. I

p.2

Among young men, there is an emerging consensus that their role as fathers will be dramatically different and much more involved than their own fathers and certainly their grandfathers, only in part because of women's changed expectations and high labour-force participation. More men are prioritizing family over careers.¹

p. 2: Encouraging and supporting these changes has the long-term potential of making a major contribution to ensuring that all children are protected from violence, abuse, exploitation and neglect, and that all children enjoy their right to protection, survival, education, development and participation. These changes will also make a major contribution to promoting women's equality and lives free of violence as well as having a positive impact for fathers themselves. Having large numbers of involved, transformed, nurturing, and non-violent fathers and other male caregivers has the potential of making a singular contribution to achieving Save the Children's breakthroughs

[Echavez, C.R., Mosawi, S.M. and RE Pilongo, Wilfreda \(2016\). Inequality: Men and masculinities in Afghanistan. AREU.](#)

Abstract: The overall purpose of the research is to achieve an in-depth understanding of different notions of being a man in Afghanistan and how they contribute to gender inequality. This report is the result of a collaborative research project by the Swedish Committee for Afghanistan (SCA) and the Afghanistan Research and Evaluation Unit (AREU) that is designed to inform both policy and practice in how to address gender inequalities vis-à-vis notions of masculinities in Afghanistan.

p.1-2

Findings:

Mature and young study participants, both male and female, showed similar views of masculinity vis-à-vis normative principles. The quantitative results revealed that men are considered “nan avar,” or the ultimate breadwinner. The greatest degree of consensus came from the conservative province, Nangarhar; then Takhar, Kabul and the less conservative Bamyan followed. The mature group exhibited a greater propensity for cohesion than the younger respondents. Although not significant, results confirmed that Bamyan and Takhar show the moderating effect of education, while Kabul and Nangarhar, which manifest higher educational attainment, exhibit a higher inclination to the idea of men as breadwinner. As to ethnicity, there is significant variation that can be observed in Takhar irrespective of sex,

with Tajik respondents showing a greater propensity toward believing that males should be the breadwinners of the family and the aggregated group showing the least inclination. Pashtuns exhibit a higher inclination to concede that men should be the breadwinners of the family while Hazaras exhibit the least.

An extensive explanation emerged in the qualitative outcomes delineating the perspective of men as “nafaqah provider,” which means domestic figureheads whose responsibilities encompass the overall well-being of the family members. A man has the responsibility to procreate, support, and protect the family and country. Afghan men are perceived to possess the qualities of being brave and, at the same time, honourable. However, a common theme in answers generated in various provinces is the loss of the sense of integrity and worth in their inability to live up to the expectations that society sets upon them. This caused them great dishonour/be-ghairat-i and shame.

Regarding the roles of women, the participants and informants in all provinces stated that women’s responsibility is to manage their homes. Mature respondents are more inclined to accept the norm compared to their younger counterparts. Moreover, data show that female respondents with higher educational attainment had a lower inclination to agree with the norm that women should take care of domestic tasks, while such has little effect on Afghan men.

Findings also showed that the majority of the respondents agree on the various masculine normative principles as they pertain to equality, control and power. When it comes to leadership quality and level of education, a belief in men as superior to women within and outside the home is comprehensively apparent. There is no significant variation between young and mature respondents. There is also a general acceptance that women are not capable of making decisions regarding marriage, with mature respondents showing a higher inclination to believe this notion, particularly

in Nangahar. Significant variation is evident in the data that show that mature respondents are more inclined to agree that “power goes hand in hand with being a man.” Acceptance is highest in Nangarhar, followed by Kabul, Takhar, and least in Bamyan. However, the likelihood of agreement decreases as the level of educational attainment increases. Results also show that ethnic groups vary significantly regarding their views on power and being a man. This can be observed in Takhar, but not in Kabul. A variety of views by ethnic groups are observable in the overall data of both male and female groups. Pashtun respondents exhibit a higher propensity of strongly agreeing that men should always be more powerful than women.

Such findings are validated in the qualitative part, where the majority of the respondents agreed that gender-based violence, although not right, is justifiable when women resist men’s decisions. Most of the male religious key informants believed that Islamic rules permit beating a wife in case she is a “nashiza.” As documented in the focus group discussions, this term means “rebellious/disobedient woman.” In this circumstance, culture becomes a facilitator, and, at the same time, a barrier to change. The qualitative analysis also showed

that religion has a distinct role in the sexual division of labour, and contradictions were found between culture and Islam. Some cultural and traditional codes, norms and practices were considered as barriers to gender equality, particularly in conservative areas, such as Nangarhar. While in Islam, women have the right to education and work, some codes and norms, as well as religious interpretations, say that women are not allowed to work or pursue further education because their honour will be tainted. Furthermore, tribal codes and norms are also against the inheritance rights of women, who must sever ties with their relatives if they claim such. Moreover, a distinct cultural norm is that when a man helps a woman with housework, he may be labelled as “zanchō” in Dari and “narkhazai” or “narshazai” in Pashto by the community; both men and women took it as a personal affront when men assumed “women’s tasks.”

p. 3

- . There should be an in-depth study on the impact of Western military involvement on Afghan gender policies and also men’s reactions toward the issues mentioned above.

p. 17

4.1 Perceptions of Masculinities 4.1.1 Roles of men

In the patriarchal context of Afghanistan, men are perceived to assume the major responsibilities in their families and communities. Gender roles constitute common expectations about people’s behaviour based on their socially identified sex. Since the expectations are shared, the implication is that a norm is set by a society that directs the acceptable behaviour. The study explores the expectations society sets for Afghan men and the corresponding consequences when they are not met. The current research findings connect with Pleck and Brannon’s study on the impact on men from the powerful social expectations they face by virtue of their being males.⁷⁹

4.1.1.1 Men as breadwinners

One of the most enduring gender-based normative principles is that of men being the primary provider for the family.

p. 19

4.1.1.2 Men as nafaqah providers

All the participants stated that a man is not only a breadwinner but a nafaqah provider; that is, a man as the husband and father is obliged to provide for all needs of the wife and the children, such as financial subsistence, family’s abode, education, and health

p. 20

4.1.1.3 Responsible for family security

Almost all (97.8 percent) of the 400 respondents concur that men should handle the security of their family (Annex Table 4-4a).

p. 21

4.1.1.4 Respect and authority in the family

As men in many societies are perceived as the head of the family, they hold authority on domestic matters. Annex Table 4-5a shows that the respondents acquiesce to the social dictum that “men should have respect and authority in the family.”

p. 23

4.1.1.5 Fulfilling family needs at any cost

The belief that “men should fulfil his family’s needs at any cost” is widely accepted by the respondents (Annex Table 4-6a).

p. 23

4.1.1.6 Can be relied upon by the wife

Annex Table 4-7a shows wide acceptance of the normative principle “a man is someone a wife can rely on in all situations.”

[Barker, G., & Ricardo, C. \(2005\). Young men and the construction of masculinity in sub-Saharan Africa: implications for HIV/AIDS, conflict, and violence. Washington, DC: World Bank.](#)

Summary Findings: Gender is increasingly used as an analytical framework in program and policy development for youth in Africa, but in most cases gender refers almost exclusively to the disadvantages that women and girls face. Given the extent of gender inequalities in sub-Saharan Africa, an almost exclusive focus on women and girls has been appropriate. However, a gender perspective and gender mainstreaming have too often ignored the gender of men and boys. The aim of this paper is to explore what a gender perspective means when applied to young men in Africa focusing on conflict, violence and HIV/AIDS. It explores the construction of manhoods in Africa and argues for the application of a more sophisticated gender analysis that also includes men and youth.

A gendered analysis of young men must take into account the plurality of masculinities in Africa. Versions of manhood in Africa are socially constructed, fluid over time and in different settings, and plural. The key requirement to attain manhood in Africa is achieving some level of financial independence, employment or income, and subsequently starting a family. Older men also have a role in holding power over younger men and thus in defining

manhood in Africa. Initiation practices or rites of passage are important factors in the socialization of boys and men throughout the region. For young men in Africa, as for young men worldwide, sexual experience is frequently associated with initiation into adulthood and achieving a socially recognized manhood.

Throughout the report, the authors make references to alternative, non-violent versions of manhood and to elements of traditional socialization in Africa that promote non-violence, and more gender-equitable attitudes on the part of young men, and to forms of socialization and social control that reduce the vulnerabilities of young men and reduce violence. Included in this section are examples of young men whose stories represent ways in which young men can question and counter prevailing norms.

These stories and the emerging literature point to some of the following protective factors that promote gender equality, health-seeking or health-protective behaviours and non-violence: (i) a high degree of self- reflection and space to rehearse new behaviours; (ii) having witnessed the impact of violence on their own families and constructed a positive lesson out of these experiences; (iii) tapping into men's sense of responsibility and positive engagement as fathers; (iv) rites of passage and traditions that have served as positive forms of social control, and which have incorporated new information and ideals; (v) family members that model more equitable or non-violent behaviours; (vi) employment and school enrolment in the case of some forms of violence and conflict; and (vii) community mobilization around the vulnerabilities of young men.

p. 53:

Tapping into men's sense of responsibility and positive engagement as fathers. Both in the case of Daniel above, and in a focus group with HIV-positive fathers in Soweto, South Africa, a number of men reported reflecting about their behaviour—in terms of caring for their own health, practicing safer sex and supporting their partners—in part because of the high value they place on their children. The potential to promote behaviour change by tapping into men's sense of concern for their children has been cited in other documents, but has seldom been taken to scale (UNAIDS 2000).²⁴ Nonetheless, since young men's unsafe sexual behaviour also increases the vulnerability of women and children to HIV infection, young men's anticipation of fatherhood and their high esteem for its responsibilities can be tapped as important incentives for practicing safer sexual behaviours (Scalway 2001).²⁵

²⁴ [UNAIDS 2000. Men and AIDS: A Gendered Approach. World AIDS Campaign. Geneva: UNAIDS.](#)

²⁵ [Scalway, T. 2001. Young Men and HIV: Culture, Poverty and Sexual Risk. Geneva:UNAIDS/The Panos Institute.](#)

p. 53: “Tapping into men’s sense of responsibility and positive engagement as fathers.The potential to promote behaviour change by tapping into men’s sense of concern for their children has been cited in other documents, but has seldom been taken to scale (UNAIDS 2000).”²⁶

p. 53: “Nonetheless, since young men’s unsafe sexual behaviour also increases the vulnerability of women and children to HIV infection, young men’s anticipation of fatherhood and their high esteem for its responsibilities can be tapped as important incentives for practicing safer sexual behaviours (Scalway 2001).”²⁷

p. 67: “The Fatherhood Project strives to promote positive images and expectations of men as fathers and to create a programmatic and policy environment for supporting men’s greater involvement with children. The project is centered on a traveling photo exhibition of more than 100 images portraying the possibilities and challenges of men’s closer engagement with children. At each community launching of the exhibition, various stakeholders, representing local government, private sector, civil society, community and faith-based organizations are in attendance. In tandem with the launching, the host community also develops and coordinates activities around the theme of fatherhood, including workshops, drama performances and essay competitions. The project also includes efforts to disseminate existing information for advocacy and program purposes, initiate and publish new research about men and fathers, and promote public discourse on the need for men’s greater involvement in children’s lives.”

p. vi: The extreme examples of violence and brutality in some conflict areas in the region must be understood as learned behaviours. This violent behaviour is reinforced by social structures at the community level, and sometimes at the family level and is learned by modelling, reinforcement, shame, overt threats and coercion.

p. vii: There has also been little attention and research on young men who live in areas where rebel groups have recruited, but who find ways out or are able to stay out. There has been significant discussion of the means that armed groups use to recruit and coerce young men, but nearly absent is any reflection about indigenous sources of strength which keep young men out of conflict. Examples from Mozambique and Sierra Leone suggest that some families and communities have been able to mobilize or organize themselves in ways that reduce young men’s involvement in conflict.

p. 1: However, in the development literature in general, and in many policy pronouncements

²⁶ [UNAIDS, 2000. Men and AIDS—A Gendered Approach. World AIDS Campaign. Geneva: UNAIDS.](#)

²⁷ Scalway, T. 2001. Young Men and HIV: Culture, Poverty and Sexual Risk. Geneva:UNAIDS/The Panos Institute.

related to gender, African men, young and old, are presented in simplistic and overtly negative terms, or their gender is simply ignored. As White states, reviewing literature on men in Africa:

In the gender and development literature, men appear very little, often as hazy background figures. ‘Good girl/bad boy’ stereotypes present women as resourceful and caring mothers, with men as relatively autonomous individualists, putting their own desires for drink or cigarettes before the family’s needs. (White 1997:16).²⁸

p. 2: Similarly, in conflict settings, while the focus has often been on young men as combatants, we must recognize the multiple roles and conditions of young men in such settings.

As Ruddick states: “In all wars, on any side, there are men frightened and running, fighting reluctantly and eager to get home, or even courageously resisting their orders to kill.” (Ruddick 1990:218).²⁹ Frequently, however, such men are left out of our analyses.

p. 4:

However, how is this range of masculinities constrained, impinged upon or redefined during conflict?

“There is no typical young man in sub-Saharan Africa and there is no one African version of manhood. The term and concept of masculinities—referring to the plurality of ways of being men—has been used for more than 10 years in the field of gender studies” (Connell 2003).³⁰

“There are in turn numerous African masculinities, urban and rural and changing historically.”

“There are versions of manhood associated with war, or being warriors, and others associated with farming or cattle-herding.”

“There are both indigenous definitions and versions of manhood, defined by tribal and ethnic group practices, as well as historically newer versions of manhood shaped by Islam and Christianity, and by Western influences, including the global media.”

p. 5:

“African men have largely been seen as monolithic, and usually negative, and often seen as

²⁸ [White, S. 1997. “Men, Masculinities and the Politics of Development.” In *Gender and Development* 5\(2\):16.](#)

²⁹ [Ruddick, Sara. 1990. *Maternal Thinking: Towards a Politics of Peace* \(Boston, Beacon Press\)](#)

³⁰ [Connell, R.W. 2003. Masculinities, Change, and Conflict in Global Society: Thinking about the Future of Men's Studies. *Journal of Men's Studies* 11\(3\):249.](#)

motivated purely by economic issues, including land use and work. They have less frequently been examined in terms of their domestic lives—for example, as fathers and partners—or in terms of how motivation to work interacts with their other social roles” (Lindsay and Miescher 2003).³¹

p. 5:

“Traditional gender analysis has often focused exclusively on condemning men’s behaviour, emphasizing accounts of men’s alcohol use and violence against women and children. While men’s negligence with regard to their family responsibilities must be highlighted, it is also important to understand the complexity of men’s roles in households and to consider cultural antecedents—and valid social reproduction roles.”

p. 5:

“Furthermore, in various accounts of young men, particularly in countries in conflict, young men have been portrayed as barbarians and vicious killers—“imagine a whole sub-continent of Lord of the Flies” as one journalist remarked (Grout 2002). Reports from Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Democratic Republic of Congo—however gruesome and shocking—do not speak for all young men in Africa, nor for all young men in these countries. Such accounts frequently fail to probe for underlying factors that lead young men to use or participate in this violence.”

p. 24: “For example, while rites of passage and secret societies are frequently criticized for promoting warrior skills, much of the traditional socialization also promoted—and in some cases still promotes—restraint from violence.”

p. 29: “Frustration is high for those young men in refugee camps, who are either ex-combatants, abductees or were displaced by violence. Young men we interviewed in IDP camps in northern Uganda confirmed that young men report a sense of idleness and little hope for the future, and may turn to alcohol and other substances. Many young men in camps report that they cannot get married and in the process achieve a socially recognized manhood. Said one young men living in an IDP camp in northern Uganda: “In the past, we would have the opportunity to dig [farm a small plot of land] and produce things and get married. Now we are displaced and it is very different [meaning they do not have land to dig on].” Forced settlement in camps weakens men’s ties to their land, leading to fears that others will take their land and that they will have nowhere to return.

p. 29: “Other authors found similar conditions in camps among Burundian refugees in Tanzania, where young men were described as seeking to “recuperate the masculinity that they perceive to have lost in the camp” (Turner 1999:1).”

³¹ Lindsay, L.A., and S.F. Miescher (Eds.) 2003. *Men and Masculinities in Modern Africa*. Portsmouth, NH:Heinemann.

p. 29: “ Young men in camps frequently complain that women do not respect them; some men sense that camp administrators have become the new big men. In other cases, however, some young men seem to take advantage of post-conflict settings to question and usurp the authority of older men.”

p. 29: Other authors have also reported on a loss of manhood suffered by men in conflict areas. Dolan (2003)³² writing on men in conflict-affected areas in northern Uganda reports:

“Non-combatant men’s ability to achieve some of the key elements in the model of masculinity into which they have been socialized is severely reduced. Education and enterprise can no longer bring recognition or a sense of achievement. Men are unable to protect their families or property from rebels of the Lord’s Resistance Army (LRA) or from soldiers who rape and steal. Humiliation, resentment, oppression and frustration lead to violence—sometimes directed against the self.”

p. 34” Several researchers have presented accounts of young men, out of work, and with tremendous free time on their hands, loosely connected to any social institutions, creating their own language and their own culture (Sommers 2003)”.³³

p.34: “If often seen in a negative light, however, some reports suggest that unemployed young men in such settings are a major voice for cultural expression, who are able to service through music and mingling of different tribal groups and their creative informal economic activity.”

p. 45: “In some countries, public health facilities are encouraging men to participate in childbirth and prenatal care. Other initiatives engage men in promoting maternal health by educating them on warning signs of maternal complications. UNICEF and other UN agencies have begun to discuss ways to engage men more fully in promoting the health and development of their children. A handful of NGOs in Latin America and parts of Africa have started educational sessions, group discussions or support groups for fathers, including both adult and adolescent fathers. Others have carried out mass media campaigns to promote positive images of men’s involvement in the lives of children and of actively engaged fathers, to counter prevailing negative versions.”

p. 58-59: “A number of opportunities to address young men and gender exist within the framework of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) programs following conflict. For example, both the demobilization and reintegration phases include orientation and psycho-social support to ex-combatants (and their dependents) that allow for discussions

³² Dolan, C. (2003). “Does War Reinforce a Dominant Notion of Masculinity?”

³³ [Sommers, M. \(2003\). “Urbanization, War, and Africa’s Youth at Risk: Towards Understanding and Addressing Future Challenges.” Washington, DC: USAID.](#)

and reflections on reasons for conflict as it relates to gender and men. It is also important to reinforce positive images of masculinity for former combatants who need to find non-violent male identities in a post-conflict society. Lastly, young men could be engaged as “peace builders” and promoters of gender equality in pre-conflict situations (plans are in place in Chad to support such an initiative).”

p. 59:

What are the attitudes of gate-keepers, such as teachers, community members and others who are the main socialization agents for young men?

How are gender-related norms constructed in diverse settings where young men are socialized, including the education system, the workplace, communities and the armed forces?

In what circumstances do men question or resist “militarized” or violent versions of manhood? What community processes and social control serve to reduce conflict and violence and to protect young men from becoming involved in armed or insurgency groups?

What are the gender-specific challenges of young men as they transition from conflict settings and male identities associated with violence to male identities associated with post-conflict?

Section 3: Critical Approaches to Hegemonic and Militarized Masculinities (Theoretical)

[Connell, R. W., & Messerschmidt, J. W. \(2005\). *Hegemonic masculinity rethinking the concept*. *Gender & society*, 19\(6\), 829-859.](#)

Abstract: The concept of hegemonic masculinity has influenced gender studies across many academic fields but has also attracted serious criticism. The authors trace the origin of the concept in a convergence of ideas in the early 1980s and map the ways it was applied when research on men and masculinities expanded. Evaluating the principal criticisms, the authors defend the underlying concept of masculinity, which in most research use is neither reified nor essentialist. However, the criticism of trait models of gender and rigid typologies is sound. The treatment of the subject in research on hegemonic masculinity can be improved with the aid of recent psychological models, although limits to discursive flexibility must be recognized. The concept of hegemonic masculinity does not equate to a model of social reproduction; we need to recognize social struggles in which subordinated masculinities influence dominant forms. Finally, the authors review what has been confirmed from early formulations (the idea of multiple masculinities, the concept of hegemony, and the emphasis on change) and what needs to be discarded (one-dimensional treatment of hierarchy and trait conceptions of gender). The authors suggest reformulation of the concept in four areas: a more complex model of gender hierarchy, emphasizing the agency of women; explicit recognition of the geography of masculinities, emphasizing the interplay among local, regional, and global levels; a more specific treatment of embodiment in contexts of privilege and power; and a stronger emphasis on the dynamics of hegemonic masculinity, recognizing internal contradictions and the possibilities of movement toward gender democracy.

p. 829-830

The concept of hegemonic masculinity, formulated two decades ago, has considerably influenced recent thinking about men, gender, and social hierarchy. It has provided a link between the growing research field of men's studies (also known as masculinity studies and critical studies of men), popular anxieties about men and boys, feminist accounts of patriarchy, and sociological models of gender. It has found uses in applied fields ranging from education and antiviolence work to health and counselling.

This is a contested concept. Yet the issues it names are very much at stake in contemporary

struggles about power and political leadership, public and private violence, and changes in families and sexuality. A comprehensive re-examination of the concept of hegemonic masculinity seems worthwhile. If the concept proves still useful, it must be reformulated in contemporary terms. We attempt both tasks in this article.

p. 835

International research has strongly confirmed the initial insight that gender orders construct multiple masculinities. Valdés and Olavarria (1998) show that even in a culturally homogeneous country such as Chile, there is no unitary masculinity, since patterns vary by class and generation. In another famously homogeneous country, Japan, Ishii-Kuntz (2003) traces the “emergence of diverse masculinities” in recent social history, with changes in child care practices a key development. Diversity of masculinities is also found in particular institutions, such as the military (Higate 2003).

Gutmann (1996), in the most beautifully observed modern ethnography of masculinity, studied a case where there is a well-defined public masculine identity— Mexican “machismo.” Gutmann shows how the imagery of machismo developed historically and was interwoven with the development of Mexican nationalism, masking enormous complexity in the actual lives of Mexican men. Gutmann teases out four patterns of masculinity in the working-class urban settlement he studies, insisting that even these four are crosscut by other social divisions and are constantly renegotiated in everyday life.

p. 835

Finally, a considerable body of research shows that masculinities are not simply different but also subject to change. Challenges to hegemony are common, and so are adjustments in the face of these challenges. Morrell (1998) assembles the evidence about gender transformations in southern Africa associated with the end of Apartheid, a system of segregated and competing patriarchies. Ferguson (2001) traces the decline of long-standing ideals of masculinity in Ireland—the celibate priest and the hardworking family man—and their replacement by more modernized and market-oriented models. Dasgupta (2000) traces tensions in the Japanese “salaryman” model of masculinity, especially after the “bubble economy” of the 1980s: A cultural figure of the “salaryman escaping” has appeared. Taga (2003) documents diverse responses to change among young middle-class men in Japan, including new options for domestic partnership with women. Meuser (2003) traces generational change in Germany, partly driven by men’s responses to changes among women. Many (although not all) young men, now expecting women to reject patriarchal social relations, are crafting a “pragmatic egalitarianism” of their own. Morris and Evans (2001), studying images of rural masculinity and femininity in Britain, finds a slower pace of change but an increasing subtlety and fragmentation in the representation of hegemonic masculinity.

p. 836

The Underlying Concept of Masculinity

That the underlying concept of masculinity is flawed has been argued from two different points of view, realist and poststructuralist. To Collinson and Hearn (1994) and Hearn (1996, 2004), the concept of masculinity is blurred, is uncertain in its meaning, and tends to deemphasize issues of power and domination. It is ultimately unnecessary to the task of understanding and contesting the power of men. The concept of multiple masculinities tends to produce a static typology.

To Petersen (1998, 2003), Collier (1998), and MacInnes (1998), the concept of masculinity is flawed because it essentializes the character of men or imposes a false unity on a fluid and contradictory reality. Some versions of this argument criticize masculinity research because it has not adopted a specific poststructuralist tool kit—which would, for instance, emphasize the discursive construction of identities (Whitehead 2002). The concept of masculinity is criticized for being framed within a heteronormative conception of gender that essentializes male-female difference and ignores difference and exclusion within the gender categories. The concept of masculinity is said to rest logically on a dichotomization of sex (biological) versus gender (cultural) and thus marginalizes or naturalizes the body.

p. 836

The notion that the concept of masculinity essentializes or homogenizes is quite difficult to reconcile with the tremendous multiplicity of social constructions that ethnographers and historians have documented with the aid of this concept (Connell 2003). Even further removed from essentialism is the fact that researchers have explored masculinities enacted by people with female bodies (Halberstam 1998; Messerschmidt 2004). Masculinity is not a fixed entity embedded in the body or personality traits of individuals. Masculinities are configurations of practice that are accomplished in social action and, therefore, can differ according to the gender relations in a particular social setting.

p. 846

What Should Be Retained

The fundamental feature of the concept remains the combination of the plurality of masculinities and the hierarchy of masculinities. This basic idea has stood up well in 20 years of research experience. Multiple patterns of masculinity have been identified in many studies, in a variety of countries, and in different institutional and cultural settings. It is also a widespread research finding that certain masculinities are more socially central, or more associated with authority and social power, than others. The concept of hegemonic masculinity presumes the subordination of nonhegemonic masculinities, and this is a process that has now been documented in many settings, internationally.

Also well supported is the idea that the hierarchy of masculinities is a pattern of hegemony,

not a pattern of simple domination based on force. Cultural consent, discursive centrality, institutionalization, and the marginalization or delegitimation of alternatives are widely documented features of socially dominant masculinities. Also well supported is the original idea that hegemonic masculinity need not be the commonest pattern in the everyday lives of boys and men. Rather, hegemony works in part through the production of exemplars of masculinity (e.g., professional sports stars), symbols that have authority despite the fact that most men and boys do not fully live up to them.

The original formulations laid some emphasis on the possibility of change in gender relations, on the idea that a dominant pattern of masculinity was open to challenge—from women’s resistance to patriarchy, and from men as bearers of alternative masculinities. Research has very fully confirmed the idea of the historical construction and reconstruction of hegemonic masculinities. Both at a local and a broad societal level, the situations in which masculinities were formed change over time. These changes call forth new strategies in gender relations (e.g., companionate marriage) and result in redefinitions of socially admired masculinity (e.g., the domestic partner rather than the Victorian patriarch).

p. 846-847

What Should Be Rejected

Two features of early formulations about hegemonic masculinity have not stood up to criticism and should be discarded. The first is a too-simple model of the social relations surrounding hegemonic masculinities. The formulation in *Gender and Power* attempted to locate all masculinities (and all femininities) in terms of a single pattern of power, the “global dominance” of men over women (Connell 1987, 183). While this was useful at the time in preventing the idea of multiple masculinities from collapsing into an array of competing lifestyles, it is now clearly

inadequate to our understanding of relations among groups of men and forms of masculinity and of women’s relations with dominant masculinities. For instance, dominance in gender relations involves an interplay of costs and benefits, challenges to hegemonic masculinity arise from the “protest masculinities” of marginalized ethnic groups, and bourgeois women may appropriate aspects of hegemonic masculinity in constructing corporate or professional careers. Clearly, better ways of understanding gender hierarchy are required.

Despite the critique of trait psychology in *Gender and Power*, and the appeal to psychoanalytic ideas about unconscious motivation, early statements about hegemonic masculinity, when they attempted to characterize the actual content of different configurations of masculinity, often fell back on trait terminology—or at best failed to offer an alternative to it. The notion of masculinity as an assemblage of traits opened the path to that treatment of hegemonic masculinity as a fixed character type that has given so much trouble and is rightly criticized in recent psychological writing. Not only the essentialist concept of masculinity but also, more generally, the trait approach to gender need to be thoroughly transcended.

p. 847

What Should Be Reformulated

In light of the research and critiques discussed above, we argue that the concept of hegemonic masculinity is in need of reformulation in four main areas: the nature of gender hierarchy, the geography of masculine configurations, the process of social embodiment, and the dynamics of masculinities.

p. 848 the nature of gender hierarchy

We suggest, therefore, that our understanding of hegemonic masculinity needs to incorporate a more holistic understanding of gender hierarchy, recognizing the agency of subordinated groups as much as the power of dominant groups and the mutual conditioning of gender dynamics and other social dynamics. We think this will tend, over time, to reduce the isolation of men's studies and will emphasize the relevance of gender dynamics to the problems—ranging from effects of globalization to issues of violence and peacemaking—being explored in other fields of social science.

p. 850 the geography of masculine configurations

Adopting an analytical framework that distinguishes local, regional, and global masculinities (and the same point applies to femininities) allows us to recognize the importance of place without falling into a monadic world of totally independent cultures or discourses. It also casts some light on the problem of multiple hegemonic masculinities, raised above. Although local models of hegemonic masculinity may differ from each other, they generally overlap. The interplay with society-wide gender dynamics is part of the explanation. Furthermore, hegemonic masculinities are, as we have just argued, to a significant degree constituted in men's inter-action with women; therefore, the commonalities in women's gender practices also produce convergence. Accordingly, local constructions of hegemonic masculinity have a certain "family resemblance," to use Wittgenstein's term, rather than logical identity. In this sense, local plurality is compatible with singularity of hegemonic masculinity at the regional or society-wide level. The "family resemblance" among local variants is likely to be represented by one symbolic model at the regional level, not by multiple models.

Social embodiment, p.851-852

To understand embodiment and hegemony, we need to understand that bodies are both objects of social practice and agents in social practice (Connell 2002). There are circuits of social practice linking bodily processes and social structures—many such circuits, which add up to the historical process in which society is embodied. These circuits of social embodiment may be very direct and simple, or they may be long and complex, passing through institutions, economic relations, cultural symbols, and so forth—without ceasing to involve material bodies. This can readily be illustrated by thinking about the gender patterns in health, illness, and medical treatment.

Dynamics of masculinities, p.853

Gender relations are always arenas of tension. A given pattern of hegemonic masculinity is hegemonic to the extent that it provides a solution to these tensions, tending to stabilize patriarchal power or reconstitute it in new conditions. A pattern of practice (i.e., a version of masculinity) that provided such a solution in past conditions but not in new conditions is open to challenge—is in fact certain to be challenged.

Such contestation occurs continuously, through the efforts of the women's movement (at the local, regional, and global levels), among generations in immigrant communities, between models of managerial masculinity, among rivals for political authority, among claimants for attention in the entertainment industry, and so on. The contestation is real, and gender theory does not predict which will prevail—the process is historically open. Accordingly, hegemony may fail. The concept of hegemonic masculinity does not rely on a theory of social reproduction.

Put another way, the conceptualization of hegemonic masculinity should explicitly acknowledge the possibility of democratizing gender relations, of abolishing power differentials, not just of reproducing hierarchy. A transitional move in this direction requires an attempt to establish as hegemonic among men ("internal hegemony" in Demetriou's [2001] sense) a version of masculinity open to equality with women. In this sense, it is possible to define a hegemonic masculinity that is thoroughly "positive" (in Collier's [1998] sense). Recent history has shown the difficulty of doing this in practice. A positive hegemony remains, nevertheless, a key strategy for contemporary efforts at reform.

[Belkin, A., & Carver, T. \(2012\). Militarized Masculinities and the Erasure of Violence: Aaron Belkin in Conversation with Terrell Carver. International Feminist Journal of Politics, 14\(4\), 558-567.](#)

p. 558

How and in what ways military masculinities might get implicated in the erasure of violence?

This is an intriguingly counter-intuitive question. Militarized masculinities are about violence. They advertise it, they celebrate it.

Militarized masculinities are the normalized and legitimized ways through which state violence is not merely represented as itself but also distinguished – usually by silent implication – from any number of other things. If we're looking at soldiers and weaponry, boys and toys, then we're not looking at international business executives, the local police or gangster drug-lords.

Or are we? Charlotte Hooper (Manly States, 2001) and Cynthia Enloe (Globalization and Militarism, 2007) have taught us to see otherwise. The production, consumption, distribution and exchange of more-or-less organized violence are hardly confined to the military or men,

but they are certainly masculine and masculinized, and profoundly destructive, even – or indeed especially – as ‘defence’. We know them when we see them.

Or do we? We need to look more closely at what we are looking at. What we are looking at is served up to us, precisely so that we can see ‘it’ for what it is, and ‘what it is’ has already been decided for us. What’s in the picture isn’t real violence at all; it’s a sanitized representation of legitimated (and sometimes illegitimated) violence, as you suggest,

p. 559-560

AB: Through which processes do you see the erasure of violence as being accomplished?

TC: Actually we’re looking here not just at the representations of objects but also, importantly, at two discursive boundary lines that are drawn through political power-processes.

One line is between good guys and bad guys, the former smiling and wearing clean outfits, and the latter scowling, demonized and ‘wanted’, either dead or on trial. The other boundary line is between what we can look at, and what we can’t. The latter is a taboo zone, and it’s everywhere. Violence as it really happens isn’t represented; it’s obscene in the ancient Greek sense, enacted off-stage. It’s too upsetting for the news, too gruesome for the information services, too uncomfortable for everyone. The no-body-bags/no-coffins policy of recent US administrations is all about the erasure of violence. Even closed-casket funeral processions in public (newly ‘Royal’ Wootton Bassett¹ comes to mind) make violence invisible. They are symbolic. They are reprises of representations. They reproduce the vocabulary of non-taboo communication. Violence in this mode is essential to fiction, movies, TV drama, pictures, prose journalism and all the vicarious things we know about. But real violence as it happens is erased.

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AB: So, you are arguing that militarized masculinities can be thought of as sites where two distinct but related boundary lines get articulated, one which distinguishes the good guys from the bad, and the other separating out what we can look at from what we can’t. In other words, militarized masculinities are sites for separating off the taboo/obscene/abjected from that which is legitimate. Can I ask you for an example of the articulation of the second boundary line through militarized masculinities?

Part of the reason I’m asking is that I understand militarized masculinities as sites where the taboo/obscene/abjected get produced and incited, not just suppressed. This is an argument that I develop in my new book *Bring Me Men* (2012),

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It struck me that the stereotypical version of militarized masculinities ‘approved for release’ either erases real violence altogether or tames and sanitizes it through symbolism.

What's not in the picture, or is presented only in some de-natured Orwellian way in the text (such as body counts, dead insurgents, collateral damage and so forth), is the mess, confusion, boredom, brutality and in fact real violence that gets done, often highly technologized as we know, and often only represented in long-shots of explosions.

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Thus we have a good guy/bad guy boundary and a represented/unpresentable boundary, framings that are co-constitutive and reinforcing of the message that our troops are clean and good.

Aaron, where you have pointed out that militaries (and other institutions) produce both sides of constitutive boundaries (e.g. being clean and being dirty, being honest and being corrupt), and – a real breakthrough – that they also produce continuous uncertainty about where the boundary is and where anyone is in relation to these moving goalposts. On the view that you have developed, anxiety is productive of insecurity, insecurity is productive of discipline, and discipline is necessarily arbitrary.

p. 561

An alternative and disrupting view of militarized masculinities could of course be constructed, for example maimed and disabled bodies, broken and

p. 562

disoriented minds, dirt and grime and all the other kinds of uncleanness that you have documented so well in your book *Bring Me Men*. But then I've been asking the question lately: 'Exactly how are militarized masculinities and competitive global capitalism different, if at all?' I am thinking of Hooper's alignment of the two in *Manly States*. Global capitalism produces pollution the way that militarized masculinities – given the resources – produce war. If the Tea Party (and the like) targeted 'defence spending', I would make a strategic choice and join up!

p. 562

why are military masculinities the sites where a lot of this boundary- making activity takes place? Why not postal service femininities, for example?

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Nation-states and militaries are pretty much the same thing, with rare exceptions, and even in avowedly peaceful nation-states (e.g. in Scandinavia) the military occupies an important symbolic position.

p. 563

The answer is that nation-states define themselves and their power hierarchies in these terms

(masculinities and militaries). Through the magic of taxation national states spend enormous amounts of money on masculinities and militaries. The current rival is (men's) sports, which are prime objects through which nation-states project their barely repressed and far-from-sublimated fantasies of domination and destruction.

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TC: Boundary making requires that we see some things clearly, and know that other things are there even if not pictured or referenced. In Derridean terms this is maybe an 'absent present' or 'constitutive outside', a realm of ideas not specifically cited but through which we are supposed to get the full message. Sometimes this is known as erasure, and since erasures tend to leave smears and traces, I wonder if that idea might be helpful. The smears and traces are in ourselves, when we make sense – sometimes in serial attempts – of what we see by relating it to what we already think we know. Basically a military-recruiting poster-boy – a clean-and-smiling soldier doing 'his thing' – has an absent-present in the shot: the 'women and children' he (or a sufficiently butched-up she) is protecting. As with any attempt to make and communicate meaning, though, the process is necessarily ambiguous and indeterminate. There could be any number of other absent-present ideas, depending on the writer-and-reader situation. In this case it could just as well be some stereotypical enemy figure; I picked on one figure that in national warrior-logic and peace-process symbolism seems likely – the 'bad guy'.

[Beasley, C. \(2008\). Rethinking Hegemonic Masculinity in a Globalizing World. *Men and Masculinities*, 11\(1\), 86-103.](#)

Abstract: Our understanding of power relations in domestic and global settings is crucially informed by analyses of the gendered character of contemporary societies and global politics. Hegemonic masculinity is a crucial concept in such analyses. However, this concept has also been the subject of debate. The concept is currently used to stand in for a singular monolithic masculinity, a global hegemonic form on a world scale and is understood to refer to transnational business masculinity to an elite group of socially dominant men. This conceptualization is reconsidered and an alternative approach presented. Rethinking the term hegemonic masculinity is necessary to produce a more nuanced understanding of privileged legitimating conceptions of manhood, and of relations between different masculinities in the global/national nexus. Such a rethinking provides a means to rethink how gendered global politics, how (gendered) globalization may be conceived.

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Masculinity studies writers can be credited with bringing to attention not just how gender is part and parcel of social life and social organization, but in addition how masculinity in particular is implicated in all aspects of sociality. As Michael Kimmel (1997) points out, masculinity is almost invariably invisible in shaping social relations, its ever-present specificity and significance shrouded in its constitution as the universal, the axiomatic, the

neutral. Masculinity, he notes, assumes the banality of the unstated norm—not requiring comment, let alone explanation. Its invisibility bespeaks its privilege (Kimmel 1997; Gardiner 2005). According to McKay, Mikosza, and Hutchins (2005), “One of the principal ingredients of men’s power and privilege” then becomes men’s indiscernible status as men

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Thus, rendering gender and masculinity visible offers a challenge to existing power relations and their continuing reiteration.

p. 87 critique of hegemonic masculinity

Masculinity studies writings on global matters are as yet in their infancy (Connell et al. 2005, 9). Despite the critical importance of this work, according to Connell ([1995] 2005, xxiv) “there are still only a handful of studies of masculinity formation in transnational arenas.” Similarly, in the “Introduction” to the Handbook of Studies on Men & Masculinities, Kimmel (2005b) states that research in this field on a world scale is very uneven and “still mainly a First World enterprise.” All the same, precisely because the investigation of gender and masculinities in global politics is indeed of great significance, I suggest that perhaps this is the moment to pause and look sympathetically but somewhat more closely at the theoretical and terminological tools developed by masculinity studies writers. I am encouraged in this endeavour by Connell’s own view that it is timely to reassess these tools. In particular, I suggest that by focusing on the term hegemonic masculinity—which is almost ubiquitously used in analyses of masculinity about local and global arenas—I can offer some useful directions for situating the as yet relatively undeveloped analysis of gender and masculinities in a globalizing world.

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The term hegemonic masculinity is most importantly a means to recognizing that “all masculinities are not created equal” (Kimmel 1997) and invokes a framing that draws attention to the diversity within masculinities, to multiple masculinities. Masculinity in this reading is not all of a piece, nor simply about power externalized. It is not only about men’s power in relation to women. Rather, masculinity is de-massified as masculinities, and these are not equal. Hegemonic masculinity holds an authoritative positioning over other masculinities and will “dominate other types in any particular historical and social context” (van Kriekan, Smith, and Holborn 2000, 413) However, at this point, as a number of writers within masculinity studies have indicated, the term becomes more slippery. Michael Flood (2002) has noted, for example, that Connell’s own use of the term slides between several meanings. In short, I suggest that these may be summarized as a slippage between its meaning as a political mechanism tied to the word hegemony—referring to cultural/moral leadership to ensure popular or mass consent to particular forms of rule—to its meaning as a descriptive word referring to dominant (most powerful and/or most widespread) versions of manhood,² and finally to its meaning as an empirical reference specifically to actual groups

of men.³

This slippage produces certain problems. First, as Flood (2002) notes, it is politically deterministic and defeatist to assume that the most dominant (in the sense either of most powerful or most widespread) ideals/forms of masculinity are necessarily the same as those that work to guarantee men's authority over women. Dominant forms of masculinity, for example, may not always, at all times, legitimate

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men's power, and those that do legitimate it may not always be socially celebrated or common. Connell himself has acknowledged this slide in his writings between the meaning of hegemonic masculinity as legitimating strategy and as merely dominant.⁴

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Relatedly, he cautions that hegemonic masculinity may in fact describe the position of a minority of men or may only loosely correspond to the lives of actual men (Connell 2000, 30; Connell and Messerschmidt 2005, 838, 846; Beasley 2006, 229; Martin 1998, 473), and has recently reemphasized that he does intend the term to be defined by its political strategic function in legitimating patriarchy.

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This raises a second issue. The understanding of hegemonic as simply socially dominant opens up a further slippage in which hegemonic is often understood even more fixedly as actual particular groups of men. As Flood (2002) points out, actual men may or may not conform to cultural ideals concerning masculinity, even when these are associated with power or are pervasive.

[Hamber, B. \(2007\). Masculinity and transitional justice: An exploratory essay. *International Journal of Transitional Justice*, 1\(3\), 375-390.](#)

Abstract: In recent years, there has been a growing focus on including women in transitional justice processes. Some scholars question whether transitional justice mechanisms take obstacles for women, such as ongoing domestic violence, into account. This article follows this line of inquiry using the prism of ongoing violence against women in South Africa. It focuses on masculinity, and questions the degree to which masculinity, and violent masculinities in particular, are considered in transitional justice studies. The article calls for a nuanced understanding of masculinities and their relationship to transitional justice, and sets parameters for a more concerted study of the subject.

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This article is intended as an exploratory essay on masculinity and transitional justice. It aims to set parameters within which a more concerted study of the subject could be undertaken. The article questions the degree to which violent masculinities in particular are taken into account in societies in transition and in the study of transitional justice. It begins by outlining some of the key literature on masculinity. It then addresses the debate in South Africa, where the literature on masculinity is burgeoning, and uses the South African case as a prism to raise questions about the relationship between transitional justice and violent masculinities. It calls for a nuanced understanding of masculinity within transitional justice debates.

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The article concludes with four key points relevant to a new theoretical and research agenda. First, it recommends a greater focus on the issue of masculinity in transitional justice research and practice. Second, it highlights the dangers of an approach to masculinity that treats 'men' as an interest group devoid of a gendered analysis. Third, the article criticises responses to the questions raised by masculinity that centre on the 'crisis in masculinity' discourse. Finally, it highlights the importance of considering how transitional justice mechanisms infused with a greater understanding of masculinity can influence types of violence (such as intimate partner violence) traditionally seen as outside their focus.⁶

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Masculinity studies, largely in sociology and psychology, have in turn said little about political transitions or transitional justice. That said, the study of masculinity itself is still developing. The sociology of masculinity, which has until recently largely focused on Western masculinities, only came into its own in the second half of the 20th century.¹² The study of masculinities in Africa is still in its infancy.¹³ Although the topic is mentioned in some peacebuilding research that explores gender questions,¹⁴ a systematic treatment of the subject is not readily available. The psychology of masculinity, or more precisely psychologists attempting to understand the male psyche, has been part of the discipline for over a century, but critical analyses of the interrelationship between psychology and a gendered social context are limited. Where the study of the psychology of men exists, it is clinical and largely experimental,¹⁵ although the last decade has seen a growing number of studies on masculinity in discursive and critical psychology.

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That said, masculinity, because of its nature and being 'un-have-able' is not an object around which a coherent science can be developed. One of the best-kept secrets in the literature on masculinity, according to Kenneth Clatterbaugh, is that 'we have an extremely ill-defined idea of what we are talking about.' There is a need to theorise masculinities, and theorising about masculinity in transitional justice is an open field.

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Most theorists and researchers working on this subject argue that it is more accurate to talk of masculinities than of masculinity.²⁶ There are multiple masculinities²⁷ and as many

masculinities as there are men.²⁸ In South Africa, research on masculinity in transition is burgeoning, and some of the views emerging from this work are instructive.²⁹ For example, it has been asserted that stereotypes dominate views of men in South Africa and fail to capture masculine diversity,³⁰ as well as that there is no typical South African man.³¹

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In a similar vein, the international literature on masculinity generally suggests that masculinities are not uniform and that power relations exist within them. There are subordinate and marginal masculinities,³³ as well as hegemonic masculinities.³

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In South Africa, any discussion of masculinity must be infused with an analysis that addresses different racial and class positions, not to mention sexual locations. Such an analysis also must recognise that all masculinities influence one another.³⁶ Although white masculinity has been hegemonic in South Africa, urban black and rural African masculinities are now jostling for ascendancy.³⁷ New masculinities are developing, as is true the world over.

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Masculinity is 'simultaneously a place in gender relations, the practices through which men and women engage that place in gender, and the effects of these practices in bodily experience, personality and culture.'⁴¹ Masculinity can also be ways of 'doing gender,' which are related to a social environment.⁴²

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Masculinity, for the purposes of this article, is defined as the widespread social norms and expectations of what it means to be a man,⁴³ or the multiple ways of 'doing male.'⁴⁴

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The ways of 'doing male' are continually changing, shaped not only by the experience of war but also by the shifting social, economic and political context during and after conflict. To fully understand the role of masculinities within the transition from conflict to 'peace,' the continuities between past and present need to be tackled.

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Traditional gender roles are also often disrupted during conflict, with some women who had previously been excluded from public life becoming economic providers, leaders and activists.⁸⁸ Men can feel threatened by the survival of women and try to reassert their manhood in the spaces where they can, most typically in intimate relationships.⁸⁹ This may be one of the reasons why women in a number of societies fail to consolidate wartime gains

as men reassert their claims, often violently.⁹⁰

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It is often the fantasies of powerful identities inscribed in gender hierarchies and emotionally invested in by men that fuel male violence. Violence may ensue when investments are thwarted, when others refuse to take certain subject positions or when men face contrary expectations of identity. The picture is complicated by the fact of multiple masculinities. Feminism has long argued that men collectively have power over women, while critical masculinity studies show that

not all men have the same amount of power or benefit equally from it, and that power is exercised differently depending on the location and the specific arrangement of relations which are in place.

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As Colleen Duggan notes in the foreword to a recent book on gender and reparations, further study is needed on 'how men deal with their own compromised masculinity in the face of adversity, since this has a direct impact upon women's long-term chances for recovery and empowerment

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Second, we must consider the impact of transitional justice processes on men. If we are to understand the role of men as the perpetrators of the majority of violence during political conflict and after it (albeit, purportedly, in a different form, such as domestic violence), we must address how we hold men accountable before, during and after transition. We thus need a more complex understanding of changing masculinities, transitional justice processes and their relationships to transition and post-conflict social reform. We must move beyond the idea of simply reforming the male psyche in an individualistic way. It is important to address the societal structures that influence the violent attitudes of many men. Attitudinal change is critical and undervalued in transitional justice, which is often legally driven and focused on larger questions of civil and political rights.¹⁰⁰ A concern with masculinity should not be equated with talking about masculinity in transitional justice as 'men's issues' or with asking bland questions like 'where are the men in transitional justice?'. Men should not be considered an interest group with a focus on men's needs alone. Rather, masculinity should be seen as central to how we conceptualise the outcomes that transitional justice processes can deliver in terms of gender justice more broadly and women's security in particular. The focal point needs to be on how violent masculinities endure post-transition and how transitional justice mechanism can be structured to impact upon this.

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Overly stressing the needs of 'men' at the expense of considering the place of masculinity in

transitional justice and a web of gendered relationships could have negative results, such as the spawning of inwardly focused men's movements around transitional justice processes. As Ross Haenfler argues, men's movements often lack a feminist understanding of structural inequality, the intentional involvement of women or a thorough comprehension of the gendered nature of society.

p. 387-388

In the final instance, any analysis of masculinity and its relationship to transition- al justice needs to recognise multiple masculinities. This should not be used to

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dilute a focus on violent masculinities. Anti-sexist male politics and challenges to violent masculinities, or gender transformation more broadly, at least at this stage, must become a source of disunity among men, not one of solidarity,¹⁰³ and include the intentional involvement of women.¹⁰⁴ Points of rupture between dominant masculinities and emerging new masculinities should be continually highlighted and explored. These should be accentuated to increase contestation between masculinities, seeking change through confrontation. In other words, both a structural analysis and a more comprehensive understanding of the inter- relationships between men and women, and among men are needed. A robust debate should begin among transitional justice experts themselves as to how best to approach the issue of masculinity if transitional justice mechanisms are to influence post-conflict violence and gender inequities.

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Third, the international literature suggests that a theory of masculinity and transitional justice cannot be built on the 'crisis in masculinity' discourse. This discourse assumes that men have been reduced to being confused, dysfunctional and insecure because of (i) rampant consumerism; (ii) women's, and more particularly feminism's, assault on male bastions of power; and (iii) the now widespread social and cultural disapproval of traditional displays of masculinity.¹⁰⁵ Contemporary masculinity research generally questions the notion of 'crisis,' with its implication that there is one, fixed masculinity.¹⁰⁶ The word 'crisis' implies a coherent system of some kind, and this is an illogical way of thinking about a configuration of practices with- in a system of gender relations.¹⁰⁷ Others argue that the use of the crisis discourse implies that male identity is a fragile and tentative thing, which makes it almost impossible to talk about masculinity without implying it has a substantive base.¹⁰⁸ Furthermore, to convey that traditional masculinities are in crisis implies they are disappearing, whereas 'aggressive masculinity is alive and well.'¹⁰⁹ Aggressive masculinities are visible in the rituals of neo-Nazis, paramilitary groups and the military, as well as in films, on television and on the sports field.

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A contextual analysis recognises that male cries of insecurity do not come out of thin air but that they are the product of a social and political context in which gender is integrally linked with power and changing power relations in a myriad of ways.

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Transitional justice literature has been criticised for embracing a simplistic liberal notion of moving 'from' male-defined political violence 'to' a liberal democratic framework. A binary view of transition fails to recognise the multiple layers of power that exist within society and the continuities between past and present.

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In addition, an analysis of masculinity and its relationship to transitional justice processes should recognise the complexities of individual and socio-political processes in which masculinity is deeply linked to notions of femininity and the social positioning of men post-conflict. Hegemonic masculinities generally demand that 'real men' have gainful employment and provide for their families.¹²⁰ Jewkes' review of the relationship between poverty and intimate partner violence highlights the need for a 'renegotiation of ideas of masculinity, and recognition of the effects of poverty and unemployment on men in prevention of intimate partner violence.'¹²¹ This, in turn, demands a more intersectionality-driven analysis¹²² of transitional justice and careful scrutiny of how we conceptualise the relationship between transitional justice processes, social reform and prevention of violence in the long term.

[Mellström, U., & Ericson, M. \(2014\). Masculinity at risk. NORMA: International Journal for Masculinity Studies, 9\(3\), 147-150.](#)

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In this special issue of NORMA 9(3) we have chosen to problematize masculinity and risk, or as we initially phrased it: Masculinity at risk. It is no doubt a broad theme that implies different theoretical and empirical turns within masculinity studies. In our initial call we asked for theoretical as well as empirical input concerning the co-constitution of masculinity at risk. As we also stated risk connotes a longstanding gendered 'leitmotif' in most, if not all societies, where risk taking and mastering fear are closely connected to masculine subjectivities and accompanying cultural imaginaries such as heroism and risk-taking. In many ways, masculinity as a gendered configuration has traditionally been conflated with acts of courage, mastering fear, and risk 'management'. As such, the connection between

masculinity and risk is multilayered, ranging from the becoming subject to structural organisation and global risk-taking. Masculinity at risk is intention- ally an ambiguous construction that points in various directions and raises many questions.

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We believe it is of particular interest for masculinity studies to investigate in what ways risk and masculinity and masculinity at risk can be thought of as co-constitutive for masculine subjectivities and collectives in different forms of social, cultural and occupational practices.

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how risk and risk taking practices are constitutive for masculine identity processes

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A theme that runs through this special issue is the delicate balance between risk- taking and being at risk and how these different processes are interdependent of each other. The distinction between being at risk as a state of uncertainty and vulnerability as opposed to voluntary risk-taking has often been pointed out in the literature (Austen, 2009; Joelsson, 2014). It is different forms of ontological statuses but possibly more connected to each other than previously articulated.

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Vulnerability is currently discussed in much feminist theorising (cf. Dahl, 2013³⁴; Ahmed, 2004³⁵; Cvetkovich³⁶, 2003; Shildrick, 2002, 2009ⁱ) but less so with regard to masculine subjectivity and ontology, although vulnerability as a state of being at risk is certainly an underlying theme in many studies of, for instance, male migrants and labourers in repressive classed and racialized contexts.

As for instance feminist theorists like Cvetkovich (2003) and Dahl (2013) suggest vulnerability opens up for change since to be vulnerable is also to be potentially transgressive. In this respect, as Mellström (2012)³⁷ has suggested, vulnerability is also an ontological status and a political condition, and in line with Ahmed (2004), vulnerability is a particular kind of bodily and intellectual relation to the world that could have profound

³⁴ Dahl, U. (2013). *Femmebodiment: Notes on queer feminine shapes of vulnerability*. In J. Weinstein & K. Jegerstedt (Eds.), *Affective tendencies*. London: Routledge.

³⁵ Ahmed, S. (2004). *The cultural politics of emotion*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

³⁶ Cvetkovich, A. (2003). *An archive of feelings: Trauma, sexuality, and lesbian public cultures*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press. doi:10.1215/9780822384434

³⁷ Mellström, U. (2012). From masculinity politics to a politics of intimacy and vulnerability? *Nordic Journal for Masculinity Studies*, Nr 2 volym 7, 117–123.

effects on how we theorise masculinity in relation to risk. The tight intersection between masculinity and risk and masculinity at risk and its connection to vulnerability becomes evident through fine-grained empirical analysis.

p. 148-149

As the intersection of masculinity as and at risk is shown through detailed analysis it is also important to stress the situatedness and context dependency of risk and risk taking practices, and as Joelsson suggests, that one should understand risk as ‘a situated social construction, context dependent and subject to sociocultural negotiation and management in everyday life.’ (Joelsson, 2014, p. 193). The processual dynamics of masculinity formations and risk taking are also something that Robinson has emphasised in her work over the years (Robinson, 2008; Robinson & Hockey, 2011). In Robinson’s article Risky Footwear Practices: Masculinity, Identity and Crisis in this issue she concludes:

As social and material contexts change, however, so practice alters, and being a man is achieved differently and in relation to more or less risk taking behaviour. Risk and transition can therefore be seen as linked together, not just in terms of transition being risky but also in terms of transitions between periods of high risk taking and other more careful or more settled periods. As already stated, this means that risk itself can be conceived of as a process, the intensity of risky behaviours and practices varying across the life course and in relation to economic and social cons

[Mellström, U. \(2012\). From masculinity politics to a politics of intimacy and vulnerability? Nordic Journal for Masculinity Studies, 7\(2\), 117-123.](#)

p. 1

Much of our scholarly efforts in masculinity studies, and gender studies in general, are directed towards thinking differently and in new ways of conceptualising gender binaries (Grosz 1999, Shildrick 2009, Sandberg 2011). In line with such an emancipatory agenda and knowledge pursuit, a new generation of masculinity studies scholars, and feminist scholars more generally, have, in the Nordic context, come to question the fundamentals of a gender equality politics that increasingly have been emptied from any radical potential for change Gender equality politics have, according to its contemporary critics (see for instance. eds. Eduards et al. 2012), gradually changed from a transformative political tool for change to a status quo bureau- and technocratic instrument for the present day neo-liberal politics in the Nordic countries.

p. 2

To cut a long story short with regard to how the Swedish and Nordic gender equality politics have developed over the last ten to fifteen years, it seems that we now have

reached the limits of the previous paradigm/s. Egeberg Holmgren (2011:62 my translation) states that “...the binary and normative points of departure of the gender equality project, risks, not only, to contribute to reproducing power regimes, but also to potentially de-radicalise feminism as it is being co-opted into the state bureaucracy, on the premises of the gender equality project.”¹ Egeberg Holmgren is one of these researchers that lately has outlined the discursive frames of a hegemonic masculinity politics in the Swedish context as well as pointed to the respective inclusionary and exclusionary mechanisms of that project as it has been articulated and practised in the history of the Swedish welfare state. In a similar vein, Gottzén and Jonsson (2012) have directed attention to how the myth of the ‘good’ gender equal man, within the Swedish gender equality project, has produced processes of dichotomisation and ‘othering’ in relation to men (and women) of colour and non-hetero men. These critical voices have pointed to how heterosexuality, able-bodiedness and Nordic-ness have been the taken for granted conceptual basis for the Swedish gender equality project. It has also been the taken for granted theoretical premises of much masculinity studies in the Nordic context.

P 2.

This is not surprising since the political and discursive frame of a politics of masculinity, as it has been articulated within the Swedish and Nordic context, has been a matter of “double emancipation”, entailing that there would be no female emancipation without a corresponding male emancipation. The most important line of research connected to such an emancipatory objective, in Sweden as well as the other Nordic countries have been the so-called fatherhood research that focuses on men’s parenting and state legislated reforms that try to make men take a greater responsibility in family life. It is through men’s fatherhood that we find the key to

p.3

how (heterosexual) men can improve as a ‘gender’. The emancipation of men have been visualised, and still is, through an active and equal parenthood (see also Mellström 2009). As such, gender equality politics has, not surprisingly, mainly been a heterosexual, white, middle class project. Recent work in masculinity studies inspired by queer and postcolonial perspectives, among others, has now productively delineated the discursive limits of this project. As this brings us to a sort of discursive end in terms of an emancipatory imaginary, it also opens up for thinking differently beyond what Egeberg Holmgren calls a hegemonic masculinity politics

[Mellström, U. \(2015\). Difference, complexity and \(onto\) epistemological challenges in masculinity studies. NORMA: International Journal for Masculinity Studies, 10\(1\), 1-4.](#)

p. 1

...masculinities (and consequently femininities) in various forms are coded, done and undone, constructed, imagined, performed, intersectionally privileged, etc., they also share a concern for processes of representation and methodological practices. As such these contributions could possibly be interpreted within the contemporary context of a wider search for alternative metaphors beyond a modernist social science, beyond representationalist claims and practices so firmly entrenched in our ways of approaching and being in the world as social scientists.

p. 1

Hoel's starting point is a research project about fatherhood among 'ethnic minority' men in Norway. Her fundamental research question is: 'how can we study ethnicity, men and masculinities without (re)producing the differences we seek to explore and nuance?'

p. 2

One constant challenge in masculinity studies is, as many others have pointed out, to further the careful, detailed and empirically oriented analyses of men and masculinities.

[Hamber, B. \(2015\). There Is a Crack in Everything: Problematising Masculinities, Peacebuilding and Transitional Justice. Human Rights Review, 1-26.](#)

Abstract: The study of masculinity, particularly in peacebuilding and transitional justice contexts, is gradually emerging. The article outlines three fissures evident in the embryonic scholarship, that is the privileging of direct violence and its limited focus, the continuities and discontinuities in militarised violence into peace time, and the tensions between new (less violent) masculinities and wider inclusive social change. The article argues for the importance of making visible the tensions between different masculinities and how masculinities are deeply entangled with systems of power and post-conflict social, political and economic outcomes. An analysis of masculine power within and between the structures aimed at building the peace in societies moving out of violence is considered essential. The article argues for an analysis that moves beyond a preoccupation with preventing violent masculinities from manifesting through the actions of individuals to considering how hidden masculine cultures operate within a variety of hierarchies and social spaces.

p. 9

In 2007, I wrote what I called an exploratory essay on masculinity and transitional justice. At the time, I noted that studies on masculinity and transitional justice were Ball but nonexistent[^] (Hamber 2007, p. 377). I added that although masculinity studies, largely in sociology and psychology, is an enormous field, it, in turn, has said little about political transitions or transitional justice. I naïvely thought that, after carefully laying out a range of areas for future research in the International Journal of Transitional Justice, my article would

stimulate debate and discussion on the subject of masculinity in the transitional justice field. This has not happened on a large scale. In 2009, it was noted in the journal again that men and masculinities are left largely unexplored (Theidon 2009, p. 4), and in 2010, Cahn and Ní Aoláin³⁸ highlighted that there is still an under-emphasis on masculinities in so-called post-conflict societies and consequently how masculinities are reformulated in such environments. The result has been that Bpost-conflict societies present a unique and under- analysed site of examination for masculinities^ (Cahn and Ní Aoláin 2010). Despite their notable contribution and that of others (Cahn and Ní Aoláin 2010; Theidon 2009, p. 4) and that scholarship is developing in masculinity study literature on conflict zones (Hollander 2014³⁹; Strier 2014⁴⁰), the issue of masculinity and transitional justice could still at best only be described as emergent.

p. 10

Interestingly, in the mainstream study of masculinity, which is a large and ever-growing field, masculinity insofar as it relates to political conflict, peacebuilding and transitional justice specifically is also a relatively under-explored field. There have been significant contributions on masculinity, soldiering, gender and warfare (for example, Cock 1993; Enloe 1988; Goldstein 2001; Ní Aoláin 2012; Sjoberg and Via 2010; Sjoberg 2014), as well as the exploration of international relations, security and masculinity (for example, Enloe 1989; Carpenter 2006; Hooper 2001; Marhia 2013; Narain 2014; Tickner 1992). Much has also been written on sexual violence and armed conflict (Buss 2009; Cohen 2013; Dolan 2010; Eriksson Baaz and Stern 2013; Wood 2006, 2009), and masculinity is often referenced in these works. But, in the larger field of men's studies, a focus on masculinity as it pertains to peacebuilding and transitional justice is a minor concern.

p. 10

There are broad reasons for the limited focus on masculinity in political contexts and societies transitioning from war to peace. Masculinity studies as a field is very broad and touches on most aspects of life (e.g. sexuality, language, culture, humour) and generally focuses on the Bordinary^ rather than so-called exceptional contexts such as war. Furthermore, the peacebuilding field itself is still relatively new and transitional justice an even more recent addition to the international scholarly lexicon. Equally in many journals, the issue of men, women and human rights violations is discussed in a range of contexts, as well as the issue of gender, but without referencing masculinity specifically.

³⁸ Cahn, N., & Ní Aoláin, F. D. (2010). Gender, Masculinities and Transition in Conflicted Societies. *New England Law Review*, 44(1), 101-123.

³⁹ Hollander, T. (2014). Men, Masculinities, and the Demise of a State: Examining Masculinities in the Context of Economic, Political, and Social Crisis in a Small Town in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. *Men and Masculinities*, 17(4), 417-439.

⁴⁰ Strier, R. (2014). Fatherhood in the Context of Political Violence: Los Padres de la Plaza. *Men And Masculinities*, 17(4), 359-375. doi: [10.1177/1097184x14539965](https://doi.org/10.1177/1097184x14539965)

p. 11

Second, men's studies, in which the notion of masculinity is most comprehensively discussed, albeit with a limited focus on issues of political conflict, are still largely Western centric. A focus on questions pertaining to African masculinities, although explored by some (Morrell, 2001b; Ouzgane and Morrell 2005; Reid and Walker 2005b; Walker 2005a), is limited, and scholarship say, for example, on Indian, Middle Eastern or Asian notions of masculinity—especially with reference to conflict contexts— is even less prevalent in the mainstream academic literature.

p. 12

Historically, masculinity studies have been criticised for appropriating specific aspects of the feminist literature and for the Bpsychologisation^ of sexual politics rather than problematizing the role of men within power relations (McMahon 1993). A specific concern with the men and masculinity literature has been the way that the study of men and masculinities has often turned to a preoccupation with the psychological Bcosts^ (O'Neill 2015) of maintaining dominant forms of masculinity (e.g. the heterosexual, stoic, risk-taking, aggressive, rational, calm, bread winning man). My work, and that of many others, has been dismissive of this type of thinking for being too closely aligned, whether intentionally or not, to the Bcrisis in masculinity^ discourse (Connell, 2005b; Edwards 2006; Haenfler 2004; Hamber 2007; O'Neill 2015; Whitehead 2006; Whitehead and Barrett 2005). As I have explored elsewhere (Hamber 2007), the problem with the crisis in masculinity discourse is that it often psychologises (for example, that men feel confused, anxious and insecure) an essentially political problem which is primarily about power relationships between men, and between men and women. The crisis discourse implies that the insecurity of men is brought on by social changes in which so-called traditional masculine roles have become outdated and dysfunctional. To deal with this, men, or so the popular argument goes, need to recognise their pain and victimhood and the impact of the emotional and even physical damage caused by certain types of masculinity and then reform. In short, they need to become new men^. The "new man" debate, often fuelled more by the Western media scholars than it should be added, has resulted in many feminists being suspicious of men and masculinity studies because not only can it deflect from an analysis of power as noted, but can also have more acute consequences. For example, an acontextual discussion of (false) equality between men and women with regard to certain issues can emerge. This can result, for example, in focusing on men as victims of domestic violence as if the issues are of the same magnitude or concern the same dynamics as violence against women. This can have consequences such as offering funding for men's groups and taking the focus off more long-standing and critical services such as providing women's shelters (Hamber 2010).

p. 13

despite contributions within feminist scholarship that oppose essentialisation, men and their multiple masculinities have, at times, been treated by some feminists with an element of suspicion and homogeneity. Dowd (2010) in her book *The Man Question* provides a robust

argument in this regard, showing how feminist scholarship has tended not to provide an adequate gender analysis of men, viewing them in an essentialist, universal, undifferentiated way^ (p. 13). The result has been an under-developed theoretical analysis.

p. 15

Perhaps more simply, masculinity can be defined, drawing on the work of Connell (1995; 2000) and Whitehead (2002), as the multiple ways of doing male (cited in Harland et al. 2005). That said, most theorists and researchers working on this subject argue that it is more accurate to talk of masculinities than of masculinity (Brittan 2005; Connell 2005b; Whitehead 2006) and there as many masculinities as there are men (MacInnes 2005). There are many ways of doing male (Connell 2005a, b) in different places,

p. 20

In the DRC, it has been shown that when faced with conflict and economic hardships as a result of political conflict, some men responded negatively by being aggressive, using violence in the home or abusing alcohol (Hollander 2014). However, other men, far from enacting violent masculinities, accepted the humiliation that the economic collapse brought and performed jobs below their self-perceived status (Hollander 2014). Many continue as leaders in the home, but this is now conditional on how reasonable they were to the family in terms of income support (Hollander 2014). Hollander goes on to add that, far from creating a victim mentality and lashing out, many men when faced with hardship went through a positive process of self-reflection:

Informants who had effaced their masculine identities had a strong sense of self- reflection and they accepted the new reality. They accepted their loss of power and they saw that they had to reconfigure themselves in a new social, political, and economic environment (Hollander 2014).

p. 25

Masculinity as a concept has become swamped with discussions about how it relates to perpetuating certain harms. Although this is important, it can deflect from some of the wider fissures that I presented above. One of the dangers of liberal peacebuilding structures such as truth commissions or inquiries being used as the central reference point is that, invariably, the issue of masculinity, if introduced at all, may result in it being dealt with in the same way that gender has been, to date, that is through a violation-centric lens. When we go down this route, we end up discussing how we can reprogramme men (mainly combatants) to behave less violently. Although this may be useful, it can also lead to a project mentality that focuses primarily on groups of men and transforming their attitudes through interventions and fails to see the complex set of factors that give rise to violent masculinities that are located well beyond the reaches of individual psyches.

p. 25

Therefore, the first challenge concerns how we locate the notion of masculinity within processes of political transition. The starting point here is not merely to look for the continuities between the violent masculinities of the past and present, but to ensure that we pay adequate attention to the discontinuities between past and present too.

p. 29

But, the everyday in contexts of war and during processes of political transition can seldom be divorced from the wider social and political context and changes taking place. As a result, in the process of building peace, the everyday needs to move beyond the family, peer group and the community. The everyday becomes a set of structures that influence all aspects of our lives and are part of the (masculine) landscape. We need therefore to consider not only how masculinity is linked to violence post-agreement, but also how it also shapes the peacebuilding environment (both at governmental and community levels) beyond the direct violence framework (Ashe 2009, 2015).

Kirby, P., & Henry, M. (2012). Rethinking masculinity and practices of violence in conflict settings. *International Feminist Journal of Politics*, 14(4), 445-449.

p. 445

Why rethink masculinity and conflict? After all, the connection of men and masculinities to organized (and seemingly unorganized) violence has been subject to considerable academic scrutiny over the last decades, not least as part of the feminist critique of disciplinary International Relations (IR) (Zalewski and Parpart 1998; Enloe 2000; Hansen 2001; Hooper 2001; Parpart and Zalewski 2008).

p. 445

Certainly, feminist and gender scholars write often of multiplicity in masculinities, of constructions of gendered agency, and of representations of violence as themselves constitutive of gender (Shepherd 2006⁴¹; Coleman and Bassi 2011⁴²; A'ha'll 2012⁴³; Gentry 2012⁴⁴). The analysis of gender within global politics has also moved beyond the level of the State and war to interrogate the full spectrum of social life, from popular culture to political economy.

⁴¹ Shepherd, L. J. (ed.). 2009. *Gender Matters in Global Politics: A Feminist Introduction to International Relations*. London: Routledge.

⁴² Coleman, L. M. and Bassi, S. A. 2011. 'Deconstructing Militant Manhood', *International Feminist Journal of Politics* 13 (2): 204–24.

⁴³ A'ha'll, L. 2012. 'Motherhood, Myth and Gendered Agency in Political Violence', *International Feminist Journal of Politics* 14 (1): 103–20.

⁴⁴ Gentry, C. E. 2012. 'Thinking about Women, Violence and Agency', *International Feminist Journal of Politics* 14 (1): 79–82.

p. 445

Some are more sceptical of this situation, warning that the actions and power of men themselves are obscured in the consensus that there are many masculinities (McCarry 2007)⁴⁵. At the same time as they direct attention to the material practices of men (and not just abstracted constructions of ‘masculinity’) such criticisms also tend to gloss over rich and situated examples of critical theorizing on precisely those themes (see, for example, Hearn 2004⁴⁶).

p. 446

Nevertheless, ambiguities do persist in the way feminist and gender scholars describe and account for masculinity (Clatterbaugh 1998; Hutchings 2008a). Against this background, a number of problems come into sharper focus. First, how are masculinities and violences connected in specific locations of power? Second, how do these connections play out internationally, in the interactions between political communities, however understood? Third, just how related are gendered identities to fighting, killing and dying in conflict settings? And fourth, how do the complexities of violence situated in this way reflect back onto theorizing about gendered hierarchy and difference?

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A second crucial thread uniting the articles concerns the relation of masculinity to violence. Here the rethinking is even clearer, disentangling military masculinities from war as such.¹ Most prominently, Luisa Maria Dietrich challenges the connection between masculinity and violence by showing how involvement in guerrilla organizations undid pre-existing identities, enabling female fighters to gain the status of heroic combatants and leaders usually reserved for men, and re-valuing activities and emotions commonly designated as ‘feminine’ (cooking, tenderness, mourning) such that male guerrillas embraced them and reflected on them fondly.

[Robinson, V. \(2003, April\). Radical revisionings?: The theorizing of masculinity and \(radical\) feminist theory. In *Women's Studies International Forum* \(Vol. 26, No. 2, pp. 129-137\). Pergamon.](#)

Abstract: Radical feminism is a diverse and evolving body of thought. The feminist assertion that it has been much maligned, caricatured and misrepresented has been well documented. Contemporary feminists would seek to add to our understanding of radical feminism as a complex and important perspective. What has not been recently considered is how radical feminism is utilized by male theorists, specifically those who theorize masculinity and who

⁴⁵ McCarry, M. 2007. ‘Masculinity Studies and Male Violence: Critique of Collusion?’ *Women’s Studies International Forum* 30 (5): 404–15.

⁴⁶ Hearn, J. 2004. ‘From Hegemonic Masculinity to the Hegemony of Men’, *Feminist Theory* 5 (1): 49–72.

consider themselves sympathetic to feminist concerns. Feminists have been both optimistic as well as critical of men's attempts to utilize feminist theory in this context. However, male theorists are currently mapping out new research agendas on masculinity, as well as reviewing their theoretical and methodological bases for this project. The central question I pose, using radical feminism as a case study, is whether those earlier feminist criticisms have been attended to, and if these theoretical and methodological reworkings are fully informed and questioned by the richness and diversity of feminist thought.

p. 129 Feminist anxiety

Male masculinity theorists themselves are currently reassessing previous knowledge claims and future research priorities and directions. Feminists have kept a careful gaze on men's theorizing over the last two decades since men began to theorize gender and feminism in an explicit and supposedly feminist empathic way. But it is important that such new theoretical and methodological shifts are both acknowledged and charted by feminists and other interested parties, such as gay and Black men. So though Denise Thompson (2001), in her efforts to rework radical feminism in terms of current issues, raises important new concerns and perspectives, how radical feminism is utilized by male theorists in relation to masculinity is not considered. How feminist theory is dealt with in this sense needs to be a continuing, central feminist concern.

p. 129

There has been much debate on whether and how feminists should welcome and engage with men who seek to have a dialogue with feminists. Men's attempts have ranged from wanting to enter the space of Women's Studies, to setting up their own field of study as "men's studies," being more discipline based or theorizing from the position of "the critical study of men and masculinities." Samuel Adu-Poku argues that feminists such as Klein (1983); "... have portrayed men's intrusion in feminism as an attempt to appropriate women's experiences and discursive spaces to sustain patriarchal representations of women as "other" (Adu-Poku, 2001, p. 157.) Other feminists have both agreed with and disagreed with Klein's views. I have argued for example, that men's studies can be seen to want to "complement" Women's Studies and does not recognize the power issues inherent in this "complementary" approach (Robinson & Richardson, 1994) (see Richardson & Robinson, 1994; Skelton, 1998 for further feminist discussion of these issues.)

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Lastly, it is important to consider who exactly the audiences for masculinity theory are. It could be argued that why it does not reach a wider and specifically feminist as well as a more general audience, is partially because of its continuing, and I will show, still limited dialogue with feminism.

p. 130

The earlier feminist critique of male masculinity writing, including its institutionalization in

the form of men's studies, as well as critiques from others such as gay and Black men, have been well documented. Issues included have been that questions of difference have not been attended to, to fears that scant institutional resources would be directed away from Women's Studies to men's studies for instance. These criticisms centered on accusations that theorizing by male theorists often only made token reference to feminism. Feminism was usually referred to in a general way without the citation of the work of individual feminists. Engagement with feminism has been seen to be reduced to one or two feminists who represent only one strand within a particular perspective.

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Masculinity theorists have, since the 1980s, problematized central issues and concepts such as hegemonic and counter hegemonic masculinities, recognized that there are a plurality of masculinities including gay and Black masculinities, redefined the sex/gender distinction and, more recently, have attempted to chart the progress and the epistemological and methodological bases of different strands of masculinity theory (see Connell, 2000; Hearn, 1996, 1998a; MacInnes, 1998; Pease, 2000; Peterson, 1998; Shepherd, 1998 for discussion of these shifts in the theories and concepts of masculinity). This is the current framework in which male theorists are attempting to make sense of and inform their concern with feminist theory. But are their recent and redefined epistemological concerns informed by the question of how feminist theory has been made invisible, caricatured and only seen as partial in past accounts of masculinity? Do masculinity theorists continue to reproduce those versions of feminism which have, as I have shown, sometimes been uncritically represented in masculinity theory?

[McCarry, M. \(2007, October\). Masculinity studies and male violence: Critique or collusion?. In Women's Studies International Forum \(Vol. 30, No. 5, pp. 404-415\). Pergamon.](#)

Abstract: Despite a more comprehensive understanding of male violence and an increase in interventions and punitive measures there has not been a concurrent diminution in men's usage of violence. There has been an increase in critical work by male masculinity theorists examining men and masculinity with some focus on men's violence. This article will provide an overview of the masculinity theories and their uneasy relationship with feminism in relation to their engagement with male violence. The three specific criticisms of this work are: that men are constructed as the real victims of masculinity; that masculinity becomes disembodied from men and as such masculinity becomes problematized instead of the practices of men; and that despite the alleged alignment with feminism the male masculinity theorists are often not reflexive about their work in terms of both political and personal commitments.

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Instead of looking at external structural factors such as unemployment or stress or low educational attainment or issues of attachment or social integration why do we not focus on

the one constant present in most interpersonal violence and that is the gender dynamics of perpetrator and victim (DeKeseredy & Swartz, 2005; Yllo, 1993).

p. 405

The model utilised in my work on male interpersonal violence is from a feminist perspective which understands that male violence has two interrelated functions: on an individual level it is used by men to exert power and control over individual women (and children) and on a structural level has the effect of perpetuating a system of male domination

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Gender

As the gender dynamics in interpersonal violence are clearly a central issue it is pertinent to critically examine both gender roles and gender power and how power is mediated in heterosexual interpersonal relations. In my work it is understood that gender categories are socially constructed and relational and I concur with Connell's critique that '[m]asculinities do not first exist and then come into contact with femininities. Masculinities and femininities are produced together in the process that constitutes a gender order' (Connell, 1995: 72). It is thus the value then placed on being male/female or masculine/ feminine which is of significance in my work on gendered violence and my critique of male domination. It is common to accuse some (radical) feminists of essentialising 'male and female', 'masculine and feminine' in their work on gendered violence when they name the perpetrators as male (Hanmer, 1990; Robinson, 2003). This criticism is generally inaccurate — gendering the perpetrators and victims as male and female respectively may conceal the minority of female perpetrators and male victims of interpersonal violence but it does not allege that all men are essentially and immutably violent simply because they are men. In this analysis, if feminists including those radical feminists who have been pioneering in the field of interpersonal violence, actually held this view then it would mean embarking on a task they knew to be futile

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However, the body of work which is explicitly on masculinities is notable for three reasons: firstly that it does not adequately or systematically deal with men's violence; secondly, it is unclear whether it has set itself up as a complement to, or in opposition to, the work that feminists have conducted in this area; thirdly that much of the literature which does come from the masculinity field serves to legitimate rather than critique men's violence. Some of these criticisms have been offered before (see Canaan & Griffin, 1990; Hanmer, 1990; Hearn, 1996b; McMahon, 1993; Ramazanoglu, 1992; Robinson, 2003; Seidler, 1990) but in this article I would like to emphasise why this is unacceptable specifically in relation to men's use of violence.

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Studies of masculinities

Since the 1970s there has been an explosion in the number of publications on the subject of men and behaviours, and developing critiques of the epistemological and methodological foundations of the various masculinity theories (Brittan, 1989; Collier, 2002; Connell, 2002; Connell, Hearn, & Kimmel, 2005; Hearn, 1996b, 1998a,b; MacInnes, 1998; Pease, 2002; Peterson, 1998; Robinson, 2003; Whitehead & Barrett, 2001). Within the academic context, much of this literature has come from the UK, the USA, Scandinavia and Australia (Hearn et al., 2002; Pringle et al., 2001). Historically, the literature which emerged from the UK and the United States, was stratified into Men's Studies (Brod, 1987a,b,c) and the Critical Studies of Men (Hearn, 1987, 1998a,b; Hearn & Collinson, 1994; Hearn & Morgan, 1990a,b; McMahon, 1993; Morgan, 1987; Pringle, 1995). Both 'groups' argued that their work was analysing masculinity objectively and critically and shared a political commitment to feminism but Keith Pringle and colleagues argued that there was a significant incongruity between these two approaches with the Critical Studies of Men theorists explicitly supportive of feminism and 'part of the broader project of Women's Studies and Gender Research, rather than competitive with them' (Pringle et al., 2001: 3).

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For the purpose of this article I am going to concentrate on those male masculinity theorists who define themselves as pro- feminist in order to argue that even the critical male masculinity pro-feminist theorists often do not adequately address power relations. In previous issues of Women's Studies International Forum there have been three significant contributions about the efficacy and limitations of the literature from the male masculinity theorists (Hanmer, 1990; Ramazanoglu, 1992; Robinson, 2003) and it is in the spirit of these previous articles that I would like to develop the critique further and argue that it is still essential to retain a critical eye on this body of work, particularly with regard to male violence.

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In 2003, Victoria Robinson explored the extent to which male masculinity theorists engaged with feminist theory rather than simply claimed pro-feminist sympathies (Robinson, 2003). Robinson argued that some of the key male masculinity theorists are now more thoughtful about their use of feminist theory particularly with the expansion of work in this area. She also debated whether the distinction between the good guys (pro-feminists) and bad guys (Men's Studies) is either still relevant or useful given the developments in this field. Robinson argued that the work generated by male masculinity theorists has limited appeal because it does not engage fully with feminism (Robinson, 2003). In my work on interpersonal violence, it is the way in which male masculinity theorists have not engaged

with feminism which has posed the greatest challenges. The most concerning aspect is however, not simply the disregard of previous feminist work, or that feminist work is often not referenced (see Canaan & Griffin, 1990 and Hanmer, 1990) but it is the explicit misrepresentation of radical feminist theory that is of most concern because of the work that these theorists have done on gender, masculinity and male violence (Hanmer, 1990; Robinson, 2003).

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A similar set of criticisms and concerns was voiced by Anthony McMahon, a pro-feminist male masculinity theorist who also expressed misgivings about the commitment to feminism:

Many texts do not acknowledge feminist theory at all. Other texts mention feminism, as a discourse parallel to the study of men, on the grounds that feminism's concern is with women, and that it yields only "scattered insights" about men. ... I argue that the masculinity literature selectively appropriates forms of feminism whose accounts of gender relations de-emphasize key issues of sexual politics. (McMahon, 1993: 675).

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Men as the real victims

Feminist studies on masculinity retain a central focus on gender power relations and examine masculinity and its impacts on both men and women; in contrast, within the masculinity studies literature there is rarely recognition of the impact of masculinity or male gender behaviour on women. Indeed, Steven Schacht and Doris Ewing (1998) argue that whilst Brod and other male masculinity theorists concede that gender roles and masculinity may have deleterious impacts on women, it is the negative consequences for men which is the rationale for many male masculinity authors' critiques of masculinity.

As argued, Connell (1995) believes that it is not in men's immediate interests to dismantle masculinity, for even with all its negativities it still benefits men and supports a gender hierarchy that privileges men and in which they receive a 'patriarchal dividend' (Connell, 1995). Some of the male masculinity authors formulate their criticisms of masculinity in such a way as to argue for the eschewal of the negative aspects of masculinity whilst retaining the benefits: 'they merely seek to modify or reform the social system so that they can still reap the rewards without suffering the negative consequences' (Ewing & Schacht, 1998: 6).

There is therefore concern that some of the literature on men and masculinities will serve to construct men as the real victims of masculinity (Flood, 2005). Consequently, gender role reconstruction is analysed in terms of a zero sum effect in which if women are advantaged in any way means that men must be disadvantaged: 'societal change in favour of women, placing men at risk of becoming the disadvantaged gender, has been the underlying theme of some writing' (Hearn et al., 2002: 392). Gough and Peace argue that the studies on men and masculinity potentially provide the theoretical 'evidence' and confirmation for validating this 'victim' status of men:

[p]resenting men as victims can be situated within the context of a wider political backlash against feminism ... As such, ways of accounting may be sought that continue to reproduce the privileges of masculinity whilst simultaneously limiting the space for potential accusations of sexism. To claim that men already suffer from present gender relations is a particularly powerful way of doing this. (Gough & Peace, 2000: 395)

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Disembodying men from masculinity

A further limitation which is largely implicit in the masculinities literature is the way in which 'masculinity' becomes reified into an autonomous 'thing-in-itself'. This disembodying and hypostatisation is of significance because it facilitates a theoretical and physical separation of 'men' from 'masculinity' and both men and masculinity from actions that men 'do'. For work on male violence this is exceptionally problematic because if we attribute causal power onto 'masculinity' we can locate the blame for male violence onto 'masculinity' and away from men who perpetrate it. This has a profound effect on the way in which both men as individual perpetrators are then conceptualised and how men as a social group are understood to receive their 'patriarchal dividend' from the violence of some men (in terms that this violence contributes to maintaining the gender order). The implications of theoretically removing masculinity from men is discussed by McMahon:

While men's practices are criticised, it is masculinity that is seen to be the problem. Calls for masculinity to be 're-defined,' 'reconstituted,' 'dismantled,' or 'transformed' become common. Instead of wondering whether they should change their behaviour, men 'wrestle with the meaning of masculinity'. (McMahon, 1993: 690–1, who is critiquing pro-feminist male masculinity author Michael Kimmell, 1986)

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McMahon argues that the result of this disembodying and hypostatisation is that the focus is drawn away from the material reality of men's behaviour and interactions and instead is relocated onto 'masculinity', which, as should always be considered, is a socially constructed theoretical concept (McMahon, 1993). Hearn (1996b) also argues for the need to refocus attention back from 'masculinity' and onto 'men' because it is men's practices that are problematic. Instead of attributing causal power onto 'masculinity', it should be the case that it is 'men' and their 'material discursive practices' which should be the focus of analysis (Hearn, 1996b).

This theoretical separation of masculinity from men has serious implications and, as the work on male violence against women illustrates, is a fundamental limitation in much of the masculinity studies. The crucial problem is not with the phenomenon of 'masculinity' as a disembodied construction, but with men's 'material discursive practices' especially when manifest as violence against women. Thus, a critique of the behaviour of men is essential,

rather than (or at least in conjunction with) a critique of the theory of 'masculinity'. We must challenge the argument that it is simply the current construction of masculinity which condones the use of violence (to maintain differentiated power relations) and that if we had a 'reconstructed masculinity' male violence would dissipate: 'to say that the problem with gender relations is the way in which masculinity is constructed, with the solution a 'reconstruction of masculinity,' is to displace theoretical attention from men's political practices' (McMahon, 1993: 692).

Whilst we need to have a critical focus on what masculinity means in both theoretical and practical terms we should heed Hearn's advice and refocus our attention away from 'masculinities' and back to 'men' and as Hearn argues 'it is generally more accurate to refer to 'men's practices' or 'men's social relations' or 'men's assumptions' or 'beliefs about men'' (Hearn, 1996a: 214). Hearn argues that male violence should be named and conceptualised as 'men's violences' or the 'violences of men' because these terms recognise violence as done by men and not by 'masculinity' (Hearn, 1998a).

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However, a few male masculinity theorists do engage with the issue of men's violence and Jeff Hearn has systematically critically analysed male violence in his work (Hearn, 1987, 1998a). Hearn argues that male violence presents real issues for male masculinity theorists because of the interrelatedness of violence to masculinity (Hearn, 1998a). Hearn argues that violence is an integral constituent of normative masculinity and thus deserves more critical focus than many masculinity theorists presently afford it. He argues that there has to be more attention paid to how and what is defined as violence whereby '[a] lot of what men do needs to be re- labelled as violence' (Hearn, 2001: 17). Hearn (1998b) is critical of the masculinity theorists who do not acknowledge or analyse male violence because violence is overwhelmingly a male activity and a central aspect of 'masculinity' and so 'to omit violence from the theorising of men is to leave aside one of the fundamental elements in the dominant formations of men' (Hearn, 1998b: 785).

Hearn also recognises that masculinity writers may deliberately omit analyses of male violence because the levels of male violence are such that this behaviour is assimilated into a facet of normative masculinity, and, therefore, to challenge such a customary aspect of masculinity potentially problematizes all other aspects of normative masculinity:

to focus on men and men's violence to women, unsettles, makes problematic, the way men are, not just in the doing of particular actions of violence but also more generally. It raises question marks against men's behaviour in general. (Hearn, 1998a: 6)

[Hearn, J. \(2004\). From hegemonic masculinity to the hegemony of men. Feminist theory, 5\(1\), 49-72.](#)

Abstract: This article evaluates the usefulness of the concept of hegemony in theorizing men.

The discussion is located within the framework of 'Critical Studies on Men' (CSM), in which the centrality of power issues is recognized, rather than that of 'Men's Studies', where it is frequently not. Recent uses, as in 'hegemonic masculinity' in the analysis of masculinities, are subjected to a qualified critique. Instead a shift is proposed from masculinity to men, to focus on 'the hegemony of men'. This formulation seeks to address the double complexity that men are both a social category formed by the gender system and collective and individual agents, often dominant collective and individual agents, of social practices. This is explored mainly in relation to substantive studies on men, and briefly the institutional development of CSM. The concluding discussion examines how these arguments connect with debates in feminist theory and social theory.

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Studying men is in itself neither new nor necessarily radical. It all depends on how this is done. Men have been studying men for a long time, and calling it 'History', 'Sociology', or whatever. These, usually unnamed, 'men's studies', in the simple sense of studies by men, may or may not be explicitly about men. They include what Mary O'Brien (1981) mockingly called malestream accounts, in which men are not explicitly present or men are represented but in ways that do not problematize 'men'. There are now several literatures that theorize and represent men in other ways: feminist, gay, queer, pro-feminist, and other critiques outside the malestream, such as some postcolonial writing. These may be directed to men as a social category, men as a gender class, specific groups of men, or collections of individuals who are men.

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Critical Studies on Men

Critical Studies on Men arise from a number of critiques – primarily from feminism, but also from gay and queer scholarship, and from men's responses, particularly men's pro-feminist responses, to feminism and debates on gender relations. CSM thus refers to that range of studies that critically address men in the context of gendered power relations. It is clear that the most influential among these critiques is feminist theory and practice, and the feminist naming of men as men (Hanmer, 1990). Other challenges have named men as gendered in different ways. Gay scholarship, by virtue of the reference to same-gender sexuality, necessarily names people in terms of gender. Gay, and indeed some queer, writing and scholarship focuses on men in quite different ways from feminist writing and scholarship (for example, Beemyn and Eliason, 1996). There are good reasons why feminist and gay critiques may not necessarily coincide (Edwards, 1994). Increasingly queer scholarship is becoming a major force in the broad field of studies on genders and sexualities, including men and men's sexualities. While gay writing may or may not problematize men's power or even the category of 'men' itself, this is not the case with much queer writing which certainly does problematize the category of men, along with other gender and sexual binaries.

p. 62-63

The approach here seeks to return to the concept of hegemony that has been so useful in the 1980s and 1990s as a way of further opening up the critical study of men. But it does so in a rather different way from the current dominant focus within CSM on the particularities of hegemonic masculinity. That approach, though clearly very valuable, is not sufficiently far-reaching in assessing, deconstructing and dismantling the hegemony of men. While the concept of hegemonic masculinity has been and remains of great importance in CSM, the hegemony of men in relation to women, children and other men needs to be addressed more directly. This is in terms of both the hegemony of the social category of men and the hegemony of men's practices.

Section 4: Alternatives to Hegemonic and Militarized Masculinities **(Empirical Research)**

[Dietrich Ortega, L. M. \(2012\). Looking Beyond Violent Militarized Masculinities: Guerrilla gender regimes in Latin America. *International Feminist Journal of Politics*, 14\(4\), 489-507.](#)

Abstract: This article moves beyond stereotypical portrayals of the connections between hyper-masculinity and violence in militarized contexts and identifies expressions of insurgent masculinities different from the imagery of 'heroic guerrilla fighter'. Based on conversations with fifty female and male former insurgent militants in Peru, Colombia and El Salvador, this comparative analysis explores patterns within gender regimes created in insurgent movements. This contribution shows that 'gender' is not merely a 'side contradiction', but that guerrilla movements invest considerable efforts in creating and managing gender relations. The construction of insurgent masculinities is not based on the rejection or devaluation of women in general, but requires diluting gendered dichotomies, enabling not only alternative role models functional for armed struggle, but also female-male bonding, prioritizing comrade identity over gender-binary consciousness.

Guerrilla/insurgent/ revolutionary masculinities as being distinct?

p. 489-490

Not only are insurgent organizations conceived as temporary constructions to be dismantled (or at least changed significantly) upon attainment of revolutionary objectives, but they are also required to combine clandestine, semi-legal and legal operations, intertwining ideological, political and military elements in their strategies to balance the asymmetry of power between contending forces. Thus, they create a particular insurgent gender regime with broad patterns of guerrilla masculinities, including expressions of masculinity beyond the stereotypical portrayal that stresses militarized masculinity's propensity to violence as nature-given and unquestionable (McKewon and Sharoni 2002: 3).

It has been noted that 'a strong common ideology', as seen in national liberation armies, helps to transcend some gendered prejudices and tensions (Yuval-Davis 1997: 101). It is precisely the 'political-military' aspect that requires capacities beyond 'war making', such as political, community and social skills and which constructs other expressions of masculinities beyond hyper-masculine violence.

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Although over the last decade the study of masculinities in Latin American contexts has increased considerably, limited attention has been paid to the constructions of revolutionary masculinities.

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Particularly interesting are works on imagery and narratives used in the construction of revolutionary masculinity, stressing Ernesto 'Che' Guevara's conception of the 'New Man', or the work of the Nicaraguan FSLN commander Omar Cabezas (1982) on the incorporation of emotions into male revolutionary repertoires or 'what might be considered the feminine, tender and loving side of the macho guerrilla' (Bayard de Volo 2012: 420; see also Rodriguez 1996; Goosses 2001). Given that autobiographies of male revolutionary leaders rarely provide insights into men's gendered experiences (Sanchez Cere'n 2008; Valencia 2008), increased attention has been placed on female militants' accounts and narratives (Vázquez et al. 1996; Grabe 2000; Vasquez 2000; Peña 2009) to derive insights into guerrilla masculinities.

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Although the propensity of insurgent masculinities to be 'more flexible, mobile and susceptible to change' (McKeown and Sharoni 2002: 3) has been highlighted, the expression of emotions and discursive shifts around the 'new man' have been identified as 'exceptions' in an otherwise traditional gendered framework that collapses militarized masculinity with violence and aggression.

p. 490-491

Conceptualizing militarized masculinities exclusively in terms of physical strength, display of violence, use of weapons, 'suppression of emotions' (Goldstein 2001: 268) and 'the performance of an aggressive and frequently misogynist masculinity' (Theidon 2009: 4), may limit the acknowledgement of multiple expressions of masculinities developing in militarized contexts.

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In fact, ignoring those concurrent aspects of militarized masculinities that incorporate repertoires of tenderness and side lining expressions that contradict the heroic fighter rationale, only implies a monolithic description of masculinity. It obscures ambivalence and hides the myriad relations involved in the construction of masculinities.

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The arms-bearing rural guerrilla combatant is but one type of guerrilla masculinity, coexisting with the political commissioner, who, for instance, connects military sections with the party, and Special Forces personnel, deployed for high-risk sabotage acts behind enemy lines. In addition, this traditional framework reproduces gendered binaries, arguing that the strength of revolutionary masculinity is based on the 'devaluation and rejection of the feminine' (Bayard de Volo 2012: 434)⁴⁷.

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This article explores patterns of militarized masculinity developed in insurgent gender regimes, which not only accommodate multiple expressions of masculinity, but support and manage alternative insurgent expressions thereof. The key rationale for insurgent masculinities is their functionality for armed struggle. Thus, these masculinities are not based on the devaluation of women in general, but on the temporary construction of particular guerrilla femininities, which allow male-female bonding and comradely complicity, and unveil expressions of guerrilla masculinities beyond the predominant association of men with violence.

Guerrilla/ insurgent femininities

p. 494

This high level of participation, together with access to power, requires a careful construction of functional models of insurgent femininities and masculinities, which are kept apart from 'civilian women' and depart from stereotypical associations of women with maternity,

⁴⁷ Bayard de Volo, L. 2012. 'A Revolution in the Binary? Gender and the Oxymoron of Revolutionary War in Cuba and Nicaragua', *Signs* 37 (2): 413–39.

peacefulness and passivity. In the words of an interviewee, *la compañera* or the female comrade, is a 'different category of women' and a 'new species of women' characterized by her political motivation, ideological conviction and as an agent for change. Together with the acknowledgement of her capacities and respect for her courageous actions, certain 'concessions' are made to the female comrade, such as promotion on the grounds of merit or commando positions in the command structure.

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In the same vein, traditionally feminine-coded traits, such as the ethic of care, display of emotions, spirit of sacrifice and comrade solidarity, were considered a strategic insurgent repertoire and were thus made accessible to different areas of militancy. In practice, insurgent organizations not only detach insurgent femininity from weakness, but encourage female militants to incorporate a stereotypically masculine-coded behaviour, such as engaging in armed combat, roughening the tone of voice while issuing a command and developing an appetite for power. In turn, men are also supported in adopting feminine-coded characteristics into their insurgent repertoires without a threat of emasculation, but making these elements integral to the construction of a complete militant. The particular guerrilla gender regime impacts upon gender relations and generates manifold consequences for expected roles and behaviour that are enforced by different mechanisms inherent to militarized contexts, requisition of capacities and skills for armed struggle and the hierarchical structure of military organizations.

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Although women did engage in stereotypically female-coded tasks, such as caring for the wounded or cooking, they did so within a collective political project that transcended private familial spheres (Lelievre Aussel et al. 2004)⁴⁸.

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The Role of Emotions in Insurgent Repertoires

Another mechanism serving to blur the limits between female and male realms was the stressing of shared humanity, which, in times when life itself is at risk, enabled a more complete expression of emotions. If there was a possibility to mourn fallen comrades, public crying was accepted and interpreted as respect for the comrade and commitment to continue the struggle, rather than weakness.

⁴⁸ Lelievre Aussel, C., Moreno Echavarría, G. and Ortiz Pérez, I. 2004. *Haciendo Memoria y dejando rastros – encuentros con mujeres excombatientes del nororiente de Colombia*. Bucaramanga: Fundación Mujer y Futuro.

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Thus, 'ethic of care', 'mystique' and 'culture of sacrifice' were aspired to by a majority of militants, allowing for humanization amid conflict and enhanced empathetic relations between militants. I

p. 501

Within the organization, there are different expressions of insurgent masculinity beyond the 'revolutionary fighter', as military skills are only one possible way (not necessarily the most effective one) to negotiate masculinity in this militarized context.

[Olivius, E. \(2016, June\). Refugee men as perpetrators, allies or troublemakers? Emerging discourses on men and masculinities in humanitarian aid. In Women's Studies International Forum \(Vol. 56, pp. 56-65\). Pergamon.](#)

Abstract: The importance of including men and boys in order to successfully promote gender equality has been increasingly emphasized in international policymaking and governance. This article examines emerging discourses on men, masculinities and gender equality in the field of humanitarian aid to refugees. Through an analysis of key policy texts as well as interviews with humanitarian workers, three main representations of the role of refugee men in relation to the promotion of gender equality are identified. Refugee men are represented as perpetrators of violence and discrimination; as powerful gatekeepers and potential allies; and as emasculated troublemakers. These ways of conceptualizing men and masculinity are problematic in ways which significantly limit their potential for the transformation of unequal gender relations: gendered power relations are obscured; refugee men's masculinity is pathologized as "primitive"; and attempts to take the needs of men into account are often turned into an argument against the empowerment of refugee women.

p. 56

Until today, however, the promotion of gender equality in humanitarian operations has primarily been understood as equivalent to special measures to ensure women's protection and access to assistance. While this may be explained as a reasonable response to women's subordinate position in many contexts where humanitarian aid is delivered, feminist scholars have also critiqued the way in which women-focused humanitarian policies represent and approach women. The overwhelming focus on women as vulnerable victims in need of special protection has been problematized as contributing to reinforce women's marginalization (Kneebone, 2005; Manderson et al., 1998; Szczepanikova, 2010). Efforts to increase refugee women's participation have often been driven by a desire to increase aid effectiveness rather than to realize women's rights, and have not necessarily contributed to change in existing gender relations (El-Bushra, 2000; Hyndman & de Alwis, 2008; Olivius, 2014). Further, representations of refugee women as victims of "backward" non-western

cultures have reproduced cultural and racial hierarchies (Macklin, 1995; Razack, 1995

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However, recent years have seen a shift in humanitarian policy and practice. Increasingly, the importance of including men in gender equality efforts is emphasized. This shift can be seen as a logical effect of the previous change in policy terminology from “women” to “gender,” and the more recent trend towards recognizing multiple forms of diversity and vulnerability, exemplified by the Age, Gender and Diversity Mainstreaming (AGDM) approach of the UNHCR (Edwards, 2010).

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These developments beg the question of whether the growing emphasis on men and masculinities in gender equality policies represents a welcome shift away from a narrow understanding of gender as equivalent to women that can foster more complex analyses of gender relations, or, as some feminists suggest, it represents a diversion of attention and resources away from the yet unfinished struggle for women's rights towards instead addressing men's needs (White, 2000). Will the shift towards men and masculinities encourage a critical deconstruction of masculinity as well as femininity, or will the desire to include everyone in equal measure, “regardless of disadvantage, patriarchy, or hierarchy” obscure the power relations at issue (Edwards, 2010: 39)?

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This article contributes to a critical examination of the implications of the shift towards men and masculinities in global gender equality policies through focusing on how men and masculinities are represented in humanitarian gender equality policy and practice. The inclusion of men and masculinities in approaches to gender equality is arguably still in its infancy in this field, and has not previously been systematically analysed. This article thereby sheds new light on an understudied aspect of humanitarian policy and practice. It does so through an analysis of two types of material: policy texts on gender from key UN humanitarian agencies and interviews with humanitarian workers assisting refugees in camps in Thailand and Bangladesh.

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The analysis presented here identifies three main representations of the role of refugee men in relation to the promotion of gender equality. First, refugee men are represented as perpetrators of violence and discrimination against refugee women. Refugee men are thereby actively creating women's vulnerability and subordination, and must be made to stop if gender equality is to be possible. Second, refugee men are represented as gatekeepers who, as power holders and decision makers in their families and communities, can both obstruct and enable change towards gender equality. The potential role of men as partners and allies for gender equality and the importance of convincing them to act as such are therefore strongly emphasized. Third, refugee men are represented as emasculated troublemakers. In this

representation, their inability to perform masculine roles as providers and protectors due to the constraints of situations of emergency and displacement, in combination with aid agencies' efforts to empower women, is said to leave men disempowered, emasculated, frustrated and bored. Male violence against women, alcohol abuse and criminality are represented as consequences of this situation, and gender equality policies that better respond to the needs of men are offered as the solution.

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While consciously conceptualizing and addressing men and masculinities is no doubt indispensable for the pursuit of more equitable gender relations in refugee situations and other contexts, I argue that the currently dominant ways of representing refugee men are problematic in ways which severely limit their usefulness to a project of gender equality and liberation: refugee men's masculinities are pathologized through a representation of refugee communities as primitive; the power relations constitutive of gender differences are obscured; and the representation of refugee men as emasculated is frequently employed to make an anti-feminist argument against the empowerment of women and the transformation of unequal gender relations.

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The promotion of gender equality, understood as the transformation of unequal gendered relations of power, un- avoidably requires an analysis of the positions of men and the construction of masculinities. The move towards increased attention to men and masculinities in international policymaking and governance is thereby a promising development. However, in this article I argue that in the field of humanitarian aid to refugees, the way in which men and masculinities have been included does not deliver on this promise. In contrast, current ways of representing refugee men in humanitarian policy and practice are problematic in ways that severely limit their usefulness to a project of gender equality and liberation.

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First, widening the understanding of gender to include refugee men and not only refugee women has tended to de- politicize gender and obscure the power relations that are constitutive of gender differences. Gender differences are represented as individual differences rather than effects of power, and approaches to gender increasingly emphasize the importance of taking the needs of men and women into account equally, rather than the need to transform unequal relations of power and disadvantage. This is especially prominent in the representation of men as emasculated troublemakers, where efforts to empower women are de- scribed as victimizing men. This conception of gender leads to an uncritical approach of identifying existing gender differences and using them as point of departure for the design of aid programs; an approach that can and often does exacerbate existing inequalities in refugee situations (Olivius, 2014).

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Further, the strong emphasis on recruiting men as allies in gender equality promotion reinforces the tendency to de-politicize gender and obscures the power relations at issue. In the representation of men as powerful gatekeepers and potential allies, men are appealed to as key actors in achieving gender equality, but the role of men and the dominant norms of masculinity in sustaining gender inequality are not problematized.

In contrast, in the representation of refugee men as perpetrators of violence and discrimination men are named as agents of inequality. This naming relies on a construction of refugee societies as traditional and backward; refugee men are thus not agents of inequality because they are men, but because they are primitive. Refugee men's masculinities are thereby pathologized and they are constructed as subjects in need of modernization and reform. The existence of gender inequality among refugees thus becomes a marker of their inability to govern themselves properly (Olivius, 2016; Reeves, 2012). The understanding of gender equality as a symbol of modernity is also reflected in the representation of refugee men as gatekeepers and allies. The heavy reliance on education as a means to convince men of the merits of gender equality reform is based on the idea that more knowledge will lead refugee men to “accept development” and realize that gender equality means progress for all.³³ This idea rests on the construction of cultural hierarchies where refugee communities are deemed inadequate, and on temporal claims where refugee communities needs to be brought “up to date,” leave their backwardness behind and defeat “the dark forces of ‘untimeliness’” (Edenheim, 2010: 38). Following from this construction, humanitarian actors become the only legitimate agents of change towards gender equality, while the work of refugee advocates is neglected and devalued. Gender equality is also explicitly constructed as a foreign idea, which risks provoking resistance to what then becomes perceived as “westernization” (Olivius, 2011).

Moreover, the representation of refugee men as emasculated troublemakers is a deeply flawed attempt to recognize that gender is not equivalent to women. The construction of men as victimized by the very challenge to male authority and privilege that the pursuit of gender equality should rightly entail undermined the idea that humanitarian organizations should seek to transform, not reinforce, gender inequalities in the delivery of aid.

While insufficient attention to gendered relations of power and reification of cultural and racial hierarchies cut across the three representations of men and masculinities, there are also significant differences and tensions among them. Clearly, emerging discourses about men and masculinities in humanitarian aid to refugees are not uniform, but contradictory and incomplete. In particular, there is considerable ambivalence with regards to the key issues of the desirability of refugee men's current masculinities and the desirability of changing these. The representation of refugee men as perpetrators depicts refugee masculinities as pathological, primitive and in need of change; the representation of refugee men as gatekeepers and allies is less confrontational because refugee men are to become allies through the modernization of their masculinities. In contrast, the representation of refugee

men as emasculated constructs the disruption of existing masculine roles as destructive and undesirable. Evidently, the implications for the development of

humanitarian gender programs are very different depending on whether refugee masculinities are seen as targets of reform or aspects of social order that should be preserved.

These contradictions, I suggest, can provide entry points for continued debate, contestation, and reformulation of currently dominant conceptions of men and masculinities. Discursive contradictions and tensions can thereby open up space to construct more fruitful ways of conceptualizing and addressing men and masculinities in humanitarian aid. To this end, I argue that humanitarian organizations and aid workers need to discard predominant assumptions about refugee communities as primitive and backward, and ensure that the goals of social equality and justice are placed at the centre of gender policies and programs. As discussed in the analysis, practices that could inspire more promising approaches include programs where men are offered skills training in areas traditionally considered as female, and vice versa, as part of a strategy to expand conceptions of male and female work as well as to ensure equal economic opportunities for men and women.³⁴ Such practices can be one way of including men and women in efforts to promote gender equality without neglecting women's structural- al subordination, and destabilize dominant notions of masculinity (and femininity) without linking changes in gender relations to a hierarchical narrative of cultural evolution.

Jones, J. (2015). [Black radical masculinities in American warfare: reconfiguring resistance in the body of Muhammad Ali towards exile](#). NORMA, 10(3-4), 265-280.

Abstract: This study focuses on boxing champion Muhammad Ali's resistance to patriarchy and hegemonic masculinity in American warfare. The narrative textual analysis is designed around Ali's final three championship-boxing bouts before he was stripped of his heavyweight championship title because of his conscientious objection to the Vietnam War. The author constructed a narrative that found that Ali's performance during this specific period was an extension of the black radical tradition. As a prize fighting champion and a conscientious objector to the Vietnam War, the gender performance of black radical masculinities is distinguished in Ali. The results from the bouts were organized with biographical quotes and facts during the period and connected with black radical theory and the trajectory of black masculinities. Amid the three bouts and resistance that led to his eventual exile from boxing, Ali's black masculinity is reconfigured through an analysis of multiple themes, such as voice, skill, anger, faith, style, and corporeality.

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Black masculinities in American warfare

The black radical tradition has always critiqued American (and Western) racialism and capitalism's effects on black folk, and this topic has evolved in research areas on black men.

Studies that focused on ‘conflict theory’ compared black men’s oppressive status in the USA to colonialism and critiqued how black masculinity was constructed as an emasculated subordinate to a hetero-normative ideal of (white American) hegemonic masculinity (Connell, 2002; Staples, 1983), which feeds the ‘tangle of pathology’ in the structure of the black family (Clark, 1965; Frazier, 1939; U.S. Department of Labor, 1965). Auto ethnographic writing highlighted the pathology, the personal and collective traumas it produced, and the social theatre of war that followed within the black communities via sexism, homophobia, self-hate, and fratricide between black men (Staples, 1995).

Later, as researchers began to focus on masculinity in its plurality, the shift to exploring issues of men in more specific contexts (Hearn et al., 2012) led to a focus on black masculinities (Jackson II & Hopson, 2011; Neal, 2013). Consequently, attention has been paid to the internecine conflicts with black men on multiple levels, such as the gender divide (Hopkinson & Moore, 2006; Kitwana, 2002) as well as the economic crisis dealing with the unemployment and underemployment of black men (Hall, Livingston, Henderson, Fisher, & Hines, 2007; Malveau, 2004; Wilson, 2012). Amid the current sociopolitical climate in the USA (e.g. the #BlackLivesMatter movement in response to police brutality and state injustice against black folk), there is a challenge to implement a space for progressive theorization and praxis about black masculinities (Chandler, 2011; Mutua, 2006).

p. 266-267

Critical consciousness and black radical masculinities

Black feminist thought and practice, an extension of the black radical tradition, black studies, and a precursor to black masculinity studies, is significant to the development of progressive research on black masculinities. In discussing the war with white hegemonic masculinity, bell hooks (2004) calls for a resurgence of literature focused on black men who applied critical consciousness to the reinvention of their identities and resistance to systemic injustices. Additionally, examining the lives and works of radical black men – such as foundational sociologist and black radical theorist W. E. B. Du Bois and Islamic black revolutionary Malcolm X – moves the discussion towards an evolving anti-patriarchal stance that is initially focused on recognizing and understanding systemic injustices as by-products of white hegemonic masculinity.

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The anti-patriarchal stance is where the black radical tradition and black feminist thought converge for the call to discover new black masculinities (Neal, 2006). Lemelle (2010) exposes this opposition, presenting the theory that US society itself is a patriarchy that pervades all political, social, economic, and religious institutions with oppressive hierarchies based on a constructed moral order. This perspective suggests that research on black men and masculinities – with its focus on the social warfare and crippling of black men by white hegemonic masculinity – is inherently anti-patriarchal but often problematized by what Lemelle calls black men’s ‘disturbing desire to play the patriarch’ (Lemelle, 2010, p. 221).

When black men perform hegemonic masculinity's general, parochial conduit – black masculinity in the singular – they perpetuate structures of oppression in racial and sexual politics. This study reads Muhammad Ali's resistance to white systems as a resistance to hegemonic masculinity, black masculinity in the singular, and patriarchy.

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In deconstructive readings and writings on black men, scholars theorize that subjects have often been misread to fit the subordinate rendering that benefits white patriarchal narratives (Hartman, 1997) and dismisses the complexities of the highly mediated black male body, image, and identity (Neal, 2013)

(black masculinities, African masculinities? Ugandan masculinities? Acholi masculinities?)

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Coates (2015), in his critical memoir on being black in America amid the current social unrest in the USA, presents state violence as a custom for black men: 'it is traditional to destroy the black body – it is heritage'. This revelatory writing is also a self-radicalization of black male identity that seeks to impact other black masculinities, as Coates addresses his own son (and subsequently, others) in the text. Furthermore, it engages literary aesthetics of the black radical tradition that functions in the belief that the 'ideal of American manhood' not only promotes hetero-normative white masculinity as superior, but it uses it as a threat to mark, trap, and murder black men and black masculinities literally and figuratively (Baldwin, 1998). Close readings of Malcolm X from Diawara (1995) and Marable (2011) both deconstruct the autobiography of the black Islamic leader (who was initially Muhammad Ali's spiritual mentor) by highlighting his transformations and the highly strategic self-narrative he constructed to illustrate a testimonial radicalization that enabled him to negotiate his manhood in certain spaces, with certain people and groups, and against such threats. Marable, for instance, wrote that Malcolm X's masculine 'narrative is a brilliant series of reinventions' (p. 10).

p. 276

Discussion and conclusion

The purpose of this article was to determine black radical masculinities in the performance of Muhammad Ali during a specific period of his life and career as a champion prize fighter and conscientious objector to the Vietnam War. A narrative textual analysis was conducted and revealed that Ali performed significant scripts of black radical masculinities throughout the period that he developed his resistant position in opposition to US patriarchy, white hegemonic masculinity, and black masculinity, white hegemonic masculinity's patriarchal counterpart. In the process of revealing the complexities of Ali's resistance, a critical review of literature on research in black masculinity studies was used to reread Ali's narrative and develop a theory of black radical masculinities within it. This rereading revealed the performance of multiple themes performed during the three championship bouts studied and

the commentary during that period. Themes cantered on black radical masculinities as it related to the incorporation of voice and skill, the negotiation of anger and faith, and the construction of style of the black male body.

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Despite its limitations, the findings of this analysis advance critical scholarship on black masculinities and on Muhammad Ali, which suggest implications for future research examining other aspects of his life and identity that introduce transformative, resistant performances of black male identities. This study contributes to the body of research that offers different perspectives on black men and critical consciousness. Future research on black male subjectivities should continue to reread narratives of iconic and common black men. Beyond the academic discourse, the study also contributes to popular sports culture and public discourses on constructions of black male identity. As long as there is conflict between black men and the state, findings from this analysis and other studies should continue to centre on creating resistant black male identities.

Bevan, M., & MacKenzie, M. H. (2012). 'Cowboy' Policing versus 'the Softer Stuff' Masculinities and Policekeeping. *International Feminist Journal of Politics*, 14(4), 508-528.

Abstract: This article examines masculinities in relation to the New Zealand police force Community Policing Pilot Program in Timor-Leste (East Timor). We find that despite calls for less militarized, more community-cantered approaches to security sector reform, various forms of militarized masculinities persisted within the culture of the New Zealand Police during its international mission. In doing so, we not only complicate singular representations of militarized masculinity, but also challenge accounts that see masculinity as a monolithic negative, violent construct that is engaged with in only problematic ways.

p. 511

We employ the approach to feminist discourse analysis taken by Claire Duncanson (2007, 2009) in her work on peacekeeper masculinities. Her approach built on Lene Hansen's (2006) post-structural discourse theory and Charlotte Hooper's (2001) theory of the process of 'masculinization' and 'feminization'. Duncanson identifies ways in which traditional militarized masculinities were either reinforced or disrupted by highlighting processes of 'linking and differentiation' (citing Hansen 2006) that existed in descriptions of peacekeeping practices. In this process, a term such as 'male' is linked to a series of qualities such as rational, strong, independent and active. Within this process, the privileged term is associated with masculinity and 'as masculinity is valued, femininity becomes the "Other", and is devalued' (Hansen 2006: 63).

p. 512

MASCULINITIES

Both feminist and critical men's studies theorists have suggested that much early feminist work did not sufficiently conceptualize the links between men, masculinity and power (Carrington et al. 1985; Connell 1987; Brod and Kaufman 1990; Hearn and Morgan 1990; Enloe 1993; Hooper 2001; Mazurana et al. 2005; Zalewski and Parpart 2008). There has been a noted failure to see men as gendered subjects, instead seeing 'men' as a generic category with equal and uncontested ties to masculinity and power. By contrast, Connell et al. (2005: 3) suggest that men's identities should be seen as fluid constructs, 'variable across time (history) and space (culture), within societies, and through life courses and biographies'. In this sense, masculinity should not be treated as if it were a uniform and singular entity, universally understood and accepted by all. Instead, efforts should be made to understand the multiplicity of masculinities, recognizing the 'plurality and diversity of men's experiences, attitudes, beliefs, situations, practices, and institutions' (Brod and Kaufman 1990: 5).

p. 512-513

Hegemonic Masculinities

Within the shift to focusing on the plurality of masculinities, there has been a concern in ensuring that gender is still conceptualized as 'a system of power, not just a set of stereotypes or observable differences between women and men' (Brod and Kaufman, 1990: 4). To address this concern, Carrington et al. (1985) developed the theory of hegemonic and subordinate masculinities which situates masculinities within the wider gender relations framework.

It has been shown that there are dominant patterns of hegemonic masculinity that are associated with 'practices, discourses and institutions' linked with male power (Zalewski and Parpart 2008: 11). This hegemonic masculinity is ideological in nature, which means that it is an easily identified, idealized model, but not an accurate description of the personalities of most men. However, those individuals who align themselves most closely to the hegemonic model are most likely to receive the benefits of the power with which it is associated (Connell 1987, 2005; Hooper 2001; Kronsell 2005). Conversely, characteristics or traits that do not converge with the hegemonic model are less able to be associated with power as they are 'symbolically assimilated to femininity' (Connell 2005: 31).

Connell's concept of hegemonic and subordinate masculinity has been utilized to understand how certain forms of masculinity can be institutionalized within organizations (Cockburn 1991; Barrett 2001; Martin 2001; Higate 2003b; Connell and Messerschmidt 2005). This work built on feminist theories of masculinism, which have paid attention to the ways in which gender dichotomies and the privileging of characteristics associated with masculinity become embedded in particular institutions and disciplines as organizing principles (Peterson and Runyan 1993; Peterson and True 1998).

p. 513

Hyper-Masculinities and Militarized Masculinities

Although hyper-masculinity is also a fluid concept, it typically refers to an enactment of masculinity cantered on aggressiveness, toughness, excessive physicality, strength and sexual potency (Connell 2000; Myrntinen 2004; Duncanson 2007). Utilizing the theory of hegemonic masculinity, studies of the security sector have shown how the privileging of particular forms of masculinity within security sector institutions has led to hyper-masculine cultures being embedded within these institutions (Morgan 1990; Enloe 1993; Connell 2000; Herbert 2001; Higate 2003a, 2003b; Whitworth 2004). Militarized masculinity is one form of masculinity that tends to dominate within security sector institutions. Militarized masculinity has been defined as a form of masculinity that equates 'manliness' with 'sanctioned use of aggression, force and violence' (Bryson 1987 cited in Myrntinen 2004: 29).

p. 515

Resistance to violent militarized masculinities

In the interviews with NZPOL officers, the officers made several references to the impact of violence on their ability, and the ability of the PNTL, to contribute to community policing. A number of officers pointed to the use of violence and elements of militarized masculine traits as weaknesses or potential obstacles to successful policing.

p. 520-521

Adapting masculinities

Although two forms of militarized masculinities that could inhibit community-based policing have been discussed, it should be noted that there is evidence of police officers resisting potentially limiting forms of masculinities. Much of the research on peacekeeping sees peacekeeper masculinities as primarily associated with a dichotomy of the 'saviour' western peacekeepers and the presumed 'helpless' populations in the developing world (Orford 1999; Whitworth 2004). This approach does not take into consideration the ways in which peacekeepers could potentially construct their masculinities through the creation of 'relations of democracy, mutual respect and equality' with the people in the host-country (Duncanson 2007: 190). It is therefore important to see security sector officers working in the UN environment as having the agency to adapt their behaviours to the context.

p. 522, future

The importance of masculinities is something that is ignored within current approaches to gender-aware police reform, and men's multiple gender identities continue to remain largely invisible within these policies (Bendix 2009; Higate and Henry 2009; Myrntinen 2010). Gender all too often is seen as something that only affects women, while masculinity remains perceived as monolithic. This research built on the critiques of 'masculinities-blindness' in

gender policy by providing an account of how police officers themselves conceptualize different forms of militarized masculinities.

Our research helps to build an expanded understanding of militarized masculinities as diverse, adaptable and context specific.

p. 523

This research also points to how masculinities are defined in relation to other intersecting identities.

Stough-Hunter, A., & Hart, J. (2015). [Understanding masculine identity among anti-war veterans](#). NORMA, 10(3-4), 219-235.

Abstract: The military is an arena in which strong ideals regarding masculinity are enforced, with the soldier often portrayed as a model of hegemonic masculinity in the USA. Men who adopt an anti-war position, which may directly conflict with positions taken by the military as an organization, may be particularly challenged in the renegotiation of their masculine identity upon re-entry to civilian life. This study employs Burke and Stets' Identity Theory (2009) and Connell's hegemonic masculinity (2005) to examine masculine identity among a group of 26 veterans. Using data from in-depth interviews with 26 former military personnel that now claim an anti-war position, the study explores how masculinity is (re)negotiated among these men. The findings include respondents' description of masculinity before and after adopting an 'anti-war' identity, as well as variations in masculinity among our respondents. Specifically, we found three types of masculinity among respondents. The masculinity scripts within these typologies, as well as patterns occurring within each type are presented and best explained by social status giving some men more freedom to protest the hegemonic ideal.

p. 219

Joining the military provides ideological, symbolic, and material resources that aid men in aligning their identity to a hegemonic masculine ideal (Hinojosa, 2010). Leaving the military, regardless of one's position on war, to re-enter civilian life is challenging for many reasons. A key challenge is defining and verifying one's identity outside of the military organization, which may even lead to identity conflict (Smith & True, 2014). Adopting an anti-war position upon leaving has the potential to further complicate identity definition and verification. Given the strong connection between the military and masculinity, men who adopt an anti-war position may be particularly challenged in the renegotiation of their masculine identity upon re-entry to civilian life.

p. 220

We use male veterans, who due to their military experience, transformed from a pro-war to an anti-war identity. In assuming an anti-war identity, these veterans revised their meanings of masculinity for themselves and with others. We ask: What happens to masculine identity when service members embrace an anti-war position? By exploring how veterans (re-)negotiate hegemonic masculinity from an anti-war position, this study augments the identity theory frame- work with the concept of hegemonic masculinity (Burke & Stets, 2009).

p. 221

Military and masculinity

There is a strong connection between masculinity, the military, and war. The military plays a primary role in shaping images of masculinity (Kilshaw, 2009). The military and war are dominant symbols of masculinity with the soldier as a key embodiment of traditional male sex role behaviour (Barrett, 1996). Accordingly, there is a considerable body of literature on the relationship between the military and masculinity (Woodward, 2000; Woodward & Jenkins, 2011).

p. 222

Military masculinity includes ‘a set of beliefs, practices and attributes that can enable individuals, men and women, to claim authority on the basis of affirmative relationships with the military or with military ideas’ (Belkin, 2012, p. 3). A distinct benefit of joining the military for men is ‘access to resources of a hegemonic masculinity’ (Hinojosa, 2010, p. 180). While there are multiple forms of military masculinity that also vary across time and place, several common descriptors of military masculinity exist including: being physical fit and powerful, mentally strong, unemotional, heterosexual, as well as endurance and loyalty (Barrett, 1996; Woodward, 2000).

Additionally, ‘militaries are important sites for the investigation of hegemonic masculinities’ (Duncanson, 2015, p. 2). Hegemonic masculinity provides a framework for understanding the existence of multiple masculinities within the military (e.g. combat soldier versus non-combat support staff, officer versus recruit (Duncanson, 2015), the positioning of service members in relation to the ‘inferior other’ of non- service members (Hinojosa, 2010), and maintaining intra-branch rivalries (Hinojosa, 2010). By applying the workings of hegemonic masculinities, militaries build cohesion with an ‘idealized’ model of the military member contributing to a shared sense of pride and motivate particular behaviour by ‘feminizing’ undesirable behaviour (Belkin, 2012; Duncanson, 2015; Goldstein, 2001).

p.222

Anti-war and the (re)negotiation of masculine identity

Re-entry into civilian life requires soldiers to assume an 'ex-soldier' or civilian identity (Smith & True, 2014). This identity may conflict in several ways. Soldiers are re-entering contexts in which there is a growing divide between civilians and the military (Collins & Holsti, 1999), systems of military recognition are not acknowledged or understood, and feedback of being a hero is incongruent with one's identity standard (Smith & True, 2014). Additionally, the military aims to shape a soldier identity that emphasizes order, obedience, and collectivism. These traits are not necessarily valued in the civilian world where individualism and autonomy are prized. Combat further shapes a soldier identity, in part, by solidifying mutual dependence and trust among members of a combat unit (Smith & True, 2014).

p. 225

Respondents explained that the situations they experienced either in the military, during combat, during college or civilian life post war, or in religious settings, resulted in a significant change in their position on war. Their criteria for being just, fair, honest, and doing what is right, tightened over time and the meanings for how to meet these requirements changed dramatically from being pro-war with few restraints on US actions abroad to adopting either the strict criteria of Just War Theory or being pacifists and believing all war is wrong or unnecessary to address injustice.

p. 226

In changing their position on war, many respondents were challenged to consider what it meant to be a good man. Identity theory would explain this as a disruption to the gender identity standard (Burke & Stets, 2009). An anti-war position and a masculine identity standard may conflict, especially if one's masculine identity standard aligns with a form of military masculinity that values aggression, dominance, and violence. If the two identities become salient simultaneously, creating identity verification for one may invoke a large discrepancy in the other.

p. 226

We further find that the activism of many of our respondents allowed them to verify their masculine identity and solidify their anti-war identity, thus providing congruence between these identities. Respondents were able to reconfigure a localized hegemonic masculinity by verifying traits such as courage, service to country, and responsibility through their activism. Traits emphasized in the military were re-defined to align with the respondents' anti-war position. Activism becomes a way for men to continue to position themselves against an inferior other. The 'inferior other' appears to be those that are less enlightened or those still buying into the traditional military masculinity.

p. 226-227

Duncanson (2009) observed a reconfiguration of localized hegemonic masculinity in his study of peacemaking missions of British soldiers in Bosnia. While challenging traditional hegemonic understanding of the soldier as ‘killing machines’, this reconfiguration still required an ‘inferior other’. British soldiers described their peacemaking efforts as the way to be a ‘real man’. This localized hegemonic masculinity, in which peacemaking soldiers were rational, controlled, and civilized, was positioned in opposition to Balkan male soldiers who were emotional, irrational, and weak (Duncanson, 2009).⁴⁹

p. 227

In examining respondents’ definition of masculinity at age 18 and now we found 3 distinct types of masculinity among our respondents: Feminist Masculinity, Responsible/Accountable Masculinity, and Enlightened Male Masculinity.

p. 227

Feminist Masculinity

The first type of masculinity, which we call ‘Feminist Masculinity,³’ is characterized by clear language in opposition to what respondents identified as traditional masculinity or being strong, dominant, and alpha. These men described a good man as one who is able to embrace ‘feminine qualities’ including nurturing, cultivating, and empowering others, while rejecting traditional masculine qualities such as aggression and dominance.

p. 228

Recently, scholars argue that hegemonic masculinity has the potential to be ‘unravelling’ with resulting forms of masculinity that legitimate gender equality, as opposed to inequality. For Duncanson (2015)⁵⁰, this ‘unravelling’ occurs as men construct their identities in terms of equality with others, rather than through relations of opposition or domination (p. 3). It appears that this group comes closest to ‘constructing their identities through recognition of similarity, respect, interdependence, empathy and equality with others’ (Duncanson, 2015, p. 3). The masculinity described by men in this group may best represent what Messerschmidt terms ‘equality masculinities’, which ‘legitimate an egalitarian relationship between men and

⁴⁹ Duncanson, C. (2009). Forces for good? Narratives of military masculinity in peacekeeping operations. *International Feminist Journal of Politics*, 11(1), 63–80.

⁵⁰ Duncanson, C. (2015). Hegemonic masculinity and the possibility of change in gender relations. *Men and Masculinities*, 18(2), 231–248.

women, between masculinity and femininity, and among men (2012, p. 73).

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Responsible/Accountable Masculinity

The second masculine type is what we term 'Responsible/Accountable' masculinity. This type includes being strong, wise, and aware of one's relation to others. A key feature of these men's responses was an emphasis on the necessity of taking responsibility for your actions because actions have consequences.

p. 229

Men in this group were more likely to discuss masculinity using characteristics that were part of their military training such as loyalty, responsibility, and accountability.

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These masculine scripts appear to reflect what Niva (1998) identifies as a shift in the hegemonic masculinity of the military which occurred during the time of the 1991 Gulf War and embraces a 'tough but tender' position. However, for these men, masculinity is intentionally disconnected from the activities of the military as an organization. Men in this group also appear to redefine and display their masculinity through their activism and often describe this activism in terms of responsibility to others.

p. 229

Enlightened Male Masculinity

The third type is the least rigidly defined of the masculine typologies. The veterans describe their masculinity as being strong, caring, wise, supportive, loving, and listening. We call this group the 'Enlightened Male' group because the descriptions of a good man were mostly 'gender neutral' and might be used to more broadly define good human behaviour. While some terms seem more closely aligned with a traditional feminine role, this group did not explicitly contrast these feminine characteristics against traditional masculinity.

p. 231

In examining men's understanding of masculinity, we found that the respondents had various ways of renegotiating the meaning of hegemonic masculinity and their own idiosyncratic position within the gendered hierarchy. Some men overtly protested and/or resisted hegemonic masculinity. Others, while rejecting specific wars or war all together, are still complicit in the hierarchy of masculinities, but no longer allow masculine military ideologies

and icons to define their positions in the gendered social order. However, to some extent, all of the respondents make sense of their masculinity through their social activism related to peace and social justice and integrity of acting on their beliefs.

p. 232

The challenge of re-entering civilian life after exiting the military, as well as the persistent connection between the military and masculinity necessitates research on the negotiation of masculine identities. The results presented here suggest that understanding identity formation and change in this re-entry process must continue to acknowledge multiple-ranked masculinities. Future studies should examine how veterans negotiate their anti-war and masculine identities in various groups. In addition, fatherhood and religion played an important role in the lives of many of our participants. A closer examination of these variables is needed.

[Haque, M. M. \(2013\). Hope for Gender Equality? A Pattern of Post-conflict Transition in Masculinity. *Gender, Technology and Development*, 17\(1\), 55-77.](#)

Abstract: Challenging the findings of existing studies on masculinity in conflict situations and post-conflict transition in masculinity, some former soldiers in the Cambodian civil war during the 1970s have constructed peaceful and responsive masculinities in a new gender order in post-war Cambodia. This is mainly because of the new dominant social discourse on maleness pervading the country, which expects men to be model husbands and fathers able to uplift their families by raising their economic and educational status. Family members, particularly wives, play an important role in actualizing the social discourse among these former soldiers. This study provides hope for gender equality through engagement with men and boys. They can be motivated to promote gender equality and end violence against women through the development of popular discourses on responsive masculinity and good fatherhood.

p. 56

There is an intellectual problem in studies on masculinities in conflict situations and post-conflict transition in masculinity. Existing studies (Myrttinen, 2005; Xaba, 2001) give the clear impression that the former soldiers often organize their masculinity around violence and notoriety in the post-war time. Conflict and war leave these men without skills or education, which lead to their marginalization in the new post-war socio-political order. Finding no other means, they are forced to follow paths akin to those in the war time to survive in the new order.

The main protagonist of Xaba's (2001) study is a typical example of how masculinity is understood in conflict and transition. Fernando, an African township youth, was treated as a "young lion" during the days of apartheid in South Africa for his struggle against the unjust

system. Many youths were recruited by political organizations such as the United Democratic Front (UDF) and the African National Congress (ANC) in the 1970s to intensify the anti-apartheid campaign. As a result of this resistance campaign, a national unity government was formed in the early 1990s. The political transition also brought changes in society, which now sought respect for law and order, restoration of state institutions, and cooperation with police in the fight against crime.

Former “young lions” like Fernando, who were neither assimilated in the national defence forces nor rehabilitated by the state, could not find employment, as they were left without any education by the end of the struggle. Being unemployed, it became hard for Fernando to find a place in the new gender order. Eventually, he became a full-time gangster for survival, and came into confrontation with the police force. Finally, he was killed by the police.

Myrntinen’s (2005) study notes that although the open conflict of Falintil, the pro-independence guerrillas, with the Indonesian military forces ended with Timor Leste’s independence in 1999, the new-born country continued to witness brutalities as the former guerrillas started expressing their masculinity in sexualized violence against their spouses and other women after their demobilization.

Cambodia’s experience of war and social disruption is extreme and daunting. The devastation and disruption of civil war that the Cambodian people have experienced is as great as any conflict in Africa or Timor Leste. Here too, the country gradually moved to peace and hopes of

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prosperity in the post-war era involving a new gender order. But some accounts of the life of Cambodian men involved in the civil war of the 1970s provide a very different picture of reconstructing masculinity in the post-war period. This article examines cases of men who have constructed peaceful and responsive masculinities in the post-war era, within a social discourse of maleness.

p. 62

Hearn (1996) questions the conceptual use of the term “masculinity,” and argues that equating masculinity to male identity or something inherent in men is problematic. Men in different cultural settings understand themselves as men in a culturally defined and specific way. As it is difficult to define what masculinities are, Hearn suggests that it is more appropriate to talk about “men” instead of “masculinities.” To Westwood (1997), masculinity exists in a plurality of forms, which can be theorized as fluid and multiple, subject to changing contexts. Masculinity is composed of daily individual accomplishments that are constructed, negotiated, and contested within the complex power relations of institutions, including the family, and related structures.

Morrell (2001) suggests that masculinity is a specific gender identity belonging to a specific male person. Although the specific gender identity is developed using social processes and

contexts, it does not necessarily mean that all men of that society possess the same identity. Individual men take up the identity which best suits them, given their relative positions in social and gender relations. Connell (2005, 2009) defines masculinity as a configuration of gender practice. Masculinity is configured within a unique structure of gender power relations under patriarchy, which is characterized by an overall subordination of women

p. 63

and domination by men. Similarly, masculinity is constructed within an overall set of relations where men overwhelmingly do paid work and control resources, and women do unpaid work. Masculinity requires active engagement in practicing gender. It is not something that someone “has” but that someone “does” (Whitehead & Barrett, 2001). Masculinities are plural and diverse. There is no single version of masculinity. Connell (2005) categorizes masculinities as (a) hegemonic, (b) complicit, (c) subordinate, and (d) marginalized.

p. 63

The relationship between masculinity and war is complex (Cockburn, 2010; Connell, 2000; Hutchings, 2012). Connell (2000) argues that masculinities are the forms in which many dynamics of violence take place. Although gender dynamics do not constitute the whole story of war, they are involved to some extent. In days of yore, war could not take place without the physical presence of two rival groups. Heroic masculinity was respected and idealized by the general masses, and often deemed exemplary among the post-war society.

p. 63

But the heroic style of masculinity disappeared in the wake of high-tech war. High-tech war requires soldiers with scientific skills for the operation of high-tech weapons. The changing conditions of war require the armies to engage more than one type of masculinity (Connell, 2000). For example, the generals symbolize a masculinity which is different from that of frontier soldiers. Maintaining more than one kind of masculinity (with power hierarchy) is essential to maintain command over the overall war situation. And wars in contemporary world are the brainchild of world politics—politics for the creation of a global market. Leaders of world politics do not denote a masculinity like the frontier soldiers. Rather, they hold a hegemonic masculinity, which controls the opponent nation/regime by controlling their own armies. Therefore, we can argue that war is a product of masculinity. War can produce masculinity both immediately and in the post-war situation. It can give rise to protest masculinity (Connell, 2000) immediately among the invaded nation or society, which can potentially lead the victims to become aggressive and violent.

Cockburn (2010) links militarization and war to three dimensions of power. She suggests that economic power, ethnic or national power, and gender power cause, shape, achieve, and reproduce militarization and war.

Hutchings (2012) argues that the link between war and masculinity does not necessarily

depend on the meaning of either masculinity or war.

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Rather, masculinity is linked to war as a way of providing a framework through which the war can be rendered as a social practice and institution.

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The life histories of these four men suggest that the post-conflict transition in masculinity among the former militia and paramilitary men took place within the new gender order of the post-war Cambodia. The new gender order, which emerged in the wake of the country's social, political, and economic progress in the period of reconstruction, measured masculinity by a man's success in making his family prosperous and educated. Political militancy, notoriety, and organized violence gradually became obsolete in the new gender order. Family men who were prospering received social respect and honor. These self-made men gained hegemony. These men were not necessarily highly educated, but they made the right decisions, worked hard, and strove for success. As success is always normatively synonymous with wealth, these men worked hard to earn money by any means in order to raise their families to a better social class.

p. 73-74

Now men like Pirun, Pheng, and Hout, who were in a kind of "political militancy," found that in the changed situation, their militant masculinity was obsolete. Their involvement could not even provide basic necessities to their families. Their zeal to "protect the country" faded in the new situation.

Although the transition of the former militiamen to a civilian life was influenced by the duty for the family, the construction of peaceful, responsive, and family-focused masculinities took place within the dis- course of "Men of Success." The discourse brought Cambodian men to a situation where the gender role of providing the main income for the family by the "successful men" was set as a standard for the "ordinary" men. It can be argued that the "Men of Success" are an ideal that put married and family men in a hegemonic position.

Family members, particularly wives, played an important role in actualizing the social discourse among these former soldiers, as is evident from Pirun's account. But the change came with costs for their wives, who also made important contributions to this economic partnership. The wives of Pirun, Pheng, and Hout toiled hard for the family prosperity. The physical distance between the spouses, after the husbands' migration to the city, created some tension, particularly in the early years of the migration, but the couples managed to tide over the situation with- out resorting to violence.

Like Fernando in Xaba's (2001) study, Pirun, Pheng, and Hout had little in the way of marketable skills (except for Pheng's informal skills in construction and motorcycle repair). But unlike Fernando, none of them took to the path of violence in the post-war era. Rather,

they made the most of their ability in order to emulate, at least partially the “Men of Success,” the hegemonic masculinity in the post-war Cambodia. All of them made their way to Phnom Penh, the centre of the reconstruction of the nation, to find any sort of work to earn money. They engaged in low-esteem, laborious, and dangerous occupations to find a place as successful men in the new gender order. Eventually, all of them made themselves “Men of Success.” They have their own houses in the capital city; two have provided university education to their children; and all have upgraded their occupation to become small-scale entrepreneurs. They are respected at least among the men of their own social class.

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This article is a departure from the existing studies on masculinities in conflict situations and the post-conflict transition in masculinity. Masculinities in conflict settings and transitional masculinities in post-conflict settings are mostly synonymous with violence, aggression, and notoriety. Instead, this study shows examples of men who organized peaceful and responsive masculinities in a post-war situation after being actively involved in situations of extreme violence.

The case studies in this article reveal how some Cambodian men began their life with no marketable civilian skills or qualifications. The social discourse on masculinities in post-war Cambodia, which underlined men's role in family prosperity, accumulation of wealth, and education of children, shaped the way these men transformed their lives in the post-war era. Family members, particularly the wives, played an important role in actualizing the social discourse among these former militia men.

Section 5: Fatherhood as Lens

Enderstein, A. M., & Boonzaier, F. (2015). Narratives of young South African fathers: redefining masculinity through fatherhood. *Journal of gender studies*, 24(5), 512-527.

Abstract: In the new South Africa gender role constructions are slowly shifting, this article explores early fatherhood as a potential site for the development of alternative masculinities. Existing research tends to cast young men as subjects of risk factor vulnerability and negative outcomes who become uninvolved fathers. The narrative data from young men in this study contradict this view. The analysis reveals that young men deliberately shift their life focus and actively renegotiate their identity through the choice to take responsibility for their children. They structure their personal goals and their relationships with families and partners in terms of providing emotional and financial stability for their child. Fatherhood becomes a highly valorised masculine identity. These young men resolve the tension between the pursuit of hegemonic gender ideals and determination to act as caregivers to their children, thus

casting fatherhood as a site to challenge stereotypes of irresponsible young men and absent fathers. This study indicates that young fathers are not invisible and that early fatherhood is a potentially transformative force in the construction of masculinities which include provision, protection and caring.

p. 512

While there is copious research on masculinities and an increasing number of organisations that engage men, a single essentialised discourse on gender persists – a discourse in which females are oppressed by aggressive and forceful males (see Varga 1997).

p. 512-513

Counter to the discourse of ‘bad men’ widely used in South African gender activism (Morrell et al. 2012b), gender equality cannot be solely contingent on the empowerment of women – it should include the development of alternatives to the constructions of masculinity which undermine gender equality (see Ratele et al. 2011, Morrell et al. 2012b). We contend that early fatherhood is a possible site for the development of progressive masculine identities that privilege care, respect and active involvement.

p. 513 fatherhood as resistance

Contrary to the understanding of young fathers¹ in terms of risk profile, we argue that they actively formulate and redefine the parameters of their masculine identity through fatherhood, creating potential sites for resistance of hegemonic gendered discourse.

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Connell (1995) suggests the concept of hegemonic masculinity to refer to the collection of practices that subordinate women to men in the maintenance of patriarchy. Hegemonic masculinity is a composite of the traits that afford the greatest power socially. It is normative, regulating the behaviour of men in terms of acceptable manhood (Connell and Messerschmidt 2005, Lindegger and Maxwell 2007). In this analysis, there are multiple masculinities (complicit, subordinate and marginal) that afford power differently depending on respective proximity to the standards of hegemonic masculinity (Pascoe 2003, Connell and Messerschmidt 2005, Williams 2009, Richardson 2010). Masculinities, as relationally defined gender identities in constant flux, are provisional and context dependent (Connell and Messerschmidt 2005, Richardson 2010). We use Connell’s theorising on masculinity as a reference point in this article. It provides a way to theorise about gendered power relations that support gender oppression, and we are concerned with the development of alternative masculinities that support a reconfiguration of these systems of power.

p. 515

Early parenting research in South Africa

In the socio-political period of transition from apartheid to democracy, identities are being reconstructed and renegotiated (Prinsloo and de la Rey 1999). The South African case is ripe for the study of masculinity, in its multiple and varied forms, and this challenge has been taken up by a host of South African scholars (e.g. Shefer et al. 2007, Ratele 2008, Morrell 2001). This research points to problematic constructions of masculinity and has begun to question some ways in which South African men have been demonised without recognition of the complex ways in which contextually bound and fluid masculinities may be constructed (Ratele 2008). Furthermore, within the wider context of globalisation involving shifting gender regimes and ‘new father’ discourses, this research serves as a necessary contribution in theorising about gender from the global periphery (Connell 2012). An investigation of alternative discourses of masculinity made possible through talk about early reproduction is a key contribution to the existing body of literature.

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Swartz and Bhana’s (2009)⁵¹ research is the first South African study to investigate young fathers’ experiences directly. This phenomenological study highlights the responsibility and emotional investment that young fathers feel for their children; emphasising financial challenges and relationships with parents, families and partners within the related socio-cultural context. Young fathers often feel a strong sense of responsibility towards their children. This relationship is heavily influenced by financial difficulties and father involvement is often a function of the degree of support that they receive from family members. Findings point to the importance of the young fathers’ experiences of their own fathers and the role that pursuits of gender norms play in early parenthood. These findings further substantiate that young fathers want to be involved with their children. Our study builds on this understanding by documenting the themes that young fathers chose to include in their narratives, with an aligned focus on the implications for the construction of alternative masculinities.

p. 519

Renegotiating identity and the role of father

The acceptance of fatherhood involves a significant shift in life focus and renegotiation of identity. John and Sizwe, for example, related painful experiences such as rebuke and exclusion from their religious communities. Other participants talked about having to stop seeing friends, drinking and breaking off relationships with other women. All of the participants talk about a change in focus following becoming a father. The participants talk about how they began to see life through the lens of ‘me þ child’.

⁵¹ Swartz, S. and Bhana, A., 2009. Teenage tata: voices of young fathers in South Africa. Cape Town: HSRC Press.

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As the young men talked about how they recovered from the unplanned pregnancy and new responsibilities, they began to describe the identity of ‘father’. The parenting role of the father was referred to in terms of financial provision, protection and guidance, physical care and emotional support. Parallel to the accounts of the participants’ role of fathers runs a less explicit account of how they relinquished the particular gender ideals of their young male peers to centre their masculine identity on performing more caring roles. For almost all of the participants, having a child caused them to eschew some of the traditional markers of young masculinity.

p. 520

Father as provider

One of the most frequently drawn upon cultural resources was ‘father as provider’ script. Engaging in paid work has traditionally been a significant aspect of masculine identity, particularly for fathers (Brandth and Kvande 1998, Doucet 2004). The participation of young men in the public economic sphere is an integral part of establishing a masculine identity in relation to the family (Adams and Coltrane 2005).

p. 523

Conclusion

Collectively, these findings show that the young men in this study consciously undertook the responsibility of fatherhood and moulded their lives to accommodate this new identity. They negotiated relationships around the aim of fulfilling their role as fathers; and this role guided their decisions and actions. We found that the young men interviewed saw fatherhood as a choice to take responsibility which ran counter current to the social norms of denying paternity. Determined to give their children the experience of a present and involved father, they talked about facing the challenges of early fatherhood. Young men negotiate relationships with families and partners amidst conflict and the pull of cultural norms; they experience a deep emotional connection to their children; they redefine themselves through financial provision, offering guidance and good examples, providing care and emotional support. These narratives are crafted to reveal the active role that the young men play in defining how they wish to practice fatherhood.

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The analysis of these narratives shows an overlap with findings from South African and international studies; namely, the centrality of finances to ‘father’ identity, the emotional attachment young fathers have to their children and the factors influencing father involvement (Allen and Doherty 1996, Caldwell and Antonucci 1997, Bunting and McAuley 2004, Glikman 2004, Swartz and Bhana 2009, Lemay et al. 2012, Morrell et al. 2012a).

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For the participants in this study, fatherhood emerges as a potential transformative force in developing positive masculinities. Positive masculinities may be defined as ‘peace loving, democratic, tolerant and respectful’ (Morrell 2006, p. 21). Datta (2007) asserts that changing masculinities and gender ideals, and therefore relationship dynamics, requires a repositioning of men as partners and fathers within families.

p. 524

The study speaks to the possibility of the development of alternative masculinities as they show the capacity of young men to subvert some hegemonic gender ideals in favour of privileging the identity of caring father. However, what this analysis also shows is that the crafting of alternative scripts of masculinity is often tentative and sometimes contradictory. In attempting to frame a narrative of caring masculinities, men simultaneously draw upon long established ways of constructing masculinity, which involve taking responsibility, protection and provision. Constructs such as masculinity and femininity, as illustrated particularly in post-structuralist feminist work (see Gavey 1989, de la Rey 1997), are not fixed. Gendering is a social process (Lorber 1994) through which manhood and womanhood are continually reconstituted in ways that accommodate ambiguity and contradiction (Glenn 1999). The potential for transformation in gender identities, norms and social practices is highlighted in this work and should continue to be at the forefront of future masculinities research.

[Datta, K. \(2007\). “In the eyes of a child, a father is everything”: Changing constructions of fatherhood in urban Botswana? Women's studies international forum 30\(2\): p. 97-113.](#)

Abstract: Research on fathers and fatherhood remains scarce, especially in the Global South. Furthermore, existing work tends to label men as ‘irresponsible fathers’. As such, the spatial and temporal differences that exist in the practices and experiences of fatherhood have been somewhat eclipsed. This article seeks to contribute to emerging research on fathers and fatherhood within the specific context of urban Botswana. Drawing upon focus group discussions held with diverse groups of men, it explores men's experiences of both being sons and then fathers. In so doing, it considers the extent to which fatherhood is being reconstructed.

Conceptual hints

p. 97

Research on parenting in the Global South reflects a bias towards capturing the practices and experiences of motherhood which is justifiable given prevalent gender ideologies which

ensure that women continue to bear the primary responsibility for not only bearing but also raising children (Bowlby, Gregory, & McKie, 1997; Doucet, 1995; Engle & Leonard, 1995; Lawler, 1996).

In turn, a depiction of fatherhood as oppositional to, and in conflict with, motherhood has led to a focus on a 'deficit' model of fatherhood (Greene & Biddlecom, 1997, p.36). Viewed from such a vantage point, men are either providers and disciplinarians or absent, irresponsible fathers (Fox, 1999).

p. 97

More recent work has challenged such homogenous understandings and is exploring temporal and spatial differences in fathering and fatherhood (Chopra, 2001; Fox, 1999; Morrell, 2005; Simpson, 2005; Townsend, 1997, 2001).

p.97

In turn, this appreciation that fatherhood is socially constructed and hence malleable is vitally important for three inter-related reasons. First, the potential to reshape fatherhood is critical for the achievement of gender equality both within the productive and reproductive spheres (Morrell, 2005). In particular, the re-negotiation of gender roles, relations and responsibilities in the reproductive sphere relies upon changing masculinities and the meaningful integration of men as husbands/partners and fathers into the household and family. A second imperative to consider fatherhood as malleable emerges from the sexual and reproductive health agenda (Bruce, 1995). The HIV/AIDS crisis has lent a particular urgency to the need to engage with men as sexual and reproductive beings given the consensus that they are critical for the prevention of the disease (Bujra, 2002). Nascent research is beginning to illustrate the link between responsible fathering and HIV/AIDS prevention. A third and final reason emerges from a focus on the rights of the children. The adoption of a rights based perspective in development studies has been critical in highlighting children's rights as well as the responsibilities of women and men as parents (Chant & Guttman, 2000; Mayo, 2001; UNICEF, 1997). There is increased consensus that children benefit from having active fathers in their lives which in turn entails a reconstruction of fatherhood (Morrell, 2005).

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Indeed, various factors militate against the reconstruction of masculine identities such as the prevalence of hegemonic masculinities and the existence of a "patriarchal dividend" (see below) (Connell, 1995, p. 242).

p. 99

It is perhaps instructive to begin with a definition, and in particular, the distinction between fathers, fathering and fatherhood. 'Fathers' and 'fathering' are defined in relation to reproduction such that fathers contribute half of a child's genetic material while 'fatherhood' is a more complex term embracing a broader range of parenting functions (Engle & Leonard, 1995). Perhaps most critically, it is agreed that it is a role which is socially constructed and negotiated and played out in relation to particular children, in specific community circumstances and cultural milieus (Roggman, Fitzgerald, Bradley, & Raikes, 2002).

Focusing on social construction, it is important to recognize the following. First, fathering and fatherhood are critical to the constructions of masculinities. Hegemonic constructions of masculinities are intimately related to sexual prowess such that the biological fathering of children is a vital marker of male virility and masculinity as is the ability to provide for the economic needs of children, and families at large. Indeed, the performance of these functions is critical to the construction of successful masculinities such that a failure to fulfil these roles may cause men to retreat from such responsibilities (Chopra, 2001). For men, having children contributes to the patrilineal process whereby they move through a series of statuses from son, father to grandfather and from child, adult to old man (Townsend, 2001). As such, not only can fathers potentially make important contributions to child development (see below), fatherhood can also make important contributions to adult development (Palkovitz, Copes, & Woolfolk, 2001; Roggman et al., 2002).

Second, fatherhood is a role which is constructed not only by men but also women and children, and in relation to motherhood and childhood. Thus, it differs in terms of what fathers and mothers do, being a parent means different things to mothers and fathers and being a father means different things to men and women (Townsend, 2001). Fathers and mothers also relate differently to sons and daughters. Looking at some of these distinctions in greater detail, parenting roles are deeply gendered such that mothers are associated with caring and nurturing while fathers are valued for providing basic needs, administering discipline and passing on skills to their children (Jabeen & Karkara, 2005). While a gendered division of parenting work which puts men in the labour market as providers for the family and women at home as carers is presented as being natural and equal, it is in fact neither. It is the product of particular economic production structures and gender organisation which facilitates a separation of fathers from children (Townsend, 2001).

It is important to recognize that motherhood is also constructed in relation to fatherhood. In spite of the fact that fatherhood varies spatially and temporally, it has certain universal characteristics in that it is a gendered role which is invested with power, both in relation to motherhood, and within the household (Engle & Leonard, 1995).

Third, the focus on the gendered differences in the construction and practices of parenting has eclipsed temporal changes in the practices of fathering and fatherhood. While there has been

an increased theoretical and empirical recognition of multiple masculinities, this recognition has not been extended to fatherhood (Townsend, 1999).⁵²

p. 99

Research has tended to create largely monolithic images of “isolated and unsupported mothers” (Townsend, 1997, p. 105), a view which Engle and Leonard (1995, p. 49) elaborate upon saying that not only have women's lives been characterized “primarily in terms of motherhood, men's lives have been characterised largely without reference to fatherhood.”

p. 99

The HIV/AIDS epidemic, and the discovery that it is a gendered disease, has led to focus on men and masculinities within sexual and reproductive health discourse and policies (Bujra, 2002; Gosine, 2004).

[Strier, R. \(2014\). Unemployment and fatherhood: Gender, culture and national context. Gender, Work & Organization, 21\(5\), 395-410.](#)

Abstract: Hegemonic representations of masculinity and dominant images of fatherhood have usually been linked to the domain of work. This article explores the experiences of men under the hardship of unemployment and the impact of these experiences on the construction of their gender identities, specifically on the construction of their fatherhood identity. In addition, the article examines how culture and national context affect the interrelationship between unemployment and fatherhood. Drawing on a post-structural constructivist theoretical perspective, the article describes a qualitative study of low-income unemployed Palestinian fathers in Israel. The study examines three areas of interest: perceptions of fatherhood, the experience of unemployment and the impact of unemployment on the construction of fatherhood. On the theoretical level, the article proposes a conceptualization of the relationship between unemployment and fatherhood. It argues that in order to generalize the impact of unemployment on fatherhood, we must first examine the context in which gendered and cultural perceptions of fatherhood are embedded. On a policy level, the article offers some recommendations for developing more contextualized, gender- and cultural- sensitive policies for unemployed fathers.

p. 395

This article challenges some common understandings about the relationship between masculinity, fatherhood and unemployment and the applicability of earlier theoretical work.

⁵² Townsend, Nicholas (1999). Fatherhoods and fieldwork: Intersections between personal and theoretical positions. *Men and Masculinities*, 2(1), 87–97.

Previous studies show that masculinity and fatherhood identities are highly vulnerable to unemployment, poverty and exclusion (Lamb, 2004⁵³; Roy, 2006⁵⁴). This article suggests that the analysis of the intersection between masculinity, fatherhood and unemployment still requires a deeper understanding which takes into consideration the multiplicity of gender identities, and the presence of powerful contextual forces such as gender, culture and national context. This kind of analysis might show that the effect of unemployment on gender identities is not uniform and varies according to contextual differences (Artazcoz et al., 2004).

p. 395

One of the main deficits of men and fatherhood studies relates to the fact that they focused mainly on white, middle-class men and sometimes overlooked issues of class, culture, race or ethnicity. Unemployed individuals and their families are exposed to many adverse events and circumstances (Ström, 2003). However, the study of the impact of unemployment on low-income fathers is relatively scarce (Farrell, 2003; Willott and Griffin, 1997). This article centres on an interesting and invisible population: men being a national and religious minority and experiencing extremely high rates of unemployment.

p. 396

Unemployment

Several studies have shown that unemployment, beyond its harmful economic dimensions, may represent a painful and detrimental experience, a traumatic episode, a threat to psychological well-being (Carroll, 2007; Spera et al., 1994; Waters and Moore, 2002). Unemployment is seen as a source of risk for individuals and families (Clark and Oswald, 1994; Fryer and Fagan, 2003; Hanisch, 1999; Komarovsky, 2004). In her classical study, Jahoda found that unemployment deprives individuals of by-products of work, such as time structure, contact with others, being part of others' plans, personal status, identity and activity (Jahoda, 1979, 1981, 1982). Warr extended Jahoda's functional model and added environmental factors that count for understanding differences in the impact of unemployment (Warr, 1987).

p. 396

In her classical work on the Great Depression in America, Komarovsky laid the foundations for the sociological understanding of the relationship between unemployment and gender. She found that patriarchal and traditional fathers suffered the most from unemployment, whereas males with more flexible gender identities were better able to cope with unemployment (Komarovsky, 2004). A common assumption is that the psychological

⁵³ Lamb, M.E. (ed.) (2004) *The Role of the Father in Child Development*. New York: Wiley.

⁵⁴ Roy, K.M. (2006) Fathers stories: A life course examination of paternal identity among low-income African American men. *Journal of Family Issues*, 27,1, 31–54.

consequences of unemployment are less severe for women than for men (Artazcoz et al., 2004; Gallie, 2004).

Cottle (2001) claims that men experience unemployment as a traumatic event that creates conditions that resemble symptoms of loss and post-trauma.

Fatherhood, p. 396

The growing interest in fatherhood studies is part of the general attention on men as subjects of gender inquiry. One of the main critiques associated with the study of fatherhood is related to its discursive, de-contextualized nature of fatherhood theories (Haney and March, 2003)⁵⁵. Responding to this theoretical flaw, we present a brief review related to the role of gender, culture and national context in the construction of fatherhood.

p. 397

Gender affects hegemonic views of fatherhood. Broughton and Rogers (2007) provide a critical overview of changing ideologies and practices of fatherhood in the 19th century, as the family acquired its distinctively modern form. Dermott (2003, 2006) argues that current views of 'good fatherhood' are related to gendered and cultural ideas. Featherstone (2003, 2009) employs a feminist perspective to highlight the gendered and socially constructed nature of fatherhood. According to gendered views of masculinity, employment seems to be crucial for men's identity (Doucet, 2006). This identity is to no small degree affirmed by proving that one is economically self-sufficient. Such proof is usually given in the form of holding a job (Crompton, 1999). This is a deeply rooted conception in the contemporary western world, in which the home mirrors feminine culture and the outdoor, external, public sphere reflects masculine culture (Bourdieu, 1992). This gendered division of space has a crucial impact on the ways in which unemployment is experienced by men and women, and trans- forms unemployment into a threat to men's psychological well-being (Anderson et al., 2005). Fodor (2006) argued that in Hungary, one of the major gender differences in the experience of poverty is that men often find themselves in a gender role crisis when they have insufficient means to function as successful breadwinners. Women, by contrast, tend to feel their roles as caretakers intensified and thus avoid a conflict with hegemonic ideals of femininity. As a response, low-income married couples devise ways in which they try to alleviate men's gender shame and devise liveable alternatives to hegemonic gender roles. Clearly, dominant constructs of masculinity oppress men who do not conform to local hegemonic social class views of masculinity (Kaufman, 1994, 1999; Kimmel, 2000). In some

⁵⁵ Haney, L. and March, M. (2003) Married fathers and caring daddies: Welfare reform and the discursive politics of paternity. *Social Problems*, 50,4, 461–81.

contexts, poverty represents not only economic hardship, but also exclusion from exerting some of the privileges of their dominant gender status (Nonn, 1998). Therefore, unemployed low-income men risk falling short of dominant standards of what is considered to be a man (Anderson, 1999). Willott and Griffin (1997) stated that, despite the potential that long-term male unemployment has of destabilizing the gender system, most unemployed men retain their conception of masculinity within hegemonic discourses of masculinity.

Culture also matters in the construction of fatherhood (Tripp-Reimer and Wilson, 1991). LaRossa (1997) drew attention to the cultural context in which the culture of fatherhood (norms, values, beliefs and symbolic expressions of fatherhood) is forged. Fatherhood is more than an assembly of roles; it is a cultural invention (LaRossa, 1997; Lupton and Barclay, 1997; Marks and Palkovitz, 2004) and, as such, is crafted by means of a discourse that stresses biology and disregards the institutional and political context in which the meaning of fatherhood is created and reproduced (LaRossa, 1988; LaRossa and Sinha, 2006).

Fatherhood researchers called for more culturally contextualized fatherhood studies that transcend the body of research into white, middle-class fatherhood, and urged the inclusion of other ethnicities in the fatherhood research agenda (Coltrane, 1994; Lamb, 2000; Marsiglio et al., 2000). Culture may play a crucial role in buffering or intensifying the impact of poverty on men. Based on a cultural analysis of white middle-class fathers in America, Townsend (2002) found that men in the American middle class perceive family, work, marriage and property as part of a package deal. According to this perspective, fatherhood is a complex, dynamic, multifaceted phenomenon, which is highly affected by cultural, gender and local context (Cabrera et al., 2000; LaRossa, 1997; Roopnarine, 2004). Cultural studies of fatherhood suggest that men are not forever committed to a particular pattern of masculinity and fatherhood, but make situational, specific choices from a cultural repertoire of masculine behaviours (Wetherell and Edley, 1999). Contemporary research on men and masculinity often overlooks the influence of religious traditions in shaping men's understanding of themselves as men and fathers. Several studies have made the connection between religious traditions and the experiences of masculinity (Boyd et al., 1996; Culbertson and Krondorfer, 2005). For example, Marks and Dollahite (2001) show that religion may play a positive role in the development of fathers' involvement. Wolfinger and Wilcox (2008) conclude that men's investment in family relationships depends on the institutional contexts of these relations, including participation in formal religion. Ouzgane (2006) focused her work on Islamic masculinities. She claims that masculinities in Islamic contexts emerge as a set of distinctive practices defined by men's positions within a variety of religious and social structures.

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National context plays a significant role in the construction of fatherhood (Catlett and McKenry, 2004; Kost, 2001). National context may include specific histories of structural inequalities, labour market characteristics, demographic changes, national politics of unemployment, hegemonic economic discourse and other power-related categories.

Roy (2008) examined the ways in which the lives of South African and American low-income fathers are strongly conditioned by histories of racial and class inequality. Offner and Holzer (2002) showed that the decline in labour market participation of low-income fathers is one of the main reasons for the fatherhood crisis in America. Wilson (1996) argued that structural and cultural reasons can explain why many African-American men left the inner city. He contended that structural economic forces, such as de-industrialization and globalization have decreased the number of high- paying manufacturing jobs in the US, which were replaced with unskilled, low pay employment. Low pay and limited education have made it extremely difficult for African-American men to marry. Moreover, lack of employment and educational opportunities creates a cultural environment that allows African-American men to internalize racist stereotypes and negative attitudes about themselves. As a result, these African-American men view fatherhood and marriage as burdens.

Despite the centrality of national context in the construction of fatherhood, one of the main critiques of the pioneering stage of fatherhood studies relates to the fact that they focused mainly on white, middle-class men and overlooked issues of class, culture and ethnicity (Cabrera et al., 2000; Marsiglio et al., 2000). Progressively, the study of non-white, low-income fathers has also become an emergent area of inquiry (Hobson, 2002; Kost, 2001; Nelson, 2004; Roy, 2006). These studies show that structural issues such as poverty and unemployment may impinge negatively on the ways in which fathers living in poverty became engaged in fathering (Edin, 2001). Studies showed the negative impact of the post-industrial economy on the quality of relations between fathers and children. McKee (1987) examined the impact of fathers' unemployment on domestic organization, childcare, housework, gender roles and relations. Atree (2005) suggested that parents experience a lack of formal and informal support in the context of poverty. Fathers feel unable to provide their children with the resources to compete for social mobility opportunities (Coley, 2001).

In general, historical studies on men and masculinities demonstrate that dominant masculinities are usually associated with power, never with poverty. Men living in poverty therefore risk falling short of dominant standards concerning what it means to be a man (Connell, 1995). In many cases, the social construction of masculinity is grounded in one common privilege, namely the domination of women (Kaufman, 1999). Men in such societies, regardless of their social status, share this asset. But in fact, beyond this commonality, masculinity is not a cohesive, uniform status. Quite the opposite, masculinity is actually experienced as a highly heterogeneous social category. For men, poverty represents not only economic hardship but, for many, also the exclusion from their privileged gender status (Ruxton, 2002).

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Findings

The main findings are presented and discussed according to the three main research questions of the study: perceptions of fatherhood, the experience of unemployment and the impact of unemployment on the construction of fatherhood.

A. Perceptions of fatherhood: 'To be a father means responsibility'

The theme of responsibility recurs throughout the fathers' narratives. Participants defined fatherhood as a complex array of duties and concerns. These preoccupations include providing children and wives with all their material needs

Participants' narratives reveal the gendered nature of fatherhood construction. According to traditional, gendered division of family labour, participants view fathers' main responsibility to be the provision of material needs.

Fathers' narratives are also consistent with cultural patriarchal conceptions of fatherhood, discussed in the context section. One of the participants clearly links the father's role as main provider with the use of authority, control and wisdom

p. 401

In accordance with local cultural conceptions, fatherhood is seen as a long-term commitment, and the centrality of fatherhood for men's identity is well documented in the fathers' accounts. Fatherhood is perceived as an organic, unquestionable, 'natural' developmental step in the life cycle of any man

Drawing on this naturalistic, 'essentialist' view of fatherhood, participants subordinate the place of masculinity, conjugal relationship and marital intimacy to the ultimate task of reproduction.

p. 401-402

Along with culture and gender, national context plays a special role in the construction of fatherhood, particularly in the ways in which participants 'interpret' and 'translate' the meaning of 'responsibility' in practical terms. Aware of the multiple systemic barriers that Palestinian Arabs in Israel face in achieving social mobility, one of the emerging themes in the research is the aspiration of these low-income, working-class fathers to provide their children with opportunities for achieving higher education. They are perfectly cognisant that gaining access to remunerative jobs in the Israeli labour market depends on higher education, which is the key to class mobility. The role of national context in the social construction of Palestinian Arab fatherhood is well reflected in interviewees' testimonies, especially when these narratives relate to the multiple generational changes affecting fathers and families

p. 402

Participants linked demographic changes in family composition with inter-generational changes in fathering pattern.

p. 402

National context seems to intervene even in the ways participants portray their own fathers. On the one hand, they appear to feel a great deal of respect and compassion toward them. They were part of a generation of low-income, unskilled Palestinian labourers who worked very hard to make ends meet; on the other hand, they do not conceal their deep sense of resentment, and even contempt:

p. 402

B. The experience of unemployment: 'Work is the soul of men'

Employment is seen as an essential component of participants' masculine identity. As one of the participants stated metaphorically, 'work is the soul of men'. According to this gendered construction of employment, being employed provides men with a sense of purpose in life and represents a crucial element in the sense-making processes. In line with this conception, the significance of unemployment appears to exceed the limits of the economic sphere.

Participants' testimonies of unemployment confirm its detrimental impact on the emotional life of men discussed in the literature review section. Participants refer to lack of motivation, apathy, low energy, changing moods and other emotional problems they relate to their occupational status.

p. 403

Unemployment also negatively affects the men's social life. Loss of a job also implies the loss of a significant framework of social belonging. Men report unemployment to be linked with social withdrawal and isolation

Unemployment is experienced as the most harmful threat to the family's well-being. The experience of unemployment severely destabilizes the family's economic situation and exhausts family savings.

Unemployment creates a sense of economic insecurity and scarcity, a situation that is well recorded in participants' accounts of unemployment. Participants describe severe economic hardship that results in heavy debts, unpaid bills and economic and financial troubles. As stated by a participant, unemployment is experienced as a vicious circle

p. 403

C. The impact of unemployment in the construction of fatherhood: 'Working men don't ask for help'

Unemployment has a negative influence on the lives of fathers. In light of the multiple stressors linked to it, unemployment severely affects family relations. As one participant expresses, 'The lack of money makes the kids crazy'. Participants' narratives disclose the sense of vulnerability these fathers sense in light their occupational status

p. 403

Fathers experience unemployment as personal failure. In light of their new occupational status, fatherhood becomes a burden, something to be hidden, a role to be played

The absence of a paid job seems to severely corrode the previous local gendered and cultural solid 'organic', 'essentialist' conceptions of fatherhood. This rupture is experienced as a psychological breakdown. Unemployment develops into an identity crisis that generates several tensions, rage and even violent behaviours.

Employment seems to offer men with a framework of existence that goes beyond the productive sphere to the family domain. Without a job, participants seem to lose their sense of orientation. For men, unemployment means the loss of their previous freedom of movement. Men experience unemployment as the loss of some previous privilege, the deprivation of their former autonomy from the home sphere.

p. 404

Unemployment fractures the previous monolithic conception of fatherhood and imposes on fathers a sense of personal withdrawal. Participants experienced unemployment with a sense of physical and psychological withdrawal to the realm of the family. A participant describes his sense of loneliness as one of the main challenges inflicted by the situation

Despite their sense of despair and isolation, participants in the study resist the idea to seek help from the social services. As one participant stated, 'working men don't ask for help'. They perceive these services as stigmatic and 'feminine'. Another participant described his deplorable financial situation as part of his decision to seek help from the social services

Participants' experiences confirm the notion that unemployment represents a serious threat to the physical and psychological well-being of men and fathers and is a risk factor for families. However, participants' narratives also suggest that under certain conditions, the experience of unemployment might also be perceived as a possible opportunity to reconstruct their fatherhood identities. For example, the following participant viewed unemployment as an opportunity to spend time with children.

Suddenly, I have lots of time. I started looking at my children in a different way, doing things I never did with them. One day, when my wife was not in the house, we played together for the first time and we had a lot of fun.

Participants reported that unemployment confronted them with the need to build new relations with other men, beyond the boundaries of the extended family within which they felt restricted. One participant stated that 'sometimes relations with strangers are better than family relations'. Participants' involvement in programmes for unemployed fathers helped them to create new social relationships with other unemployed men. Participants described these relations as warm, close and 'very different from what we are used to in the company of men'. One participant vividly expressed the group's contributions:

Participants crave some kind of social belonging, especially in times of uncertainty and

tension. It seems that fathers' enrolment in intervention programmes partially reflect this longing. According to the fathers' accounts, programmes may help them handle the psychological consequences of unemployment more successfully, and in particular, assisted participants not to blame themselves. They met other fathers in the same situation and improved their wounded self-esteem.

Warrington, M. (2013). Challenging the status quo: the enabling role of gender sensitive fathers, inspirational mothers and surrogate parents in Uganda. *Educational Review*, 65(4), 402-415.

Abstract: Within a context where relatively few girls complete secondary education, 18 women were interviewed in Uganda with the objective of ascertaining how they were able to overcome the challenges they encountered to become well-qualified and successful career-women. An important finding from this research was that although parental involvement in Uganda is a much less formal process than that reported in literature from the Global North, it is nevertheless crucially important, with parents and other key figures enabling, supporting and encouraging the young women's education, and acting as role models. The paper highlights, however, the gendered nature of such involvement, with some fathers having the advantages of authority, education, money and time to enable them to stand apart from their communities in supporting their daughters' education. In contrast, mothers frequently struggled through lack of resources, yet their unstinting hard work and persistence offered inspiration and role modelling of a different kind. Interviewees growing up without one or both biological parents meanwhile relied on a network of people who in effect became surrogate parents, in various ways assisting them to complete their schooling.

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"Parental" involvement in practice: different models of encouragement and support

"Definitely it is my father"

When asked about the key figures in their lives 11 of the women first cited their fathers, with several talking about the strong relationships they had with their fathers, who were keenly protective of their welfare, gave their daughters time and attention, listened, took an interest, gave advice and encouraged them in their education. As Magarita said, "from the very beginning he inculcated in us the spirit of studying." Patricia became pregnant at an early age; yet in spite of community hostility, "my father gave me all the support he could", and insisted on her being allowed to return to school, an extremely unusual outcome at the time. Three women described their fathers as "gender-sensitive", treating their daughters the same as their sons, sending them to school and ensuring their material needs were met.

"Parental" involvement in practice: different models of encouragement and support

"Definitely it is my father"

When asked about the key figures in their lives 11 of the women first cited their fathers, with several talking about the strong relationships they had with their fathers, who were keenly protective of their welfare, gave their daughters time and attention, listened, took an interest, gave advice and encouraged them in their education. As Magarita said, “from the very beginning he inculcated in us the spirit of studying.” Patricia became pregnant at an early age; yet in spite of community hostility, “my father gave me all the support he could”, and insisted on her being allowed to return to school, an extremely unusual outcome at the time. Three women described their fathers as “gender-sensitive”, treating their daughters the same as their sons, sending them to school and ensuring their material needs were met.

p. 408

These findings resonate with Datta’s (2007) arguments about fatherhood embracing a broader range of parenting functions than the “deficit” model commonly depicted in opposition to, or in conflict with, motherhood, with fathers portrayed as disciplinarians if present, or irresponsible if absent. It reflects, too, Chopra’s (2001, 447) discussion, as she talks of how, “emerging from its feminist roots, the mother- hood discourse has been generative of its crucial Other: The Phallocentric Patriarch or the Absent Father.” The consequent “muting” of fathers has, she argues, eclipsed any alternative versions of fathering and the care provided by them.

[Este, D. C., & Tachble, A. \(2009\). Fatherhood in the Canadian context: Perceptions and experiences of Sudanese refugee men. *Sex Roles*, 60\(7-8\), 456-466.](#)

Abstract: As they attempt to settle and adapt into Canadian society, new immigrants and/or refugee fathers face multiple stressors, some of which include underemployment or unemployment, social isolation, and changing roles within the family. Through a qualitative research involving in-depth interviews with 20 Sudanese refugee men recruited through a criterion sampling process based primarily on length of residency and age of children in Canada, this paper examines their perceptions and experiences as fathers in a large urban centre in Canada. Insights on the meaning of fatherhood, the values that guide their behaviour as fathers, their interactions with and aspirations for their children, and the challenges these men encounter as fathers in Canadian society are also provided.

p. 458

Despite the key role fathers play in the family setting, however, very little is written about fathers. Both in terms of research and provision of services, fathers appear to be marginalized and are “generally an afterthought” (O’Donnell et al. 2005, p. 395). However, during the past decade this trend is being reversed as scholars, practitioners, and policy makers collectively have become interested in different aspects of fatherhood research and programs for this particular group.

Economic provisioning is considered a central feature of the father’s role in most segments of

society (Featherstone 2003). “This is the role that fathers perceive as their fundamental role,” (Bouchard 2003, p. 18) as evidenced by their “vulnerability and distress when they fail to fulfil” (Bouchard, p. 7) this role under different circumstances. To fathers, the ability to provide their children with “food on the table, a warm place to live, stability, a solid place in the community, and good prospects for the future” (Bouchard, p. 7) are responsibilities that are considered vital.

p. 460-461

Meaning of Fatherhood

Provider

When asked about the meaning of fatherhood, all of the Sudanese fathers expressed notions of responsibility, commitment, and care. The majority maintained that providing for their children and their family in general was the major priority

p. 461 Teacher

All fathers felt that taking on the role of a teacher and instructing their children on how to be appropriate citizens with a strong sense of right and wrong was another paternal duty,

p. 461

Values

Customs and Tradition

When questioned about the values that guide their behaviour as fathers, all of the men stressed the prominence of their customs and traditions as being very influential

p. 461 Importance of Respect

A salient value that definitely guided the fathering practices of this group of Sudanese was the enormity of importance placed on ensuring their children were respectful and well-mannered

Section 6: Fatherhood and Conflict

Gokani, R., Bogossian, A., & Akesson, B. (2015). Occupying masculinities: fathering in the Palestinian territories. *NORMA*, 10(3-4), 203-218.

Abstract: Under occupation, Palestinians face a range of challenges such as poverty, lack of mobility, decreased access to social and health services, and violence. Fathers in Palestine have had to raise children in such a context, yet little is understood about their experiences. We conducted research with 18 families in the occupied West Bank and annexed East Jerusalem in order to understand the experiences of fathers in the face of occupation and

violence. Applying theories of masculinity and fatherhood, our analysis suggests that occupation has challenged or obstructed the performance of three quintessentially masculine acts inherent to fatherhood: provision, protection, and modelling. The first refers to the role of the father as ‘breadwinner;’ the second to the role of father as ‘protector;’ and the third to the role of the father as masculine ‘model’ from whom children can learn masculine traits. We conclude by providing suggestions for future practice and research.

p. 203

For almost a century, Palestinians and Israelis have been at the centre of one of the most bitterly contentious and protracted conflicts on earth. At the same time, Palestinian men continue to get married, become fathers, and raise children amidst violence and instability. While such a situation is conceivably dominated by a number of practical considerations, some natural to fatherhood and others specific to the situation, fatherhood is an inherently multifaceted role. I

p. 205 Theoretical framing

Our theoretical approach to masculinity is rooted first and foremost in a social constructionist epistemology (Berger & Luckmann, 1966). Accordingly, we view masculinity as a phenomenon that is heavily influenced by human agency and as a result, we observe a constellation of ‘masculinities’, each of which is theoretically related to the others in the complex of human culture.

p. 205

However, as Connell (1987) states, ‘not all masculinities are equal’, and so we note the disproportionate power of certain constructions of masculinity over others. Whether from a Foucaultian perspective, which emphasizes relations of power, or the structuralist approach upon which Connell’s (1987) work relies, it is important to understand the manner in which certain traits are branded as ‘masculine’ and privileged over others at a given place and point in time. Connell’s (1987) pioneering work in this area has helped to bring the term ‘hegemonic masculinity’ to bear on gender studies and on the social sciences more broadly.

p. 205

‘Hegemonic masculinity’ or the ‘hegemonic ideal’ has been described as ‘embodying the currently most honoured way of being a man, [requiring] all other men to position themselves in relation to it’ (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005, p. 832). This theory implies that those individuals in a society who most closely represent the cultural ideal of the hegemonic male are socially, culturally, and economically rewarded, while those who fail to meet this ideal, said to be performing ‘subordinated masculinities’, are not. In consideration of the present study, it is important to underscore the agreement among scholars that there exists no universal definition of hegemonic masculinity. In other words, different cultures idealize different forms of masculinity, and, more- over, at different times. Although not integral to

our analysis, we acknowledge the influence of Christensen and Jensen's (2014)⁵⁶ call for a more nuanced understanding of hegemonic masculinity that incorporates theories of intersectionality, which is particularly relevant in an international context.

p. 206

While studies of Arab masculinity abound (Amar, 2011), the portion of the English- language literature specifically concerning Palestinian men is relatively small. In part, it seems that this might be a consequence of the tendency to focus on women when considering the intersection of gender and war or violent conflict (Sharoni, 1997).

(authors talk about Palestinian masculinity, is there such a thing as Acholi masculinity?)

p. 206

Certainly, 'the context of Palestinian masculinity', as Hawari (2004) states, 'is one of political subjugation and coercion' (p. 35). Accordingly, the handful of studies on Palestinian masculinities has borne in mind this context as scholarship on the matter positions Palestinian masculinity in relation to Israeli occupation and the struggle for Palestinian nationalism (e.g. Massad, 1995; Peteet, 1994), including in some analyses in relation to Israeli masculinity (e.g. Johnson & Kuttub, 2002).

p. 206

Peteet (1994), for instance, has powerfully described the manner in which physical violence against Palestinian men at the hands of the Israeli army during the first intifada was reconstructed by them from being shameful to a 'rite of passage into manhood' and a 'ritual of resistance' with implications for 'political consciousness and agency', including for leadership (p. 31). With such a posture toward occupation, 'the young male', she notes, 'is a metonym for Palestinian opposition and struggle against domination' (p. 36).

p. 206

The gendered nature of opposition is part and parcel of what Joseph Massad (1995), himself a Palestinian male, describes as a 'nationalist masculinity' which formed among Palestinian men after 1947.

p. 206-207

As in the occupied territories, scholars who have explored masculinity among Palestinian men living in Israel underline the manner in which Palestinian masculinity has been reconstituted to suit the Israeli national context, albeit in different ways (Hawari, 2004; Sa'ar & Yahia-Younis, 2008; Strier, 2014). Hawari (2004), for instance, suggests that the Israeli

⁵⁶ Christensen, A.-D., & Jensen, S. Q. (2014). Combining hegemonic masculinity and intersectionality. *NORMA: International Journal for Masculinity Studies*, 9(1), 60–75.

national context has truncated the expression of a masculinity to encompass a narrowly practicable but politically non-threatening goal: day-to-day survival. Masculinity, or ‘manliness is herein defined by the man’s capacity to avoid confrontation with the authorities’ and ‘thus, masculine heroism [is] derived from the provision of daily sustenance and not from the resistance against humiliation or subjugation’ (p. 39). Notably, this masculinity is in stark contrast to the findings of Peteet (1994), who, during the first intifada, derived the image of the beating as ritualized rite of passage and an inscription on the body of resistance.

p. 207

Palestinian masculinities and fatherhood

Perhaps, it is this reason – that is, the importance of male provision in the Israeli national context – for which Strier’s (2014)⁵⁷ more recent exploration into the effects of unemployment on Palestinian fathers has yielded supportive findings. From her interviews with unemployed Palestinian men living in Israel, there emerges a clear picture suggesting that in this particular national context, ‘being a father’, to quote one of her participants, means ‘carrying the burden of the family’s subsistence’ (p. 401). Employment and provision, as opposed to nationalism, emerge as the primary masculine trait to be fulfilled.

Massad’s work (1995)⁵⁸ appears to be among the few which mentions explicitly the connection between fatherhood and masculinity in the Palestinian nationalist context. Specifically, he notes that Palestinian national identity was defined by being ‘born of an Arab Palestinian father’ after 1947. In other words, with the connection between masculinity and nationalism in Massad’s work, fatherhood can be viewed in the context of the development of a ‘nationalist masculinity’. This is more powerfully stated by Massad:

While the land as mother was responsible for the reproduction of Palestinians until 1947, the rape [of the land as mother] disqualified her from this role. It is now fathers [i.e., paternity] who reproduce the nation. Territory was replaced by paternity. (p. 472, emphasis in original)

p. 207

The importance of fatherhood as a site of masculinity is particularly intriguing for a number of reasons in addition to those indicated by Massad (1995). For instance, to the extent that masculinities emerge and abide in institutions (Sa’ar & Yahia-Younis, 2008), fatherhood and the family are among the most formative and crucial for young children. Consider also what Birenbaum-Carmeli and Inhorn (2009) have pointed out, that ‘fatherhood is crucial to

⁵⁷ Strier, R. (2014), Unemployment and Fatherhood: Gender, Culture and National Context. *Gender, Work & Organization*, 21: 395–410.

⁵⁸ Massad, J. (1995). Conceiving the masculine: Gender and Palestinian nationalism. *Middle East Journal*, 49(3), 467–483.

achieving masculine adulthood' among Palestinians (p. 23). Peteet (1994) also indicated that Palestinian 'maleness' is 'closely intertwined' with fatherhood (p. 34). A chorus of scholars therefore point to the father-son relationship as significant, but no study has looked specifically at this relationship from the vantage of masculinity. Consequently, it is this gap that our paper intends to address, and hopefully doing so will provide an initial glimpse into the manner in which Palestinian men struggle with competing masculinities in the context of violence and occupation.

p. 209

Findings

The analysis of our participants' narratives suggests that occupation has challenged or obstructed the performance of aspects of fathering that have often been linked to masculinities: (1) provision; (2) protection; and (3) modelling. The first aspect refers to the role of the father as 'breadwinner;' the second to the role of father as protector; and the third to the role of the father as masculine 'model' from whom children can learn, presumably masculine, traits. These three seemed to be seriously challenged as a direct consequence of occupation, hence the title 'occupying masculinity'.

Challenges to traditional 'masculine' role of father as provider

Fathers' breadwinning and provisioning role has traditionally been identified as the hallmark of fathers' care of, involvement with, and responsibility for their children and families. From a biosocial perspective, Lamb et al.'s (1987) explanatory models of fathering describe the task of responsibility as fathers arrange resources for their children. Hammami (2013) describes how following the second intifada, the historic Palestinian male image of the heroic fighter was viewed in stark contrast to Palestinian men's lack of power and agency. Both of these images have since given way to the father's breadwinner role representing the refusal to be swayed from procuring a daily existence. Breadwinning has come to symbolize daily resistance against the occupation and men's sense of being men and having some sense of agency.

Masculinities scholar Morgan (1992) suggests that masculinity can be 'put on the line' when men are unemployed. Our analysis confirmed that the occupation systematically denies Palestinian men the opportunity to secure resources for their families, particularly through economic means, thereby challenging men's role as breadwinner and provisioner. Fathers' ability to provide adequately for their families is challenged by multiple interacting systems including poverty, underemployment, disability, as well as inadequate physical living conditions.

p. 212

'We all feel frightened': levelling the parent-child protection hierarchy

In addition to providing for their children, the notion of fatherhood conjures images of

protection. We found that the protection hierarchy, which typifies the parent–child relationship, tends to be ‘levelled’ off between fathers and their children in this study. This hierarchy is conceivably defined, at least in part, by masculinity specifically and gender more generally, and certainly within the context of patriarchy. In other words, under ordinary circumstances, within a patriarchy, the male head or father of a family is responsible for the protection of its members, including children. We observed, however, that the structural effects of the occupation, including violence and poverty, strongly militated against the fulfilment of this responsibility, and instead, mediated the ‘levelling’ of the protection hierarchy.

p. 213

‘It’s difficult to control them’: competing masculinities between father and son

Perhaps as a result of this levelling, we observed among fathers and sons a shift in the performance of what might be considered an aspect of hegemonic masculinity, or even of the ‘nationalist masculinity’ described by Massad (1995). Specifically, fathers expressed concerns about their sons’ more aggressive expressions regarding resistance to occupation. Accordingly, fathers’ expressions of masculinity seemed to differ from those of their sons, by being far less aggressive, and perhaps more ‘mature’. We observed, therefore, fathers’ less violent, one might say stoic, masculinity ‘managing’ their sons’ more aggressive impulses. Abu-Younes, said, ‘It’s difficult to control them, because we all feel frightened,’ illustrating the pervasiveness of fear among Palestinians.

New directions p. 214

War often conjures gendered images. But when it comes to men, these images are arguably often exemplars of a more militaristic and aggressive performance of masculinity. While not entirely unrealistic, the prevalence and force of these images seem to belie an important reality: that the context of political violence provides a site for the subversion of these images and a potential to open up and reimagine new forms of masculinity. We have attempted to take a step in this direction, by providing an analysis of the narratives of Palestinian fathers, which suggest a manner in which fatherhood in the context of war is a site for the performance of masculinities among fathers and sons.

p. 215

This research highlights the importance of listening to fathers’ voices in the context of conflict. Whereas many studies focus on children and mothers (e.g. in the third author’s work) in conflict, attention should also be paid to fathers who contribute to their children’s development in varied and unique ways. Approaches should focus on supporting fathers’ caregiving roles and should ultimately consider father’s multiple roles as provider, protector, and model both in relation to their families, but also within the community.

Osman, M. R. (2003). Officers as fathers: What is the impact of fatherhood on military decision-making during conflict? *Defense Studies*, 3(3), 63-86.

How might fatherhood affect decision-making in the battlefield?

p. 63:

Kettle wrote this poem five days before he was killed in action on the Somme in 1916. Its relevance to this essay lies in highlighting the desire of this fighting man to articulate his feelings to his daughter. This in turn may lead us to ask to what degree did Kettle's emotional tie with his daughter affect his decision-making process in the trenches? In 1916 there was no body of research available exploring the impact of fatherhood on decision-making. After World War II academics began investigations into the effects of fatherhood and by the turn of the millennium the subject had become an area of some research interest.

p. 64: "The literature review indicated that becoming a father heightened the sensitivity to one's value set. Within the military, values play an important role in the decision-making process. Therefore, one can hypothesise that a child has an impact on the decision-making process of a military father. Further, it could be argued, from the literature review, that a heightened sensitivity to values may make a father take a more cautious military posture."

p. 65: "Further, the survey suggested that the officer who is a father is likely to take more reflective decisions that consider the longer-term implications."

p. 71:

Lewis identified that 'Even to themselves, men's perceptions of fatherhood contain contradictions. They admit that they are less involved than their wives with the baby; yet they repeatedly revealed a deep commitment to fathering.' This deep commitment was proven to manifest itself in feelings of intensity and adopting new codes of practice. This section of the essay will show that this intensification relates directly to values. Gross states that 'from the beginning, even from birth, children influence their parent's behaviour just as much as the parents influence them'.

p. 71

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p. 84

The impact of fatherhood on military decision-making in the operational and tactical environments is an area that begs further research.).

Without redress of political and economic grievances, young men, in particular, are prone to seek out new forms of militarized work (Hoffman 2011, Thiedon 2009). Frustrations over the inability to realize their potential as men, or live up to their gender expectations, may and has led to further violent activity in an attempt to reassert control. Policymakers therefore, need to consider the 'effects of hyper- and other forms of masculinities into the planning and delivery of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) programs' (Ni Aolain, Cahn, Haynes 2012, 245; Porter 2013).

[Griswold, R. \(2001\). Fatherhood, childhood, and war: 1945. Magazine of History, 15\(4\), 60.](#)

In the end, however, the military prevailed and fathers became subject to the draft. As these men left for war, attention cantered on their psychological indispensability to family life, particularly to sex-role development and early father-child bonding. Commentators worried that fatherly absence promoted maternal overprotection, effeminacy, softness, and perhaps even homosexuality. They called upon mothers to do everything in their power to find proper father substitutes and to keep absent fathers present in the lives of their children. Child advisers urged wives to remind their children constantly of their fathers, and testimonials during the war suggest that women took such advice to heart. Writing in Parents' Magazine in 1944, one mother seemed confident that her efforts to acquaint her daughter with her absent father had succeeded: "I was amazed at how many opportunities present themselves for talking about Daddy, for making him a part of our lives. And I know that when he comes home Debbie will experience no shock, for he will be no stranger to her.

p. 60

Looking back, a veteran testified in the same magazine that his wife's efforts to keep him informed about his child had been successful: "I, like many other men who had never seen their children, used to receive letter after letter that was meant to prepare me for parenthood. My wife, like many other wives, tried determinedly to teach her husband the joys and responsibilities of being a father by correspondence

p. 60

As a home economist, journalist, and dedicated reader of child guidance literature, Kathryn

undoubtedly had seen the admonitions about keeping absent fathers informed of their children's intellectual, psychological, and physical development.

Strier, R. (2014). *Fatherhood in the Context of Political Violence: Los Padres de la Plaza. Men and Masculinities*, 17(4), 359-375

Abstract: Grounded on a documentary film-based qualitative research methodology, the article undertakes a social constructivist theoretical analysis of the story of a group of Argentinean fathers whose children were victims of enforced disappearance. It focuses specifically on the impact of the massive use of enforced disappearance on fathers by the Military government in Argentina between 1976 and 1983. The premeditated use of this tactic gave birth to a protest movement named “Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo,” established by a group of mothers whose children were abducted. Whereas the mothers’ role in the context of this historical period of political violence was extensively documented, the question of the fathers’ role remains unclear. Based on “Padres de la Plaza: 10 Recorridos Posibles” by director Joaquin Daglio, a documentary film that portrayed the stories of ten fathers whose children were abducted, the article examines the experience of fatherhood in the context of political violence, the impact of enforced disappearance on these fathers, the role of the fathers in the Mothers’ protest movement, and the construction of fatherhood under these particular historical and personal circumstances. The article shows how fatherhood is experienced and transformed in the contexts of political violence, specifically in contexts of the institutionalized, state-sponsored violation of human and civil rights.

p. 360

Third, it shows the changing character of fatherhood as a dynamic construction deeply affected by historical and political context (LaRossa 2010)⁵⁹.

p. 362

The article builds on a historical and social constructivist theoretical perspective of fatherhood which frames fatherhood as a cultural construction highly affected by changing historical contexts (LaRossa 2010). According to this theoretical framework, any interpretation of fatherhood cannot be fully grasped without an analysis of the historical background that gave birth to the specific culture of fatherhood under investigation (Gregory and Milner 2011; LaRossa 1997). One of the main contextual variables that affects our understanding of the transformation of fatherhood is the political background in which different cultural images of fatherhood are negotiated (Oechsle, Müller, and Hess 2012).

p. 365

⁵⁹ LaRossa, Ralph. 1997. *The Modernization of Fatherhood: A Social and Political History*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Daglio's (2010) question "What happened with the fathers?" relates to two different levels. First, the personal level: the untold experience of fathers in the context of the enforced political disappearance of their sons and daughters. Second, and more broadly, to the political level: why did fathers never achieve a level of political organization like that of the mothers, siblings, children, and even grand- mothers of the "Desaparecidos"?

p. 365

Thirty years later, the fathers' memories still convey the anguish caused by their failure to keep their children out of the reach of the state's political terror. The camera still transmits the sense of desolation of those who experienced the fear seeing their children abducted.

p. 369

The role of the mothers in the context of the political violence in Argentina was worldwide known, thanks to the political struggle of the Mothers of Plaza de Mayo. The military regime couldn't reconcile their own views as the saviours of the Argentine people with their responsibility for the repression of women as mothers. The motherization of the protest against the terror provided the women's movement with immunity.

p. 369-370

Retelling the story of their paternal presence. However, the film reminds its viewers that even in their subordinate role, the fathers were nevertheless present. In the film, the fathers explain that the struggle to restore their children alive and to put an end to the military regime remains untold. It is precisely R.B. who lost three children to the regime, who explains that:

The fathers were present, they were always present, in their own way, but they were all present.

The film thus takes a vindictory and historical role: to retell the story of the fathers in the personal and political struggle to retrieve their children and to communicate the central message: "We were there."

The trauma of abduction gave birth to a new kind of fatherhood, a mourning fatherhood which longs for intimacy with their lost children. Whereas mothers took an active political role, these fathers progressively entered in a previously unknown domain, the domain of intimacy, of "being" against the gendered convention of "doing." Fatherhood would henceforth be constructed in memories, as part of a primal and existential need to keep the child in the intimate sphere of the living family. The cowardly behaviour of the Junta, the massive extermination of thousands of young children, the helplessness and futility of these fathers' attempts to find any trace of missing loved ones, the fathers' failure to develop any political participation all converged in the destruction of these men' fatherhoods. However, out of the ruins, the film launches the contours of a new Argentinean fatherhood, a longing, reflexive, intimate fatherhood.

The film concludes with the fathers gathering in the Plaza the Mayo, and some of them introduce themselves to the group for the first time. The viewer thus realizes that the meeting arranged by the director was their first and only attempt to come together as a group, in the Plaza, which symbolically belonged to the Mothers. The camera pulls away and leaves these fathers in their painful, shared loneliness; a living monument of mourning fatherhood.

p. 372-373

It was precisely in the shadowy corners of the Plaza, where these men, husbands and fathers created a new alternative kind of fatherhood from their defeated selves, one focused on a subordinate role of companion to their wives. Fatherhood now became condensed in memories. The film presents these fathers as men finally liberated from any dominant male conventions. They are free to mourn in an intimate, personal way the loss of their children, to long without male restraint for their children's physical proximity. They are men who proudly venerate their children's commitment to justice and personal sacrifice, who proudly worship their wives' bravery, their total devotion as Mothers of the Plaza. In a cruel paradox, the loss of their children under the paternalist and authoritarian military regime emancipated these men from the masculine need to assert their authority, to prove self-control, to protect, and to be self-reliant. The loss they suffered to political violence enabled the fathers to achieve a new sense of intimacy with the memory of their children. This new, intimate, personal fatherhood is performed in the film as resistance, the fusion of the personal and the political which transcends the boundaries of established local masculinities. However, compared with the Mothers of the Plaza who evolved into a collective community of resistance, the fathers, in keeping with the gendered view of masculine behaviour, remained a group of lonely men, each carrying his own troubles (Kimmel 2012).

[Frank, S. M. \(1992\). "Rendering Aid and Comfort": Images of Fatherhood in the Letters of Civil War Soldiers from Massachusetts and Michigan. *Journal of Social History*, 26\(1\), 5-31.](#)

p.5

Only recently have historians come to recognize that being a father is far more than a legal or biological fact; it is a role whose activities and meanings have changed over time.

p. 5

Despite all of the valuable work on women, children, and the family and more than a decade of scholarship on the history of masculinity, the central role that fatherhood plays in many men's lives has remained largely unexamined. While a good deal is known about changing childrearing patterns and ideal types of manhood, comparatively little is known about men's personal experiences as father

p. 5

This lack of attention has generated considerable historiographic ambiguity. Very briefly, the literature on fathers depicts men as passing from the centre to the periphery of their children's spiritual and emotional lives. Especially in the colonial period, society expected the father not only to earn a living to provide for his family, but also to supervise a child's moral and religious education. Consequently, the husband and father was central to the well-being of the family and to the socialization of its members.²

p. 5-6

There is an emerging consensus that the modern style of fatherhood, with men specializing as economic providers, first appeared in the early decades of the nineteenth century. As some fathers began to spend more time at work and less at home, and as family structure shifted away from patriarchal dominance and toward more companionate relationships, paternal requirements shrank.⁴ Even so fathers continued to play a number of significant family roles beyond that of breadwinner. They still acted as ultimate disciplinarians of children, and they continued to teach certain kinds of moral practical life lessons about work, property, and survival in the world-particularly to boys.

p. 6

Fortunately, a vast body of documents contains material that reveals the actual status of mid nineteenth century fatherhood via the letters exchanged by Civil War soldiers and their families. Military historians long have recognized that soldiers' letters had much to say about the men who fought the sectional conflict.⁹ Social historians, however, have been slow to realize that the war had a wrenching impact on a generation of American families. It has been estimated that in the North and South combined, about 40 percent of whites of military age (aged 13 to 43 in 1860) served in the armed forces. Moreover, the chances of someone enlisted in the war dying, suffering wounds, or deserting were very high. While we do not know for certain how many servicemen were married with children, it is clear that the Civil War separated many fathers from their families, sometimes forever. What makes the soldiers' letters extremely useful is that they contain information not only about the combat experience of thousands of American fathers and sons, but also about the home lives that their military service disrupted.

p. 7

Yet despite the realization that manliness was one of the core values that soldiers brought to the war, little attention has been paid to soldiers as fathers and as sons, two roles that contributed importantly to the construction of masculine identity. This is all the more surprising since it has been confirmed that soldiers viewed themselves and fought the war not simply as men but as representatives of their families; as husbands, fathers, brothers, and sons. This essay will touch on each of these roles, but the focus is on fathers and sons. More

specifically, the essay will explore the meaning of those roles and of the father-son relationship for the war's participants.

p. 17

We have seen to this point how the meaning of fatherhood helped shape the military experience of Civil War soldiers. What remains to be analysed are the images of civilian fatherhood that emerge in these letters, particularly with regard to the division of parenting responsibilities between husbands and wives and the relationship that fathers had with their children.

p. 23

During the past decade historians of masculinity have opened new areas of men's social experience for study, but little attention has been paid to the impact of the Civil War on men's lives as fathers and sons. When the war has been thought of in terms of gender identity at all, it has been viewed primarily as an event that gave men a chance to test their courage. Pioneering scholarship on the history of manhood conjectured that the war created a generation of men more aggressive than they had been before. In this view, the Civil War's legacy to masculinity was to foster a martial spirit that encouraged men to strive for success at work and to lead a strenuous life outside of their homes in the all-male world of lodges, neighbourhood taverns, and fraternal and veterans' groups.⁸

p. 23

In addition to testing individual courage, the war highlighted familial relationships particularly the relationship of fathers and sons. The letters examined here demonstrate the continued vitality of fatherhood at mid-century. Rendering aid and comfort to their wives and children was an important part of fatherhood and masculine identity for these men. All sources have their limitations, of course, and these letters offer us only a snapshot of fatherhood for a few years under extraordinary circumstances. Nonetheless, they suggest the need

to rethink our understanding of the war's impact. It may be that the war-by focusing attention on men in their paternal capacity, and especially in relation to their sons encouraged not absence but involvement in domestic life. At a minimum, we should entertain the notion that while many individual fathers and their families suffered greatly under the hardships of war, fatherhood as a social category emerged from the conflict intact

p. 23

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to rethink our understanding of the war's impact. It may be that the war-by focusing attention on men in their paternal capacity, and especially in relation to their sons encouraged not absence but involvement in domestic life. At a minimum, we should entertain the notion that while many individual fathers and their families suffered greatly under the hardships of war, fatherhood as a social category emerged from the conflict intact

[Baines, E. \(2011\). Gender, responsibility, and the grey zone: Considerations for transitional justice. *Journal of Human Rights*, 10\(4\), 477-493.](#)

Abstract: The Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) has forcibly recruited tens of thousands of youth from northern Uganda, Southern Sudan, and more presently the Democratic Republic of Congo and the Central African Republic. The longer that abducted youth spend inside the armed group, the more likely they will assume positions of command. These roles are differentiated on the basis of sex and gender expectations: young men are more likely to become active combatants and young women are more likely to become forced "wives" and mothers. As a result, forcibly recruited male and female youth are assumed to hold different degrees of responsibility. Comparing the life stories of an abducted male and female youth who became LRA commanders, I argue that each made choices within a state of coerced militarized masculinity. The question of responsibility must be located in the context of a present-day grey zone, and must unsettle gendered assumptions about men and women, and guilt and innocence. Transitional justice has only begun to grapple with the ambiguity of gender, responsibility, and the grey zone.

p. 478: Gender analyses of violence in armed conflict situate discussions of agency in the context of hegemonic masculinity (Connell 1995a) in which men enjoy license over other men and all women (Enloe 2000; Skjelsbæk 2001; Alison 2007)

p. 479: In the context of war, available masculinities are reduced to aggressive, physical, and heterosexual attributes and achieved through the exercise of violence (Connell 1995a, 1995b; Goldstein 2001)

p. 479: Nwogu argues that the foundations of violence are in part the exclusion of the stories of perpetrators from public consideration, reproducing the idea that they are monsters, not human, not like us. To acknowledge the motivations of perpetrators and to understand the

context in which they become violent actors does not excuse the wrong done by them but lays the groundwork for comprehension and rehumanization.

p. 481:

The structure of the LRA transgress boundaries of sociality in the most intimate of ways, forcing their female prisoners to become “wives” and mothers to their children; the male prisoners are likewise forced to be husbands and fathers or they are accused of being “not men.” An intimacy between tormentor and the tormented is formed: The “wife” needs her bush “husband” to execute his “work” with utmost skill to keep her and her children alive; the “husband” needs his bush “wife” to carry out her gender-related “work” to keep him and his children alive. The different gender expectations in the LRA conform to an expectation of militarized masculinity and cannot be understood outside of this construct.

The varied, gender-differentiated impact of war on men and women and boys and girls is well documented (Turshen and Twagiramariya 1998; Moser and Clark 2001; Carpenter 2006). Gender relations pattern behaviour through norms and expectations of what it means to be “a man” or “a woman” or to perform this identity (Butler 1999). Gender relations do not determine agency and exist in relationship to a complex web of other social relations that shape power and privilege, such as ethnicity, class, or sexuality. As such, women can be both victims and perpetrators, associated with passivity and agency in times of war. Chris Coulter (2008, 2009), in her study of the reintegration experiences of once abducted female combatants in Sierra Leone, argues that women can be both victim and perpetrator at once, illustrating that gender roles are also contextual. The women whom she studies “had strategies and options, but their choices were circumscribed in ways different than for men” (2009: 5) and these were determined by gender, kinship, age, or class. Under such extreme situations, “space for manoeuvring . . . [was] defined by a militarized masculinity . . . hegemonic at the time of war” (2008: 69).

Just as choices are circumscribed for women, then, so too are they for men (Carpenter 2006; Jones 2009). Militarization actively “produces” violent masculinities that pattern relationships of superiority and inferiority between men, and between men and women, in ways that is beneficial to the reproduction of power of a minority over a majority (Connell 1995a; Enloe 2000; Goldstein 2001). In her study of the reintegration process in Colombia, Theidon (2009) argues that physical prowess and violence remain the only way to “be” a “man” when ex-combatants return home. Alternatives to hegemonic masculinities, such as a “father” or “husband” are impossible to achieve in the impoverished and insecure communities ex-combatants return to, and so many demonstrate a proclivity to resume violence.

p. 481-482

Chris Dolan provides a useful example of this in the context of internally displaced persons camps of northern Uganda, where “individuals subscribe to the model [of hegemonic masculinity] for economic and psychological survival reasons, and their families have a vested interest in ensuring that they do so for economic security reasons” (2003: 15, 16).

p. 482

Similarly, Maria Eriksson Baaz and Maria Stern (2009) find that “impossible masculinities” created in the highly militarized setting of Eastern Congo diminish men’s sense of themselves and help men rationalize acts of rape, revealing the dysfunctions and dangers of militarized masculinity. In a word, militarized masculinity leans on the exercise of violent actions in order to maintain patterns of superiority of one group over another.

If choice is circumscribed by militarized masculinities in general in war zones, what happens in the context of a nonstate armed group where an abducted youth is violently forced to become not just a soldier but also a father, a mother, a “husband,” or a “wife”?

and expectations of what it means to be a “man” or a “woman” in such a highly militarized and masculinized organization.

p. 485

To recall, hegemonic masculinity relies as much on women as it does men. If Kamdulu is responsible for his role as a commander, Atim is too, for as the “wife” to a commander, she played a role just as important to the central operation of the LRA. Both were coerced, both complicate the perpetrator-victim dichotomy.

p. 487

Then we must reconsider how we evaluate the choices of men under similar circumstances of coercion who, when faced with the choice of protecting their life or that of their family, chose to exercise their “bodily capital” (Theidon 2009) and exchange their physical strength and prowess for their own life, or that of their families.

Kamdulu returned in 2005 during the height of Operation Iron Fist II, a military campaign that destroyed the LRA bases in the Sudan. At the time, hundreds of wives and children were released by LRA commanders. This was in part strategic, it enabled commanders to be more mobile, but it also was a decision taken to protect their “wives” and children. It is also possible that Kamdulu surrendered out of a desire to protect his and his families’ lives. Shortly after his return home, Kamdulu explained this to my research assistant, “I really want to be a latin gang⁸ and assume the responsibility of looking after my children and wives whom I had sent back home [released from the bush before he surrendered] . . . [I wanted] to signal to the people at home that I have accepted my responsibilities as a father. . . . What I was doing in the bush was evil” (Interview with Kamdulu, June 3, 2005).

p. 487

However, Kamdulu's options to reintegrate into civilian life were limited; transitional justice processes in Uganda do not dismantle militarized masculinities after demobilization. He reportedly tried to return to primary school, but the teacher told him to leave after he distracted the children in his classroom. He also reportedly found interaction with civilians difficult. After the initial euphoria of his return, he was scorned. His front teeth went missing, and it was rumoured they had been knocked out by a group of angry men who had once suffered at his hand. His talents were limited; his ability to reconnect to a social or kinship network forestalled. The one place he could maintain a semblance of prestige was the army, to conform to a militarized masculinity once more.

The Ugandan military replicate patterns of militarized masculinity. The process of "reintegration" often involves the enlistment of former abductees (Allen and Schomerus 2006; Dolan 2009; Gettleman 2010). Most escaped or captured LRA soldiers transit through Ugandan People's Defence Forces (UPDF) military barracks where they are required to debrief. There, men are encouraged to think of life in the UPDF as the best option for a secure future. Strategies for the recruitment of young men focus particularly on low

p. 488

expectations for their future, as a man. One recalled, "Soldiers would tempt and taunt us, insulting us for being in an army like the LRA which only runs away during the fighting. Be a real man, fight with a real army now like the UPDF. You will get money for your work, a gun and a uniform" (Human Rights Watch 2003: 57). Ex-LRA soldiers are battle experienced, can operate a variety of military hardware and have internal intelligence of LRA bases and tactics. The Ugandan government has an entire battalion composed of former LRA soldiers, most deployed to track down and engage the LRA.

The Government of Uganda's reinsertion strategy for senior-level LRA commanders is to recruit them into its political machinery. Rewarded with generous reinsertion packages and the beneficiaries of special development projects tailored to provide them with economic alternatives, those commanders in turn support the president in his war against the LRA. Kamdulu was an attractive new recruit of the military, as he possessed the finely tuned skills of the art of war. He could simply become a civilian: not only is it a humiliating loss of status as a man but it is dangerous to be unarmed, so instead he turned to violence, to that which he knows best. When the government's ability to control his violence failed—when they no longer had a monopoly over its use—he was imprisoned. Reportedly, his wives were kicked out of the barracks and "grew thin due to hunger."

p. 488

Nearly half of the women with whom we have collected life stories are in contact with the families of their children's father who is either dead or still in the bush. At least two women remarried their dead "husband's" brother as a way of protecting her children (who inherit land and identity through the paternal clan) and her own future (where her children are expected to care for her in her later years).

Others face even fewer choices when they are either rejected by their children's patrikin or their own kin reject the families of the bush "husband" who offer to pay luk,⁹ which would entitle them custody of the child. "The family of the children come that they want to unite with us so that we take care of the children but my family refuses. Where should I stand?" (Storytelling session, July 3, 2010).

p. 489

Some men (and their families) accept the women regardless of her past, but refuse to care for her children born in the LRA, resulting in the breakup of the marriage.

p. 489

On return, some of the women continue to replicate ideas of hegemonic masculinity:

The man with whom we returned should be empowered so that he can begin taking good care of us. This is because first of all there is no way he can take good care of us. It might be that he went to the bush when he was very young, say 12 years old, you can cry that he doesn't take care of you. He doesn't take care of you because the child has no clothes and does not go to school but he himself is not even educated. Now as you see what should be done with these people who have problems like this? So me, I see that he should first be strengthened (kityel kore) so that he can take good care of us. (Storytelling session Gulu, July 10, 2010)

p. 489

Others talked of how the fathers of their children "ran mad" or turn to drink, unable to cope with the return to civilian life. Still others discussed the fact that some men simply disappeared after joining the Ugandan military. Of their children's fathers, the women summarized: They are "useless men" unable to provide for their children.

p. 489

Without adequate reintegration strategies, alternative masculinities are unavailable on return from the bush (see also Annan et al. 2010).

The only way for an ex-combatant like Kamdulu to regain social status is through violent means (Dolan 2003).

p. 489

The only way for Atim to protect her future is to seek a reunion with her bush husband or, if he is not there, his kin. Yet, the future is uncertain:

You can put your husband with whom you returned under pressure that "help me, help me" all the time and yet you see that he also sleeps hungry just the way you do. He has nowhere he can go. . . . Men and women [should] combine to take care of the children. You cannot keep on stressing [him], yet he doesn't have anything to do. [If you do] then the man [will] either become a thief or start doing

something which is not even fit for human life. (Storytelling session, Gulu, July 3, 2010)

p. 489

When Kamdulu was unable to return to school or play the part of *latin gang*, he returned to the Ugandan military and violence to sustain himself, the performance of militarized masculinity once again reproduced.

p. 489

The child that I had with him created a bond between us. Because that relationship cannot be denied since in the future people will be saying “your father is alive and he is even out from the bush” more so, the child in the future will

p. 490

also insist that he should be taken to his father. . . . He is free to see his child because it was neither his nor my wish to go to the bush. (Storytelling session, Gulu, August 20, 2010)

Section 7: Other Articles of Interest

Vigh, Henrik E. "Militantly well." *HAU: Journal of Ethnographic Theory* 5.3 (2015): 93-110.

Abstract: Building on ethnographic fieldwork among militant, urban youth in Bissau, Guinea-Bissau, this article illuminates how young men in the city actively engage in conflict in order to improve their lives and prospects. The article shows how mobilizing is seen as a move toward a reduction of hardship and the possibility of fulfilling one's social potential. Rather than looking at what people see themselves as having to fight against—the last decades of war in Bissau being remarkably void of ideological standpoints and collective visions of dangerous Others (Vigh 2009)—the article looks at the visions of better futures that transcend conflict engagement and wartime suffering for young militiamen. It clarifies the positive prospects that are expected to lie beyond the known horrors of war. Though conflict and warfare may provide strange points of departure for talking about well-being, imaginaries of happiness stand out from a background of hardship and are talked about in both a quite concrete way, as a lack of insecurity, as well as in an abstract way, as realization of social being. However, for most of the people I talk to, happiness remains elusive and evades their desperate attempts to grasp it. It appears, as such, simultaneously to be what life is most profoundly about, as well as the dimension of it that constantly seems to avoid capture.

p. 96

Happiness and hardship

I have written about the Aguenta militia elsewhere and sought to make sense of their conflict engagement by focusing on the concept of “social navigation” (Vigh [2003] 2006, 2006, 2010) and by situating them in contexts of “crises and chronicity” (2008). In contrast, the current article looks specifically at their mobilization through the concept of “emplacement” and relates this to ideas of happiness and well-being in Bissau. Though visions of happiness figure as powerful motivators for the young men I talk to, it remains, as we shall see, illusive and elusive as an experiential state. It figures as an existential goal that avoids capture, making the pursuit of it stand forth as its primary instantiation. In this manner the article takes its inspirations from Michael Jackson “in understanding well-being, not as a settled state but as a field of struggle” (2011: ix). It asks, thus, what happiness might look like seen from a situation of conflict and scarcity, where it may be imagined to be located, and how it may be attained (cf. Jiménez 2008: 181)? Doing so allows me to clarify how mobilizing into a militia in the midst of war may be seen as a way to gain well-being by moving toward positions of social worth and value³; a process of emplacement that shows how imaginaries of being well motivate action as both short-term and long-term orientations (cf. Thin 2008: 151).⁴

p. 97

I realize that the Aguenta militia may be seen by some to provide a peculiar point of

departure for addressing well-being. As a youth militia in one of the world's poorest and most unstable societies, the logical angle of approach might appear to be a focus on suffering and despair (cf. Robbins 2013).⁵ The militia was a haphazardly formed fighting force. Poorly trained and unimpressive in terms of numbers, equipment, and abilities, they fared poorly in warfare and are spoken of in Bissau as carne di bazooka, ("bazooka meat") or cannon fodder (Vigh [2003] 2006, 2009, 2011). Yet, while life in the militia may stand in direct contrast to our common understandings of well-being, such hardship and suffering is, as we shall see, shadowed by dreams and ideas of happiness and made endurable as a perceived movement toward better lives and more valued positions of being. Happiness and hardship are in this respect dialectically related as one instantiates an imaginary of the other. Just as the experience of happiness can conjure a fear of its termination, so hardship may be brightened by hopefulness, and suffering by imaginaries of well-being (Jackson 2011).

p. 98

Focusing on happiness and well-being in relation to the mobilization of the Aguentas in general, and Raul's story more specifically, may in this perspective partly inform us of the motives behind their conflict engagement. Despite the common-sense distance between warfare and happiness a closer look may illuminate how such motivations are socially anchored, and how the well-being people strive toward is informed by relational concerns and obligations. In the Bissauan case this means framing happiness and well-being within a state of prolonged decline and political instability (Vigh 2008; see also McGovern 2011). Guinea-Bissau has been caught in a process of economic and political deterioration for the better part of its existence as an independent country, to the point where political instability and insecurity is perceived as chronic, and where people experience their lives as increasingly difficult to live in agreeable or meaningful ways. However, the consequences of crises and decline affect diverse social groups in different ways, closing down various avenues of possibility and creating specific situated concerns.

p. 106

Nelson did not move on in life by joining the Aguenta militia. Though he was repeatedly mobilized, demobilized, and remobilized over a period of ten years,¹⁰ he ended up defeated and demoralized sitting in the same run-down area of Bissau with the same group of friends, waiting once again for better times and brighter futures. With an aptitude for joining the losing side of any battle, he never experienced victory. Instead of moving toward a better life he found himself drifting from the social position of "youth," a position that at least offers the possibility of mobility, into a default position of poverty; a social position of generalized immobility as um algin coitado ("a poor man"). Though struggling to gain momentum in life he managed, in other words, only to glide into a generic space of scarcity and to become further caught in a marginal position within a turbulent and volatile political scenario.

p. 106

This article has sought to illuminate happiness and well-being from within a space of hardship and conflict. Looking at the Aguentas through a prism of emplacement has clarified how mobilization is related to gaining security, provision, and prospects, directed toward a feeling of safety and the relief of being connected and protected. Yet it also shows how, in situations of conflict, the pursuit of happiness may paradoxically produce actions that bring people into a space of suffering. In this respect, happiness can have an ironic presence when sought in conditions that are not generally conducive to it. Not only may the struggle to attain it bring one into harm's way; as Nelson's story indicates happiness may also remain a phantom state of being despite peoples' desperate struggles to attain it. It is illusive and elusive, potentially present but presently absent as an experiential state that avoids capture (Gotfredsen 2013).

p. 106-107

Yet perhaps happiness actually has most life while it is being pursued. As an existential goal it reveals itself in imaginaries and instantiations that are transitory and contingent. It moves as people move along, shifting elsewhere when approached, making us chase it regardless of the situation we find ourselves in (Jackson 2011: ix). The Aguentas may provide an unusual point of departure for describing and discussing happiness and well-being. Yet they offer a good description of how we struggle to attain it and how it may inform our acts and motives in even the most difficult of circumstances. This becomes terribly clear as urban youth seek to navigate war as a vital conjuncture, a constellation of events that opens up otherwise frozen socio-political landscapes. As we have seen, happiness in such situations becomes a bearing, simultaneously a directionality as well as an awareness of one's position or embeddedness relative to one's surroundings.

[Corbin, J. N. \(2008\). Returning home: resettlement of formerly abducted children in Northern Uganda. *Disasters*, 32\(2\), 316-335.](#)

Abstract: This exploratory qualitative study considers the subjective resettlement experiences of children forced into armed conflict in Northern Uganda from the perspectives of 11 former child combatants and 11 adult community members. A thematic analysis was performed on the narrative data. The bioecological model was used to provide a conceptual framework for key themes. Major findings included the overarching impact of ongoing armed conflict on returnees' lives, the important role of the family in supporting children's resettlement, the harassment of former child soldiers by community members, and the community's inability to support systematically the returning children in tangible ways. This study recommends that humanitarian services at all levels strengthen the capacity of families to care for the material and psychoemotional needs of former child soldiers within their communities.

P. 323: "Respondents reported that families were more important than other social groups

including community, school and religion. Families provided psychosocial support through the traditional welcoming process, basic needs such as shelter, food and clothing, and reconnections to cultural traditions. Families also provided protection from the harassment of other community members who might be angry with or fearful of the FAC's violent actions during abduction or captivity."

p. 324:

"Four FAC specifically mentioned the importance of family in reducing the discomfort associated with the difficult environmental conditions. They said it was easier not to think about the past when they had a comfortable place to live, a safe place to sleep, sufficient food and the presence of family and friends."

p. 323-324

The following statement from a young female FAC demonstrates the role of a supportive relative (male, uncle) in providing psychoemotional support, material items and safety from negative sentiments of some community members:

One thing she will never forget is her uncle. When she came, the uncle brought her everything, even clothing, so many other things, personal things. The uncle has constantly showed her love . . . she is warmly welcomed, contrary to what she has been hearing. Some people complain that those who come back from the bush . . . are possessed by evil spirits and all that. But her uncle has proved that wrong, he often [went] to visit her at the reception centre, send for her things and even during Christmas he took her Christmas [gifts] . . . so she is very happy about that.

p. 329

[in response to the harassment of FARC by community members] A male teacher explained how he guides the other students in the class to help returning FAC t into the community. 'We always tell even other children who have not been abducted, you should stay together with them, discuss with them, play with them, so that they also feel comfortable.'

p. 330

Some FAC believed that females of marriage age upon return had less difficulty than males because they married and 'they go away to the new place [husband's community], where they go it is difficult for you to comment on somebody's woman.' This respondent further explained that males had more difficulty because they remained in the camp. A third

perception was that females who returned with children had more difficulty.

p. 330

Two community members stated that females returning with children had more difficulty with reintegration. Three reported that females had less difficulty because they married upon return from captivity and their husbands could provide for them. Other explanations for females experiencing less difficulty upon return included females behaving in more socially appropriate ways and younger females being able to return to school [while boys stay out of school to find ways to generate income]

p. 331

Because families bear the most responsibility for the resettlement of formerly abducted children, humanitarian services must focus attention on supporting the families to do this task.

p. 327

All FAC explained that they managed the psychoemotional aspects of past experiences in captivity by not reflecting on those experiences. This did not mean the past was forgotten or denied; rather it was more important for FAC to engage in productive activities and reconnect to family and community. This strategy may be effective given the ongoing instability in many war affected areas, the limited psycho- social services in the camps, and the importance of community relationships.

Avoidance of talking about trauma experiences by FAC and the community seems a key contributor to psychological healing. This approach, however, is contrary to western practices in dealing with trauma, which encourage individuals to remember and talk about the traumas experienced. The goal of western therapy has been to decrease the individual's trauma symptoms by increasing conscious tolerance of the emotional and cognitive aspects of the trauma and constructing a psychologically integrated experience of the trauma event (Herman, 1997; Van Der Kolk et al., 1996).

McElroy, T., Spittal, P., Atim, S., Tebere, L., & Muyinda, H. (2010). Mothering in a time of conflict: Acholi women's experience of child rearing in the displacement camps of northern Uganda. *Journal of the Motherhood Initiative for Research and Community Involvement*, 1(1).

Abstract: The purpose of this investigation was to explore the challenges experienced by mothers rearing children in the context of war and displacement in Northern Uganda. **Design:** Sixty-three mothers participated in the study (26 in interview, 37 in focus group discussion) while living in internal displacement during the 20-year war waged by rebels in Northern Uganda. Using open-ended questions and probing, they were asked to discuss the challenges of parenting in the context of war. **Results:** The women expressed they had faced significant challenges in fulfilling their maternal roles in the context of conflict and displacement. Their life circumstances forced a sustained focus on survival, challenged their traditional familial relational patterns and interfered with their ability to socialize their children, instilling in the mother's apprehension about their children's future. Nonetheless, mothers also displayed resilience and persistence in facing the barrage of threats to their families. **Conclusions:** The difficult and sometimes horrendous circumstances of conflict and displacement alter cultural and relational parenting patterns and impact profoundly on mothers and children.

Results

p. 132

1) The challenge of ensuring physical survival and promoting the health of children in the context of conflict and displacement:

The circumstances of conflict and displacement in Northern Uganda frequently challenged and limited mothers' ability to protect the well-being and even the lives of their children. While the camps were established to offer protection from the rebel forces, this protection often did not materialize, leaving the population vulnerable to attack, destruction and looting. Mothers were constantly living with the very real threats of violence and abduction being perpetrated against themselves or their children by a range of actors

p.133

This violent, on-going conflict and containment in the camps meant that mothers were restricted from accessing their agricultural land; the source of their livelihood. With these restrictions came severe limitation and thwarting of the most basic maternal role; the ability to meet the material and survival needs of children. The women recalled the former competence of the family unit in providing nutritious varied food, clothes, and other basics, such as money for school or bride price for marriage. This shift from perceived sufficiency to economic desperation was demoralizing to mothers

2) The challenge of building children's productive capacity in the context of conflict and displacement p. 134

Mothers in this study reported that the context and confines of camp living prevented them from teaching their children the productive skills they would need later in life. In the past, children and youth worked alongside their families and were mentored in skills, knowledge and work values

However, while living in displacement, parents feared their children could be abducted if they went to the agricultural land, and so left them in the camps during the day with minimal, if any, supervision. The drive to protect children took priority over fostering the children's capacity to be productive and economically self-maintaining in the future

Confined to camps, mothers feared children were socialized to leisure and idleness, a sharp contrast to past values of productivity. Some saw young people as undisciplined and/or unmotivated and worried about how the children would provide for themselves and their families in the future. It was difficult for some mothers to imagine future productive roles of unskilled, uneducated youth

3) The challenge of socializing children in the context of conflict and displacement: p. 134

Traditional Acholi homesteads had consisted of numerous huts within a compound that would house various members of the extended family. Child rearing and socialization was largely a family responsibility and the interdependent nature of communities was reflected in their use of space and proximity to kin. In conflict and displacement, mothers reported that families were often divided. This severely weakened the family unit as the main source of socialization and limited the support that mothers previously had in socializing, disciplining, protecting and nurturing their children

p. 135

The camps also offered children much more social interaction with strangers than had been possible in the village. People came to the camps with diverse lifestyles and manners and what was modelled for children in the camps was not always desirable as far as mothers were concerned. From receiving bad advice to full predation, perpetrators of negative influence were reported to take many forms: peers, parents and family, other adults (shop owners, married men, sugar daddies and mamas, soldier's wives, traders, neighbours) and authority figures (soldiers, teachers).

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- ⁱ Shildrick, M. (2002). *Embodying the monster: encounters with the vulnerable self*. London: Sage.
- Shildrick, M. (2009). *Dangerous discourses of disability, subjectivity and sexuality*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan. doi:10.1057/9780230244641