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Men Crazy Making Theories of Masculinity

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SUMMARY

Research on masculinity has burgeoned over the last fifteen years, growing from several publications a year to an annual rate of over a hundred articles and monographs. These projects on masculinity are being produced primarily, although not exclusively, by men. While the new masculinity studies borrow liberally from feminist studies, they also utilize a diversity of psychological theories, from behaviourist to psychoanalytic. The suddenness, volume and variety of masculinity projects present a compelling invitation to assess the entire project. As theory productions, how do masculinity theories compare with feminist theories of gender? What is the most appropriate means to evaluate the theoretical options contained in these works? Perhaps the most tempting question issues from their very emergence: why have men and some women at this time undertaken the theoretical examination of what has generally been regarded as the 'unmarked category'? What is so intriguing or urgent about such research? This chapter visits these questions, suggesting, in the end, that this apparent 'crisis in masculinity' is, but is not simply 'all about men.' In their structuring and conceptualisations of gender and the social world, these theories mimic certain features of femininity. Drawing upon several examples from reproductive technologies, it is proposed that the new subject formations of masculinity also contribute to a moral-political narrative that destabilises the conventional epistemology of science. These theory ventures thus speak at once about the status of the academy, the global economy, and intimate relations between men and women—shifting social arrangements of power—just as they inscribe and document a new self awareness of a particular subject formation.

We live in a time of fallen heroes. The monuments built of men, by men and for men have tumbled. Men have not just been brought to earth, their strengths put in perspective by their flaws....The empire seems to be crumbling. (Betcher & Pollack, 1993, p. 1)

"Fragile Masculinity": once an oxymoron, now an empirical truth. Through engaged and sustained investigation, masculinity (or masculinities) is being revealed as dangerous, not simply for others but for men themselves. Deploying received psychological constructs and culturally salient rhetoric, researchers report that masculinity is in "crisis," harboring "conflicts," "paradoxes," and "defenses"; North American men are caught by "hegemonic masculinity" bearing the trauma of the "male wound" or mask (Hudson & Jacot, 1991). Masculinity is related causally to abusiveness and violence, including its newest choreography, school violence (Mai & Alpert, 2000). Normative masculinity has a pronounced "dark side" (Brooks & Silverstein, 1995), promoting alexithymia, alcoholism and substance abuse, anality, high-risk behaviors, psychological and neurotic defenses, hypercompetitiveness, homophobia, gynophobia, sexism, suicide, absent fathering, marital problems, defensive autonomy, destructive entitlement, disindividuation, narcissism, proclivity toward nonrelational sex, and even deadly disease (Lippa & Martin, 2000). As one author confessed, "I don't want to condemn masculinity: like garlic, it has its uses,

but a little of it goes a long way, and a heavy dose is nauseating" (Pittman quoted in Doherty, 1991, p. 30). Another noted that "we have moved manhood from the pedestal to the mud, from an idealized model to a deficit model" (Doherty, 1991, p. 30).

Men on a "pedestal." "Idealized" manhood. "Deficit models" of masculinity. Familiar terms from the psychology of women are transposed onto the psychology of men. Masculinity psychology borrows substantially from feminist scholarship and, in so doing incorporates, along with theories of gender roles and social construction of gender psyches, an understanding of men as vulnerable, damaged, and oppressed. Academic and popular media reports have multiplied in the last decade (Newton, 1998), and a search of Psychological Abstracts produced 291 entries on masculinity between 1997 and 2001, while only 11 were listed between 1967 and 1971. I want to propose that these proliferating studies are sustained through scientific analogy. It is not merely the case that masculinity researchers adopted a psychology of gender—of roles, cognitive schema, socialization, identification, and its associated explanation of the social origins of gender (versus the biological bases of sex). Rather, these investigators have advanced an analogical science that compares masculinity to femininity. Analysis of the analogy reveals a shift in thinking (about gender) toward a differently gendered or more sexless psychology in which the romance of patriarchal selves is replaced with post-gender self. The new, peculiarly subterranean, post-gender self that inhabits masculinity theory has affinities with recent transformations in scientific epistemology. The turn in genetic science from the natural object to information exchange of the self-replicating gene undoes the heterosexual romance of masculine science: "Whereas earlier versions of biology drew heavily on the imagery of a masculine science unveiling a feminine nature, and emphasise the fecundity of this coupling, their mergings which inspire the awe of biogeneticists are much more expansive and promiscuous" (Franklin, 1995, p. 68).

FEMININE IS TO MASCULINE AS VICTIM IS TO VICTIM

Imagine a revised Miller's Analogy test with gender-related items.

- Feminine is to Masculine as victim is to (fill in the blank).
- Feminine is to Masculine as oppressed is to (fill in the blank).
- Feminine is to Masculine as dysfunctional is to (fill in the blank).
- Feminine is to Masculine as emotionality is to (fill in the blank)

According to this *au courant* test, constructed with the findings of the new masculinity research, the answers would be: feminine is to masculine as victim is to victim, as oppressed is to oppressed, as dysfunctional is to dysfunctional, as emotionality is to emotionality. As discerned in the case of the 19th-century scientific analogy of race and gender (comparing so-called lower races and women), analogies function to produce new meanings that result from the interaction of the two parts. Analogies constitute the science by generating "new systems of implications, new hypothesis and therefore new observations" (Stepan, 1986, p. 268). Although analogy comprises a productive tool of scientific investigation, the

implications evoked by the analogy suppress knowledge just as they ground novel understandings. Through analogical reasoning masculinity studies have produced a chain of similarities between men and women that replaces mundane knowledge about gender difference: men too are victimized, oppressed, denigrated, and emotional. At the same time, this analogical science suppresses other differences, notably those of power and subjectivity, the apparently "unmarked" essence of the object of psychology

Beginning in the 1970s, psychological studies of masculinity increasingly utilized theoretical and conceptual approaches to gender that were crafted by feminist psychologists (who were focusing primarily on women and femininity). Feminist psychology insisted on distinguishing between biological and social origins of gender attributes; investigating the social and societal bases of gender roles; and examining femininity and women's unique experience in terms of (patriarchal) power arrangements, with an overarching commitment to instituting more equal arrangements. Although masculinity research has changed over the decades (Doherty, 1991; Kimmel, 1987), it consistently has relied on core psychological understandings of gender identities as social phenomena which are interactive, changing, and non-unitary. Just as the series of 19th-century analogies comparing women and lower races "were brought together in a biosocial science of human variation" (Stepan, 1986, p. 264), a component of evolutionary theory, so the analogies comparing masculinity and femininity are connected through a social constructionist model of identity formation and function. According to Segal, the literature argues that "Men too were oppressed by their roles, and insecure in their male identities—particularly given the absence of male role models in early life. Men too need liberating" (1990, p. 68).

Absorbing this general model of gender, masculinity researchers often blend it with other psychologies, typically versions of object relations theory and psychopathology. In North America, however, much masculinity work utilizes Pleck's adaptation of gender socialization theories: Pleck's gender role strain paradigm shows "that contemporary men are burdened by role definitions that are not only impossible for most men to attain but are also psychologically dysfunctional, and that the skills required to attempt to meet these definitions are often forged in the fires of traumatic childhood socialization experiences" (Levant & Brooks, 1997, p. 1). Thus, men are subject to a triad of tension: discrepancy-strain, dysfunction strain, and trauma strain (Levant, 1997; Pleck, 1995), and boys are put in a "gender straightjacket" (Pollack, 1998, p. xxiv). This perspective on masculinity has enabled the generation of numerous similarities with femininity, suggesting, among other things, that masculinity could be marked or identified, conventional masculinity is pathological or dysfunctional for the individual (it produces deficit), and the causes of this inadequate masculinity indicate men as victims of contemporary society. How like women!

The marking of masculinity has transpired in various investigative locales, yet the empirical outcomes indicate a certain consensus. Using psychometrics, researchers have located core features of masculinity. Scales, inventories, and personality tests inscribe masculinity, exposing and enumerating its underlying qualities. The Brannon Masculinity Scale, for instance, finds the "blueprint for manhood" to

include avoidance of fear, appearance of invulnerability, status striving, and adventure or violence seeking. Other inscription devices measure "masculinity transcendence," role conflict and stress, sociosexual orientation, and homophobia (Walker, 2000). One scale calibrates two ideological components of masculinity: "Hypermasculine Posturing" and achievement (Doss & Hopkins, 1998) and another relates role conflict to emotional restrictiveness and relationship problems, suggesting that "the gender role conflicted male is fueled by, yet vigorously defended against, the resulting fragility he feels" (Blazina & Watkins, 2000, p. 130). Going beyond the feminist psychometricians' favorite, the Bem Sex-Role Inventory, these instruments index the terms of masculinity, encoding all its overly-garlic details in language.

Empirical and theoretical studies explore its meanings, typically defining the masculine kind through four factors of independence, achievement and striving (competitiveness), restricted emotionality and avoidance of the feminine and homosexual. Mapping these attributes onto the aforementioned triad of masculine role stresses or discrepancies yields a geography for locating the psychic costs of being masculine. Added to this cartographic project are ontogenetic explanations—borrowed liberally from developmental, psychoanalytic, and object-relations theories—which detail how masculinity emerges through particular child-rearing styles and within particular historical, cultural, and institutional contexts. These gender drenched developmental processes generally are understood as "traumatic" and "terrifying" to boys, laying the psychological foundation for adult distress, aggressivity, misogyny, shame, and self-denigration (Brooks, 1998). So charted, the map of masculinity comprises a terrain of normative roles and behaviors that are themselves impossible and dysfunctional; furthermore, that ground is unstable and ever subject to cultural changes. This merger of traits, roles and ontogenetic processes describe how men are victims of an inconstant, even mercurial, world.

Work on men's "restrictive emotionality exemplifies the dangerous location of contemporary masculinity within the social world (Jansz, 2000). Levant's (2001) construct of "normative male alexithymia" aligns dysfunction, the "inability to put emotions into words," with masculinity (p. 424). While cautioning about the risks of pathologizing maleness, Levant argues that "this aspect of traditional masculinity does not serve men well in today's world and is therefore dysfunctional, although it served a purpose in an earlier era.... Normative alexithymia, like the more severe forms, is a result of trauma—in this case the trauma of the male role socialization process" (pp. 425–426). His explanatory framework is drawn, not from object-relations theory but, rather, from role socialization theory: for boys, "This socialization process includes both the creation of skills deficits (by not teaching boys emotional skills or allowing them to have experiences that would facilitate their learning these skills) and trauma (including prohibitions against boys' natural emotional expressivity and punishment, often in the form of making the boy feel deeply ashamed of himself for violating these prohibitions)" (p. 430). Emotional inexpressiveness places men at yet another risk when they confront tragic loss. Their inability to feel and express emotion renders them susceptible to what Thompson terms "ontological insecurity": "a breakdown in the individual's taken-for-granted relationships with the social world" (2001, p. 33). Other research validates the idea of

normative emotional deficit, demonstrating the ego defenses and aggressiveness that result from identification with the traditional masculine role (Eisler, 1998; Mahalik & Cournoyer, 1998).

The catalogue of psychological risks recited at the outset of this paper are receiving comparable analysis, indicating how masculinity is dysfunctional, damaging, and oppressive. However, it is not one hegemonic masculinity that threatens psychic wellbeing of men: masculinity takes many forms, inflected significantly by time, place, race, ethnicity, class, and age. Sensitized to the problems of universalism in psychological theories, notably by hearing the critiques of American feminism, masculinity researchers have pluralized the masculine, distinguishing the masculinities of Latinos, Frat Boys, "Blue Men," Southerners, Gangs, and various other identity inflections. In whatever form, masculinity harms men: men are its victims. Using a psychological trope linking dysfunction to deficit to victim, masculinity researchers delineate the fundamental social origins of the damage. The distal (social) cause of masculine roles, configured through discrepancies and strains—of the "crisis in masculinity"—is twofold: over the long run, an unrealizable human kind has evolved socially and, more recently, societal transformations have substantively altered gender arrangements of power. Regarding the first cause, what is termed the "masculine mystique" (if ever one doubted the borrowing from the feminine) responsible for this unrealizable human kind is patriarchy: "Patriarchy has represented not only the dehumanization of women, but also of men. Women are transformed into objects, a form of property. But the property owner in this relationship is thereby himself rendered inert, machine-like" (Horrocks, 1994, p. 66). As Horrocks argues, men's superordinate status paradoxically yields their victimization for "In becoming accomplices and agents of the patriarchal oppression of women, men are themselves mutilated psychologically" (p. 182). This power not only oppresses men but, via a double blind, it also limits their ability to change. Their competitive autonomy predisposes men toward denial and being shamed by criticism. If denial and resistance to criticisms are insufficient blocks to social flexibility, men also are found to lack "comfort and fluency with emotions that are crucial to personal change" (Levant, 1997, p. 222). As one book title tells it, *If Only Men Could Talk* (Gratch, 2001). At stake for men in any dismantling of patriarchy is their power, privilege, and prerogatives; thus denial on their part is understandable (Linstead, 1997).

The second cause of masculine disorder, changing social arrangements, is more routinely discussed. The traditional "breadwinner," "head-of-household" role of the American male has literally, according to the literature, been capsized. Brooks (1998) candidly and comprehensively specified the changes: "Over the past thirty years, the contemporary women's movement has turned men's lives upside down" (p. 9). While noting that not all men and women have joined the movement, the impact has been "enormous": "Traditional patriarchal wisdom and power have been challenged in a fundamental way. Feminism has demanded a voice for women's experience and a realignment of traditional power arrangements between the genders" (p. 9). The social transformations altered the workplace: "For centuries, men have held almost exclusive dominion over the world of work (outside the home ... That simply is not the case any longer, as a vast majority of women have entered the workforce and

now earn a substantial portion of total family income" (p. 10). Some researchers depict a gender lag in this massive social transformation, a lag where women have moved astride the changes and, consequently have benefited, whereas men have been left, with gender disabilities, some distance behind: "We have a long way to go to overcome the deficit" (Doherty, 1991, p. 30). The internal contradictions of psychological masculinity, once upon a time endurable, now are directly challenged (Yates, 2000, p. 77). Given that the "atavistic values of the masculine mystique continues to be reinforced in most areas of entertainment, as well as some sports," Miedzian has urged that "American boys must be protected from a culture of violence" (1997, pp. 428, 434). As victims of an oppressive and mutating world, men have been found to be subject to the objectifying "female gaze" (Goddard, 2000).

Such conceptions of masculinity suggest a number of rich and provocative interpretations. They might be considered yet another symptom of the hysteria of late capitalism. Or, they could be considered in terms of the rise of a therapeutic worldview in which everyone requires intervention and clinical attention; masculinity research accordingly comprises a clarion call to bring more men into the therapy industry. The proclamations of damage might be seen as a practical reaction to shifts in social attention—toward women and away from men—or, more psychoanalytically, as the psychic response to a genuine assault against narcissist personalities. Although each of these interpretive possibilities warrant attention, the focus here is on the structural and instrumental features of the scientific argument itself, on the scientific practices engaged in defining the object of analysis, the psychic life of men.

ANALOGY AND GENDER

The analogy of masculinity and femininity, through such explanatory frames, takes a robust form, featuring an equity of trauma, dysfunction, and victimization. That coherent form of equity is reiterated in comparative descriptions (Sobieraj, 1998, p. 28). The facts produced through the scientific analogy pronounce that in terms of gender in the world, everybody loses, everybody needs to gain.

Analogical science renders similarities between two kinds previously and conventionally understood as different—usually understood, in fact, as opposites. While retaining features of differences, say in emotionality or competitiveness, the sameness of effects and causes is foreground. Such sameness boldly signals an equity previously not recognized; it calls for comparable treatment if not comparable worth. Although this new "narrative field" (Haraway, 1986) of deficit and victimization was fueled by feminist discourse, it is important to recognize that the concepts of masculine crisis and wound have a longer history within American culture and the human sciences (Bederman, 1995; Rotundo, 1993).

Analogy also suppresses certain knowledge just as its implications are sources for generating knowledge. The masculinity and femininity analogy disregards the view that the asymmetry of gender relations of power is formative of gender differences. Masculinity researches emphasize deficits and damages accrued to men in sexist society, backgrounding not only matters of the perpetration of sexism but also privilege, opportunity, and prerogatives afforded men in an asymmetrical social

order. Conditions of everyday life in a material world recede with this psychic comparability of men and women. There appear to be no effects of—or benefits attained from—gender privilege and dominance, only costs. Social power evaporates or, at best, is rendered a risk to the holder's wellbeing.

Imagine if the analogical rendering of sameness of gender oppression had not transpired. Without that leveling of difference, psychological models of the gender asymmetry of power would necessarily theorize the dominance and privilege men accrue via that asymmetry. This counterfactual suggests the possibility of a refined psychology of the power-holder or a theory of victimizers who are not themselves also victims. It enables theories that attend to the effects of perceived omnipotence without hypothesizing latent deficiencies, or theories that chart the effects of perceived loss of that dominant position.

Also elided in the analogy of sameness is any explication of the subject, of self or subjectivity. Masculinity apparently either comprises a mask, hiding both well being and authentic self, or a wound, harming some implicitly understood self. From studies focusing on the masculine ideology or role, one can only infer that what underlies the same damaged identities of the masculine and the feminine is a gender-free self. In declaring sameness, along with the disregard of asymmetrical gender relations and a tacit commitment to liberated selves, the scientific analogy confronts not only empirical and theoretic problems, but epistemic ones as well. It is incompatible with understandings of the phenomenology of power and the associated experiences of "self" and "other." The experienced structure of gender power was articulated first, and perspicuously, by de Beauvoir in 1945: "the terms *masculine* and *feminine* are used symmetrically only as a matter of form, as on legal papers. In actuality, the relation of the two sexes is not quite like that of two electrical poles, for man represents both the positive and the neutral, as is indicated by the common use of *man* to designate human beings in general; whereas woman represents only the negative, defined by limiting criteria, without reciprocity" (1961, p. xv). The relation is never equal because "woman is defined and differentiated with reference to man and not he with reference to her; she is the incidental, the inessential as opposed to the essential. He is the Subject, he is the Absolute—she is the Other" (p. xvi). de Beauvoir's observations controvert the scientific analogy of masculine and feminine: "No subject will readily volunteer to become the object, the inessential; it is not the Other who, in defining himself as the Other, establishes the One. The Other is posed as such by the one in defining himself as the One" (pp. xvii–xviii). The relation of power is everywhere clear and differentially beneficial such that "Refusal to pose oneself as the Subject, unique and absolute, requires great self-denial" (p. xxv).

Added to the list of matters left unexamined in the scientific analogy of masculinity and femininity, then, is "self-denial"; left unappreciated is the incredibility of men's willingness to relinquish the subject position and stand as the other—the object. By contrast to this submitting subject of masculinity psychology, the Subject of de Beauvoir's gender constellation does not "volunteer to become the Object." Men, as feminist theorists have argued, represent the "unmarked category" of analysis, positioned outside the scientific view to maintain their status of subject.

Given their positioning, "It is probably not possible to write a history of man's body and its pleasures because the historical record was created in a cultural tradition

where no such history was necessary" (Lacqueur, 1990, p. 22). And it is in this strategy that feminist philosophers of science find the epistemic subject of science to be gendered male: the gaze in the sexual sciences fixates on the other, the marked category of women, the category that is abject, inferior, and needing control.

The figure of this masculinity, at once unmarked and serving as the standard of humanity, is evident in the first scientific attempts to assess psychological masculinity and femininity. In 1936, after over a decade of investigation, Terman and Miles (1936) completed the first objective, quantitative and culture-proof measure of masculinity and femininity. The M-F scale both tested real, not purported, differences and tapped a central dimension of individuals' core personality, the self. Terman and Miles worked in kinship with others like Jacob Jastrow (1918) who located authentic masculinity and femininity "in the habitat of deep psychology, where traits are at once subtle and profound. Here the feminine mind, as all minds in the specialized aspects, becomes most revealing" (p. 314). Although deploying a binary pairing of masculinity and femininity, the dualism was asymmetrical, concentrating mainly on the description of femininity in men as well as women (Lopatin, 2001; Morawski, 1985, 1987).

With this historical point of reference we can ask why and by what means does the new masculinity research break with the longstanding project to establish gender at the core of psyche and through subject-other relations rehearse the asymmetry of power? Or, following de Beauvoir, we can ask why the subject now is engaged in self-denial, apparently identifying with, rather than standing opposed to, the other? And what are the implications for the dominant epistemology of science, particularly for the subject of scientific knowing?

These questions can be pursued in at least two ways. One way extends prevailing (and feminist) understandings of *power* and *self*. The other route suspects that qualitative changes in these operational understandings of power and self call for rethinking our notions of the subject *vis a vis* power and self. The remarkable innovations in the new (analogical) psychology of men, when viewed in relation to advances in another scientific venture concerned with sex and sexing, the reproductive sciences, suggest a need to rethink the prevailing perspective.

REFASHIONING DIFFERENCES, GENDERS, AND SELVES?

The first approach to the question returns us to the gendered nature of epistemology, back to Virginia Woolf's (1938) observation that "science, it would seem, is not sexless; she is a man, a father, and infected too" (p. 139). Whereas classical epistemology assures the separation of observing subject and object of interrogation, feminist models indicate their intimate relations: modern epistemology is masculine both in its internalization of masculine attributes and in its rendering of things perceived as different as inferior (Bordo, 1986; Keller, 1985; Merchant, 1980). Manhood thus is intertwined with the very ontology of objective observation, and the denigration of women is a logical as well as structural outcome of such gendered knowledge making. The male gaze does apprehend the male body for men make themselves in multiple ways through their engagements within the life sciences: "As a subject of behavioral science, man is self-made, father of the species and guarantor

of human nature" (Haraway, 1989, p. 220). What is officially "unmarked," then, can be interrogated in the understandings of scientists. To maintain arrangements of dominance, men have projected onto the other, typically women, what is intolerable, thus producing a sort of mirror imaging of negative qualities. At historical moments when these arrangements appear to be challenged, men have undertaken more direct self-analysis. Thus, for instance, contests about the nature of manhood in the early twentieth century led to invention of the concept of "masculinity" as a strategy to better explicate manliness (Bederman, 1995).

Employing this feminist epistemology of science, contemporary theorizing of masculinity as damaged and dysfunctional stands as a product of self-regard at a historical juncture of challenges to and changes in the gender relations of power. These new psychologies presume and expose an underlying self masked by the normative ideals of manhood, ideals that have been frayed by cultural practices and discourse beginning in the late 1960s. Power seems to be differently distributed, somehow equitably, and an authentic, unitary self, still unmarked and masculine, coheres above the gender turmoil which itself is unlike the psychological binary proffered in work like that of Terman and Miles. The asymmetry of power appears to be replaced by the androgynous wish for symmetry. These shifts in psychological theorizing—displacing or replacing gender—might be understood as defensive reactions to perceived or real threats to power (Kimmel, 1993; Russett, 1989). Their self-regard, then, involves insecurity, fear and self-doubt. However, such defensive reaction might not have been sufficient in the latter half of the 20th century. Considering the social changes, or perceived social changes, of this period, we might see a doubling of defenses, what can be called a "double ego problem": not only is omnipotence a defense against inadequacy and vulnerability but the mass social rehearsal of that vulnerability invites an ego defense of disregard for the very features which are vulnerable, for masculine styles (an ego defense process involving splitting).

Self denial as defense and strategy might be the process underlying the treatment of male objects in the reproductive sciences. Whereas some of this research incorporates conventional representations of masculinity, for instance, in scientific account of heroic, ambitious sperm (Martin, 1987) and the occasional exoneration of male games from the responsibility of (fetal) harm (Daniels, 1997; Dwight, 1997), in other projects male reproductive objects—men, fluids and gametes—have been treated much like female reproductive objects. They have been objectified, calibrated, pathologized, and manipulated. These new reproductive projects, in ways strikingly correspondent with the new masculinity psychologies, the gender relations of power recede just as they appear to have done in masculinity studies.

Could the single-minded ambition for mastery, in this case over men's own reproductive powers, eliminate the very need for these ordinary reproductive powers in men? Could self-denial be operating here also? That is, if self-denial serves as an ego defense in the masculine self, does the new post-gender reproductive science likewise shift power? Perhaps scientists sacrifice men's esteemed paternity, their symbolic place in reproduction, for the grander aspirations of control of reproduction—for "controlling life itself" as described by one 20th century biologist (Pauly, 1987). A post-gender science realized. However, this account

proves to be insufficient for appreciating what has changed, notably the very subject–other relations of modernity. As Franklin (1995) has argued, patriarchal and paternal relations are radically altered in contemporary genetics: “Whereas earlier versions of biology drew heavily on the imagery of a masculine science unveiling a feminine nature, and emphasised the fecundity of this coupling, the mergings which inspire the awe of biogeneticists are much more expansive and promiscuous. Informing this shift, there is again the indebtedness to a model of replication, rather than reproduction; to an idiom of information flow connecting generations, rather than of a blood tie; and to an interest in the secrets of life, rather than the facts of Nature” (p. 68).

In this new landscape gender recedes. With the gene as an autoreplicant what can be achieved is “autopaternality.” As Franklin (1995) has noted, “sex/gender is also reconfigured in the context of information, where the gene, as ‘author’ of the message, becomes the agent of its own instrumentality, in a loop of self-determinism, as telos that does away with the need for ‘soil’ (or matrix) altogether” (p. 70). And in this new post-heterosexual romance, maternity can be re-inscribed as a paternal act, inviting an “older, quintessentially patriarchal, tradition of insemination as the definitive act of begetting” (p. 72). For Franklin, the rupture in subject–object arrangements risks not the obliteration but the transcendence of paternity. Autopaternality serves as a metaphor, looming almost as an uber gender that retains some features of the original subject. For Oudshoorn, the risk in these new scientific arrangements is of “re–othering,” notably the othering of those individuals assumed to be less responsible agents: “people of colour” (p. 338).

The reproductive sciences do not provide an analogy for the psychology of masculinity for they actually are allied sciences, part of a heterogeneous network of alliances engaged in the continual configuration of the world and man’s place in that world. These nascent reconfigurations—from the diversity of medicalized bodies to the diversity of gender forms, of masculinities, and from the fascination with information flow and auto–replication of genes to the unmasking of masculine ideologies,—entail a remaking of subject, of subjectivity. The classic subject–other relation fades as the new man willingly engages in self–abnegation and self–denial by discarding the hierarchical and masterful arrangements of manhood and paternity. Difference is dismantled, making way for the play of relations and information: power shifts locations, making conventional critiques of masculinity and manhood problematic (as the purported difference has evaporated). Although these psychological ventures in fashioning a new human kind resonate with the anti-masculine, humanist manifestos of Jourard and Maslow issued over thirty years ago, the recent psychologies signal no obvious or universal (and its root male) human nature. Seemingly, as difference dissolves, the self loses its thingness leaving us with simple but central questions like what is male and female and where is power located. Nor do the new visions include mandates for some transparent freedom; instead, they vibrate with anxieties about an uncertain, unsteady world. In arguing for the deconstruction of identity and promotion of relations of difference, Sampson (1993, p. 162) asks, “Can we have difference without hierarchy?” However, as new scientific formulations refuse the centrality of difference, the question might be reversed: Can we have hierarchy without difference? These evidently postmodern

formulations, albeit a step beyond the previous anti-masculine humanists, evade hierarchy (or posit it as a relational process of mutual exploitation).

As psychological theorists, the challenge is to interrogate this new post-masculine subject status: we need to trace its lines of power and seeming losses of power, to correct the omissions of social context, and clarify the terms and forms of these budding reformulations of the psychological self. We might ask how this post-masculine self benefits by the suppression of ongoing differentials in social power, ever reacting personally to change and averting continuing hierarchical practices? How might this self reproduce the tenets of manhood—and patriarchy—by removing only the mask of masculinity and allowing (some) women also to perform this differently gendered self? And in this juncture where modern and postmodern coexist within a mobile subjectivity still yearning for selfhood, we might seize opportunities to constructively intervene in this subjectivity development project, insisting that we venture beyond the repetitious, modern pattern of subject–other. We might insist at once that the self is more complex and that power, privilege, and resources influence the structure of that self.

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