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An independent academic psychologist, based in England, who has written extensively on different areas of psychology with an emphasis on the critical stance towards traditional ideas.

A complete listing of his writings at <http://kmbpsychology.jottit.com>.

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# **1. HEGEMONIC MASCULINITY, AND GLOBAL AND AGEING MASCULINITIES**

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## **1.1. HEGEMONIC MASCULINITY**

"Hegemonic masculinity"<sup>1</sup> (HM) is a term that has grown in popularity in recent years, but it is a "contested concept" (Connell and Messerschmidt 2005). Connell (1987) is best known for crystallising the model of multiple masculinities which included the idea of HM (and "emphasised femininity"). HM can be defined as "the pattern of practice (ie: things done, not just a set of role expectations or an identity) that allowed men's dominance over women to continue" (Connell and Messerschmidt 2005 p832)<sup>2</sup>, or as "the configuration of gender practice which embodies the currently accepted answer to the problem of the legitimacy of patriarchy, which guarantees (or is taken to guarantee) the dominant position of men and the subordination of women" (Connell 1995). It includes traits like physical strength, aggression, virility, professional success, wealth, heterosexual prowess, and self-control over emotions like hurt (Calasanti 2004)<sup>3</sup>.

HM is "not assumed to be normal in the statistical sense: only a minority of men might enact it. But it was certainly normative. It embodied the currently most honoured way of being a man, it required all other men to position themselves in relation to it, and it ideologically legitimated the global subordination of women to men" (Connell and Messerschmidt 2005 p832).

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<sup>1</sup> The term "hegemonic" comes from the work of Gramsci (1971). "Unlike ideology, however, hegemony invokes power by consent rather than by coercion. The ruling classes, for example, maintain their domination by defining and legitimating a certain definition of the situation, framing the way events are understood and morality is defined. Consequently, the organisation of society seems natural, inevitable and ordinary..." (Speer 2001 p108). Donaldson (1993) viewed the term "hegemonic" "as slippery and difficult as the idea of masculinity itself" (quoted in Speer 2001).

<sup>2</sup> "Because gender relations are so deeply rooted in everyday practices, they are often invisible, particularly to those privileged by them. At the same time, the norms embedded in institutions are often more apparent to those disadvantaged by them" (Calasanti 2004 pS306).

<sup>3</sup> Brannon (1976) summarised the characteristics of HM in four phases: "no sissy stuff" (not feminine), "be a big wheel" (power and success), "be a sturdy oak" (keep emotions under control, particularly in a crisis), and "give 'em hell" (risk-taking and aggressive).

Calasanti (2004) confirmed this:

Although most men aspire to and measure themselves against this dominant masculinity, the majority do not achieve it, leading to "contradictory meanings and experiences of manhood" (Coltrane 1994 p42). Only so many men can be successful and wealthy, for example, or be heterosexually dominant; and the disempowerment of the majority of men often results from discrimination on the basis of their positions in other systems of inequality. Further, hegemonic masculinity "allows elite males to extend their influence and control over lesser-status males" (Sabo and Gordon 1995 p8), subordinating not only femininities but other masculinities as well (Courtenay 2000). Thus, it is not surprising that many men feel powerless. Many are relatively powerless – not in relation to women, but in their relationships with other men (pS307).

Some men benefit from patriarchy without enacting HM, these men are showing "complicit masculinities". HM "did not necessarily mean violence, but it could be supported by force, and it achieved ascendancy through culture, institutions, and persuasion" (Connell and Messerschmidt 2005).

### **1.1.1. Hegemonic Masculinity in Action**

Connell (2005) described men and boys as the "gatekeepers for gender equality" because "the very gender inequalities in economic assets, political power, and cultural authority, as well as the means of coercion, that gender reforms intend to change, currently mean that men (often specific groups of men) control most of the resources required to implement women's claims for justice" (p1802). Yet as progress is made to improve "women's rights", it can seem that men are not mentioned. This has led to a "backlash posture" of "men's rights" accusing feminism of injustice with men and boys as the "truly disadvantaged", particularly in situations of family breakdowns and legal disputes over custody of the children <sup>4</sup>.

Coyle and Morgan-Sykes (1998) analysed articles in "The Independent" newspaper in the UK about the "crisis" in men's mental health. Although HM was presented as problematic (eg: not talking about emotions, and depression), the alternative (namely femininity) was treated negatively. For example, one article arguing for men to be more relaxed said: "Massages, facials and an

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<sup>4</sup> I would call this the "families need fathers" discourse.

hour in a flotation tank are high up on many women's lists of priorities. It is time they go to the top of men's shopping lists, too". Furthermore, "women were positioned as a principal element within a range of social pressures and expectations which are represented as limiting and oppressing men" (p275).

HM has been applied to many areas of life to explain behaviours and social structures including (Connell and Messerschmidt 2005):

- The dynamics of the classroom, and bullying among boys.
- The predominance of men as perpetrators of serious crimes.
- Media representations of men in professional sport.
- "Men's health practices".
- The "gendered character of bureaucracies and workplaces".

Calasanti (2004) showed HM in action with the example of health. Men deny pain and do not seek medical help generally <sup>5</sup>, and this goes hand in hand with the construction of men as "tough" and therefore "naturally dominant". Where it is possible to measure, men have similar levels of health problems as women, but it is the not seeking help that is different. This would not be an issue except that male behaviour is assumed to be the norm in society, and "consequently, researchers and theorists alike presume that women are in poorer health because women get more bed rest than men do and see physicians more often" (Courtenay 2000 p1395 quoted in Calasanti 2004 pS308).

If health is viewed in terms of longevity rather than "muscles", women are healthier than men. "Given that women are unquestionably less susceptible to serious illness and live longer than men, it would seem that women should provide the standard against which men's health and men's health behaviour are measured. If this were the case, we would be compelled instead to confront men's inadequate bed rest and men's under-utilisation of health care" (Courtenay 2000 p1395 quoted in Calasanti 2004 pS308).

Oliffe (2009) interviewed three men born in 1920/30s from Victoria, Australia, recruited from the prostate cancer support group. The social construction of

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<sup>5</sup> Helgeson (1995) gave this example: "The man who had the heart attack said he had felt symptoms but refused to admit or report them because symptoms signified weakness that contradicted the masculine role. He also refused to seek help for symptoms because it would have interfered with his business, which was his primary route to affirming his masculine identity. Ironically, his failure to adhere to good health behaviour after the first MI [myocardial infarction] led to a second, more debilitating, MI that resulted in the loss of the business he was striving to maintain" (quoted in Calasanti 2004 pS309).

masculinity intersected with health behaviour in areas like it being unmanly to seek treated and visibly caring about health viewed as "feminine". Reflecting upon their lives, the interviewees also showed how expectations of masculinity changed with age. For example, seeking treatment was even more frowned upon for young men working in physical (working class) jobs.

Henwood et al (2002) reflecting on changes in society's views of men and their bodies observed: "On the one hand, it is necessary to consider how men's bodies are treated as 'objects' that are gazed upon by sections of society (especially within the advertising, fashion and leisure industries) and, as society becomes increasingly consumer-led, by a far wider spectrum of other people and by individual men... On the other hand, it is necessary to investigate men's experiences as 'embodied subjects', whose sense of selfhood and of the body is constructed through a wide range of ways of engaging with the world and with everyday life" (p183).

Kaufman (2001) described the link between patriarchy and violence by men with "the seven Ps of men's violence":

- Patriarchal power - Patriarchy is based upon "the triad of men's violence: violence against women, against other men, and against themselves. Violence is "built" into the system.
- Sense of entitlement to privilege - Patriarchy produces a sense of entitlement for men, and violence flows that entitlement. For example, violence against the wife who fails to provide dinner on the table on time.
- Permission - Implicit and explicit rules in societies give permission for violence (eg: weak laws on rape or weakly enforced).
- Paradox of men's power - While benefiting from patriarchy, men also suffer the insecurities of failing to live up to the ideal that goes with it, namely hegemonic masculinity. Violence is also a "compensatory mechanism" with such insecurities.
- Psychic armour of manhood - Surviving this paradox requires men to dampen their emotions, and particularly their empathy with others. Less empathy allows for violence against others.
- Masculinity as a psychic pressure cooker - Men still experience many emotions, but they must hide them, and violence becomes an "easier" response to fear, hurt,

and pain, for example.

- Past experiences - Many men have grown up in households where domestic violence occurred (and even experienced it directly as victims).

### **1.1.2. Hegemonic Masculinity Today**

Connell and Messerschmidt (2005) presented five main criticisms of HM put forward by various authors in the 1990s:

1. The underlying concept of masculinity is flawed "because it essentialises the character of men or imposes a false unity on a fluid and contradictory reality... [and]... ignores differences and exclusion within the gender categories" (Connell and Messerschmidt 2005 p836).

2. HM is a "type" rather than something actually embodied (ie: what does HM actually look like in practice). Connell and Messerschmidt (2005) defended themselves: hegemonic masculinities "express widespread ideals, fantasies, and desires. They provide models of relations with women and solutions to problems of gender relations" (p838).

3. The concept of HM is reified (ie: an abstract concept is made feel real). In other words, the associated ideas of patriarchy and so on are presented as real rather than as social constructions in particular historical times and places. Furthermore, HM is presented as exclusively negative.

4. HM represents a certain type of men when it should be seen as a way that men position themselves (ie: subject positions) in discourses and everyday interactions (Wetherell and Edley 1999).

5. Patriarchy can appear to be a self-reproducing system. Connell and Messerschmidt (2005) emphasised that much work is involved in maintaining the system and it is not self-reproducing. "To sustain a given pattern of hegemony requires the policing of men as well as the exclusion or discrediting of women" (p844).

After reflecting on the main criticisms of HM, Connell and Messerschmidt (2005) reviewed the concept. For them, the key idea of the "plurality of masculinities and hierarchy of masculinities" should remain as well as the concept of hegemony which works "through the production of exemplars of masculinity (eg: professional sport stars), symbols that have authority despite the fact that most men and boys do not fully live up to them"



(p846).

Connell and Messerschmidt (2005) reformulated HM in the following ways:

i) A more complex gender hierarchy including "protest masculinities"<sup>6</sup>, and more focus on the "practices of women in the construction of gender among men".

ii) Different geographical levels of HM - local (everyday interactions in families, organisations and communities), regional (nation-state), and global (international).

iii) More work on the embodiment of HM (ie: men's physical bodies) including trans-sexualism.

iv) An awareness of the dynamics and contradictions in the construction of masculinities, particularly as men age.

### **1.1.3. Homophobia and Homohysteria**

Kimmel (1997) argued that homophobia is a "central organising principle" of masculinity. It is not a fear of gay men or that a man might be perceived as gay, for him, but a term used like "faggot", for example, is "a label of ultimate contempt for anyone who seems sissy, untough, uncool" (Leverenz 1986 quoted in Kimmel 1997)<sup>7</sup>. "As young men we are constantly riding those gender boundaries, checking the fences we have constructed on the perimeter, making sure that nothing even remotely feminine might show through. The possibilities of being unmasked are everywhere. Even the most seemingly insignificant thing can pose a threat or activate that haunting terror" (Kimmel 1997 p234).

Kimmell (1997) went further and placed homophobia as a cause of sexism (putting down women to exaggerate masculinity) and racism (denying manhood to others proves that one is "fully manly").

Homophobia and anti-gay attitudes have been reported among male students in educational institutions as a means of maintaining heteromale identities (Pronger

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<sup>6</sup> This is "a pattern of masculinity constructed in local working-class settings, sometimes among ethnically marginalised men, which embodies the claim to power typical of regional hegemonic masculinities in Western countries, but which lacks the economic resources and institutional authority that underpins the regional and global pattern" (Connell and Messerschmidt 2005 pp847-848).

<sup>7</sup> There are consequences to such an environment as adolescents and young adults struggling with issues of gender identity and their sexuality are more likely to attempt suicide (eg: Wichstrom and Hegna 2003).

1990) <sup>8</sup>. "Deploying homophobia against others shows that one is meeting an important mandate of heteromascularity, while simultaneously raising one's social status at the expense of others" (McCormack 2011 p337).

In schools, "Boys who most closely embody this standard [HM] are accorded the most social capital, while those who behave in ways that conflict with this valorised form of masculinity are marginalised" (McCormack 2011 p338). Anderson (2009) developed the idea of "homohysteria" among males (ie: the fear of being homosexualised - which relegates an individual in the masculine hierarchy). Homohysteria influences boys' and men's behaviour in three ways - employing homophobic discourse (ie: anti-gay language), maintaining distance from homosexuality (eg: expressing disgust), and avoiding tactile contact with other males ("homosocial tactility") (McCormack 2011).

Using in-depth interviews and participant observation over twelve months, McCormack (2011) reported that such attitudes and behaviours were on the decline among male pupils at three sixth-form colleges (16-18 year-olds) in the south of England.

McCormack found:

a) No attempt to distance self from homosexuality - eg: popular and "sporty" students expressing support for "equality for gays", and the social acceptance of openly gay students.

b) No homophobic discourse, and it replaced by "homosexually-themed" or "gay discourse" - eg: use of the word "gay" as an expression of displeasure ("that's so gay"). "However, boys maintain that this phrase is not homophobic. Chris says, 'I say it all the time. But I don't mean anything by it. I've got gay friends'. Alex says, 'It isn't meant homophobically. When I say that's so gay, I don't mean homosexual'" (p348).

c) Greater homosocial tactility.

Despite the progress, heterosexuality was still privileged, and "heterosexual recuperation" was used by boys to emphasise their heterosexuality after "gender transgressions" (McCormack and Anderson 2010). "Heterosexual recuperation" involved "boasting about heterosexual desires and conquests" (conquestual recuperation) and "satirical proclamation of same-sex desire" (ironic recuperation).

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<sup>8</sup> Any feminine behaviour by a boy is interpreted as a sign of homosexuality. "Homosexual suspicion is effective in relegating boys in the masculine hierarchy because anyone's heterosexuality can be questioned in a homophobic culture" (McCormack 2011 p338).

Frosh et al (2003a) explored the gender boundaries among 11-14 year-old boys in London<sup>9</sup>. For example, one boy (Oliver) preferred to be with girls than to play football, and this drew criticism from the boys. Oliver constructed himself as "superior" to the boys in response. "For Oliver, football was an obsession with trivia, which made boys unable to concentrate in class or to develop friendships with girls. He was also convinced that his girl friends would be shocked if he started showing an interest in football; this conviction enabled him to construct himself as better than other boys in the eyes of girls" (Frosh et al 2003a p44).

## 1.2. GLOBAL MASCULINITIES

Hegemonic masculinity will manifest in different ways around the world as well as showing the common themes.

In Nicaragua (and Latin America), for example, "machismo" is the "version" of HM which sees men as "naturally physically and intellectually superior" to women. The stereotypical image is associated with gun-slitting, heavy-drinking cowboys (Welsh 2001).

Goffman (1963) described the characteristics of the "complete unblushing male" in the USA as young, married, White, urban, northern, heterosexual, Protestant, father, college educated, fully employed, of good complexion, weight and height, and having a successful record in sports<sup>10</sup>. Many men, of course, do not live up to this, and thus can feel "inadequate" or "insecure".

Kimmel (2001) described how right-wing militias in the USA have become a means to re-establish hegemonic masculinities power against the "onslaught" of feminism and "emasculatation" by the State. Globalisation has left many men in positions of disadvantage in terms of economic power (loss of job) and public patriarchy (power in the political arena) as well as with domestic patriarchy as more women work and/or divorce such men. Particularly in small towns, these men and "downwardly mobile rural White men" are feeling the pinch, and "it is through the militias that American manhood can be restored and revived - a manhood in which individual White men control the fruits of their own labour. It is the militarised manhood of the heroic John Rambo; a manhood that celebrates the God-sanctioned right to band together in armed militias if anyone, or any governmental agency, tries to take it away from them" (Kimmel 2001

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<sup>9</sup> The boys were recruited from 12 secondary schools for 45 group interviews and 78 individual interviews (including with 24 girls) (Frosh et al 2003b).

<sup>10</sup> Sometimes called "marketplace masculinity" (Kimmel 1997).

p29). So much is about the perceived entitlement to power.

In Australia, the history of colonial settlement shaped masculinity in the form of "mateship". In the frontier situation of the 18th and 19th centuries, men supported each other for survival (while keeping women at a distance, and with hostility towards indigenous groups). "In this situation, the famous Australian mateship is born, that particular kind of behaviourcode in which a man will do anything to protect or support a mate" (Tacey 1997 p135). This loyalty can be taken to trump all others. In other words, even when the mate has broken the law (Pease 2001).

Mateship also embodies toughness, and silence, which stand in opposition to emotions and talk about them (Pease 2001).

Mateship manifests itself in professional sport, drinking and getting drunk, "pack rape", and homophobia (Pease 2001).

In multi-racial/multi-ethnic countries like South Africa, the "requirements" of HM are manifest in different ways. For example, an Afrikaner man might be taught "ladies first", while for a Xhosa man it was "men first". But "both are based on an assumption that women are weaker and need either protection or assistance" (Horowitz 2001).

In Ireland, Ferguson (2001) observed that traditional masculinity was "essentially rural, based heavily around the family, marriage and celibacy". The dominance of celibacy, particularly for Catholic priests, created a "silence, awkwardness and embarrassment" around issues related to sexuality and intimate emotional relationships. Sport in the form of the Gaelic Athletic Association played a role in the "self-reliant Irish male body". The male breadwinner image led, an the extreme, to emigration to find work, while the home was clearly the domain of women.

These traditional values were challenged at the end of 20th century by the decline in power and status of the Catholic Church (including scandals about "paedophile priests"), and economic change (including more women in the workplace). Social changes included the introduction of divorce in 1996, and the decriminalisation of homosexuality in 1993 (though homophobia did not disappear overnight) (Ferguson 2001). Berriss (1996) quoted the insult, "If you're Irish and gay, your parents must be English".

### 1.3. OLDER MEN AND AGEING MASCULINITIES

The acting tough about pain aspect of HM becomes more important as men age. Chronic illness is a threat to older men's HM. This can lead to an exaggeration of certain behaviours to allow men to maintain power. Charmaz (1995) observed that chronically ill men affirmed their masculinity by controlling the one area left to them - their wives. "Indeed, the most privileged men may be least equipped to cope with age-based disadvantage, especially if other resources, such as wealth, decline as well" (Calasanti 2004 p311).

Advertising can play on the fears of ageing men losing power by encouraging them to strive to retain behaviours of younger men like active holidays, and, with Viagra, sexual behaviour (Calasanti 2004).

Calasanti and King (2007) analysed 69 anti-ageing websites for their portrayal of masculinity. Headlines like "Testosterone...makes you a MAN" defined "manhood in terms of having lots of testosterone, which they [websites] equate with not being women, and not being old. Hence, they advertise their products and services in terms of the themes of old age as sickness or disease and femininity as threat to manhood" (p361).

The websites presented manhood as under attack from the declining testosterone (despite any scientific evidence that this has an effect), and even used terms like "male menopause" or "andropause". "Anti-ageing advertisements offer visions of men triumphant: attractive to clients, seductive to women, strong with lovers, and competitive at work and in sport" (Calasanti and King 2007 p364).

With the appearance of Viagra, a re-sexing has occurred for older men. One advertisement for Viagra referred to men finding that "their sexual prowess is better than ever, and vigour, vitality, and libido is restored" (Calasanti and King 2007).

"Successful ageing" is an attempt to combat negative stereotypes of older people, but its emphasis on remaining active can backfire: "One strives to remain active to show that one is not really old. In this sense, successful ageing means not ageing and not being old because our constructions of old age contain no positive content. Signs of old age continue to operate as stigma..." (Calasanti and King 2005 p7).

Calasanti and King (2005) showed how "successful ageing" is manifest in images of older men who "lack two of hegemonic masculinity's fundamentals: hard-charging careers and robust physical strength". The images present a "new masculinity" in old age:

- a) "Playing hard" - Active and expensive leisure

activities are marketed at older men, thereby reinforcing the importance of maintaining the physical abilities of the young. "However, hollow such promises of expensive recreation might be for most men, the study of men's physical aggression and self-care suggests that illusions drive many indeed and that men will often sacrifice health and even their lives to accomplish this exaggerated sense of physical superiority to women and resistance to the forces of nature" (Calasanti and King 2005 p12).

b) "Staying hard" - An inevitable decline in sexual desire with age is no longer acceptable with the development of medical products to aid in "staying hard". "In the ideal world of these ads, age is a state of mind, one to be conquered through public displays of a phallic, physical prowess" (Calasanti and King 2005 p15) (which is, of course, heterosexual).

But there is a contradiction here within these images - a "classic double-bind": "...old men should, so as not to intrude on the rights of younger men, retreat from the paid labour market; but they should also, so as to age successfully, never stop consuming opportunities to be active. They should, so as not to be 'dirty', stop becoming erect; but they should also, so as to age successfully, never lose that erection" (Calasanti and King 2005 p20).

Another example of older men affirming their masculinity is through the rejection of the label "widower". As one man in North America said: "Functionally, I can't consider myself a widower... Maybe bachelorhood would be better. I simply see myself as a free agent and do what I please when I want to do it" (van den Hoonaard 2007 p277). The use of "bachelor" allowed the man to maintain his (hetero)sexual status (van den Hoonaard 2007). Likewise, another widower said, "Suddenly I'm free. I'm loose. So, therefore here I am, and I constitute a threat or danger" (to married couples as in a "lone wolf") (van den Hoonaard 2007).

"These responses conjure up the image of a free, virile bachelor rather than an old, grieving man who has lost his life-long partner. They highlight the absence of a masculinity script that would fit the participants' experience as old, widowers, and men... Hence, they resorted to masculine scripts that would more easily fit a young bachelor" (van den Hoonaard 2007 p278).

Cooking is an interesting example for widowers. van den Hoonaard (2007) found that her interviewees knew how to cook and did so, but, because of its association with femininity, had to emphasise their masculinity about it. For example, by not enjoying cooking or by not cooking certain "fancy" foods. "Rather they cooked masculine

items like roasts, steaks and potatoes. A few men identified the George Foreman Grill as their appliance of choice. You cannot get more masculine than using an implement recommended by this retired boxer who calls his grill, 'a lean, mean, fat-reducing, grilling machine'.." (van den Hoonaard 2007 p278). Other men simultaneously emphasised their former physical prowess when talking about enjoying cooking.

Similar "disclaimers" were made about housework by the widowers including having lower standards than their wives' had had or not really knowing what to do (ie: superficial knowledge) (van den Hoonaard 2007).

Throughout her interviews with the widowers, van den Hoonaard (2007) observed how the men "reasserted their masculinity through their demeanour, showing little emotion, outlining their career accomplishments, and contrasting themselves with femininity and women" (p279).

Bennett (2007) found that sixty British widowed men from the East Midlands and the North West in interviews showed emotions, but maintained their masculinity by the language they used in telling their stories.

Overall, the men who talked about their feelings (both about the death and their feelings generally) coped better with bereavement, and some men keep the grief private and others allowed it into the public domain. But "Talking about feelings is widely regarded as 'a woman-thing', a symptom for some men of 'feminine weakness'. Widowers who want or need to talk yet remain 'masculine', therefore, tend to acknowledge their feelings but transform their personal stories from accounts of 'feminine weakness' into examples of 'masculine strength' through the rhetoric of their discourse" (Bennett 2007 p351).

Bennett described four "rhetorical devices":

i) Control - Talking about the "collapse" of grief (loss of control) followed by the regaining of control over their lives (and emotions).

ii) Rationality - For example, describing the topic in a matter-of-fact way. "Mr.C" said: "Yeah, felt a bit sorry for myself... but I intended to get over it and that was it" (p353).

iii) Responsibility - Fulfilling their responsibilities is part of dominant masculinity, and the men would talk about keeping going for the sake of the children, for example.

iv) Successful action - Many men emphasised their successful overcoming of the "sissy stuff", like depression after the bereavement.

Ribeiro et al (2007) found a similar conflict to maintain masculinity in a "feminised position" among 53 older men caring for their impaired wives in northern Portugal <sup>11</sup> <sup>12</sup>. A number of themes emerged from the semi-structured interviews:

a) "A (wo)man in charge" - The men were aware of doing "feminine" roles, and referred to this ironically. For example, one man introduced himself to the interviewer as "the woman of the house".

b) Man/husband caregiver - The men referred to themselves as husbands rather than as caregivers, and presented their caring within the context of the duty of a husband. It was something that had to be done. For example, "Robert" described conversations with his male friends: "They tell me, 'Hey man what else can you do? You have no one else... you have your daughter but you know the way it is, it's your wife, it's your obligation. You know... Daughters may help you and go here and there, but you can't be like that, you must be at home. Neither she nor your home will be ok if you're not there'" (p309).

c) Power and the caregiving relationship - Caring was presented as a sign of being the "head of the couple", and, in the case of total dependence of the wife, the men had even more power. As one man said, "She now totally depends on me, there's no one else here but me".

d) Perceived social honour - In the local community these caregiving men were known, and it was viewed positively: "People see me doing things and say 'you're really one of those husbands... one of those husbands like all should be!' [imitating their voices]... Some of them get surprised with all this patience that I have,

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<sup>11</sup> Twigg (2004) noted the problem of male careworkers with the elderly: "Men construct other men as potentially sexually predatory - to some degree at least - and a general wariness often pervades male clients' feelings towards male careworkers, particularly if unfamiliar. This is reinforced by a sense that since carework is women's work, men who do it may be 'effeminate'. Male careworkers, like male nurses, do a job that gendered in a way that is at odds with their own gender... This can be both to their advantage and disadvantage. One of the disadvantages is that they tend to find that their sexuality is questioned. But like male nurses, they often find that they rise more quickly up the employment hierarchy, promoted away from the frontline of bodycare. The forces that take them up the glass escalator of gender are complex, but among them is a sense that carework in its bodywork aspects is not really a job for men, both in the sense that it is beneath them and therefore slightly shameful, and that those who do it, or who choose to remain doing it, are in some sense suspect" (pp69-70).

<sup>12</sup> It is interesting that caring in the public domain as in social work has been masculinised in the post-World War II years in the UK as an occupation with "bodies of knowledge and codes of ethics" emerged. Though this has been subsequently challenged: "Men in social work, like the nation-state, seem at present, to be unstably located somewhere between the domestic sphere and the transnational and global" (Christie 2001 p114).



this will, this thing I have for getting all the care work done..." ("Bernard")(Ribeiro et al 2007 p308).

Reich (2007) explored the ageing male and ethnicity/race in the case in the USA of a Black grandfather seeking to become the custodian of his grandchild. His "criminal" past and his flamboyant appearance led to the nickname of "the pimp case". Certain issues were raised about the grandfather's appropriateness to be the caretaker because of the manifestation of HM as a younger man (ie: "Black masculinity"), and these issues would probably not have been faced by a White man.

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## **2. WAR AND AGGRESSION AND THE ENGA**

- 2.1. War and aggression
- 2.2. Enga people
- 2.3. Construction of masculinity
- 2.4. Appendix 2A - Hegemonic whiteness
- 2.5. References

### **2.1. WAR AND AGGRESSION**

"Why people form military coalitions and go to war is an age-old question... [and] ... many disciplines have become involved in the debate over whether war or peace is the natural state of humanity" (Wiessner 2006).

From an evolutionary viewpoint, aggression by groups of males ("coalitionary aggression") allowed them to increase their evolutionary fitness by acquiring material resources and females. Writing about male chimpanzees, Wrangham and Peterson (1996) said: "The temperamental goal is to intimidate the opposition, to beat them to a pulp, to erode their ability to challenge. Winning has become an end in itself. It looks the same with men" (quoted in Wiessner 2006).

Manson and Wrangham (1991) used these evolutionary ideas to explain intergroup aggression with "imbalance of power" hypothesis. Intergroup aggression is opportunistic, and occurs when group sizes are unequal. Meeting a smaller group, the coalitionary males in a larger group take the opportunity to subdue them, and steal the resources and females. Thus "warfare" evolved for domination and acquisition. Evidence from chimpanzees is used to show the evolutionary basis.

But Wiessner (2006) emphasised important differences between early human (non-centralised, egalitarian) and chimpanzees "societies":

a) Humans disperse and mix by choice including marriage with other groups. "Acquisitive aggression disrupts essential ties: to hurt one's neighbours is to hurt oneself" (Wiessner 2006).

b) Male chimpanzees are strongly xenophobic towards males in other groups in a way that humans are not. There is xenophobia among humans, but it is limited compared to travel and exchange (both historically, and today with tourism, for example).

c) Rank in chimpanzee "societies" is based on aggressive dominance, whereas among humans other means are used, like skills prized by the group.

"In egalitarian societies, status is given to

individuals who provide benefits for the group; when they cease to do so, their demise is rapid. The fact that humans have several means to achieve status causes fault lines in warring coalitions. For example, young men with little political experience use warfare as a means to display physical prowess and willingness to sacrifice for the group with little regard for other outcomes. Older, skilled leaders try to channel warfare in such a way as to reduce losses and foster conditions conducive to economic, social, and ceremonial enterprises on which, in turn, their successes depend. Consequently, causes that move coalitions are usually ones that can be shared by all: the need to restore honour, to please the ancestors, or to counteract sorcery" (Wiessner 2006 p167).

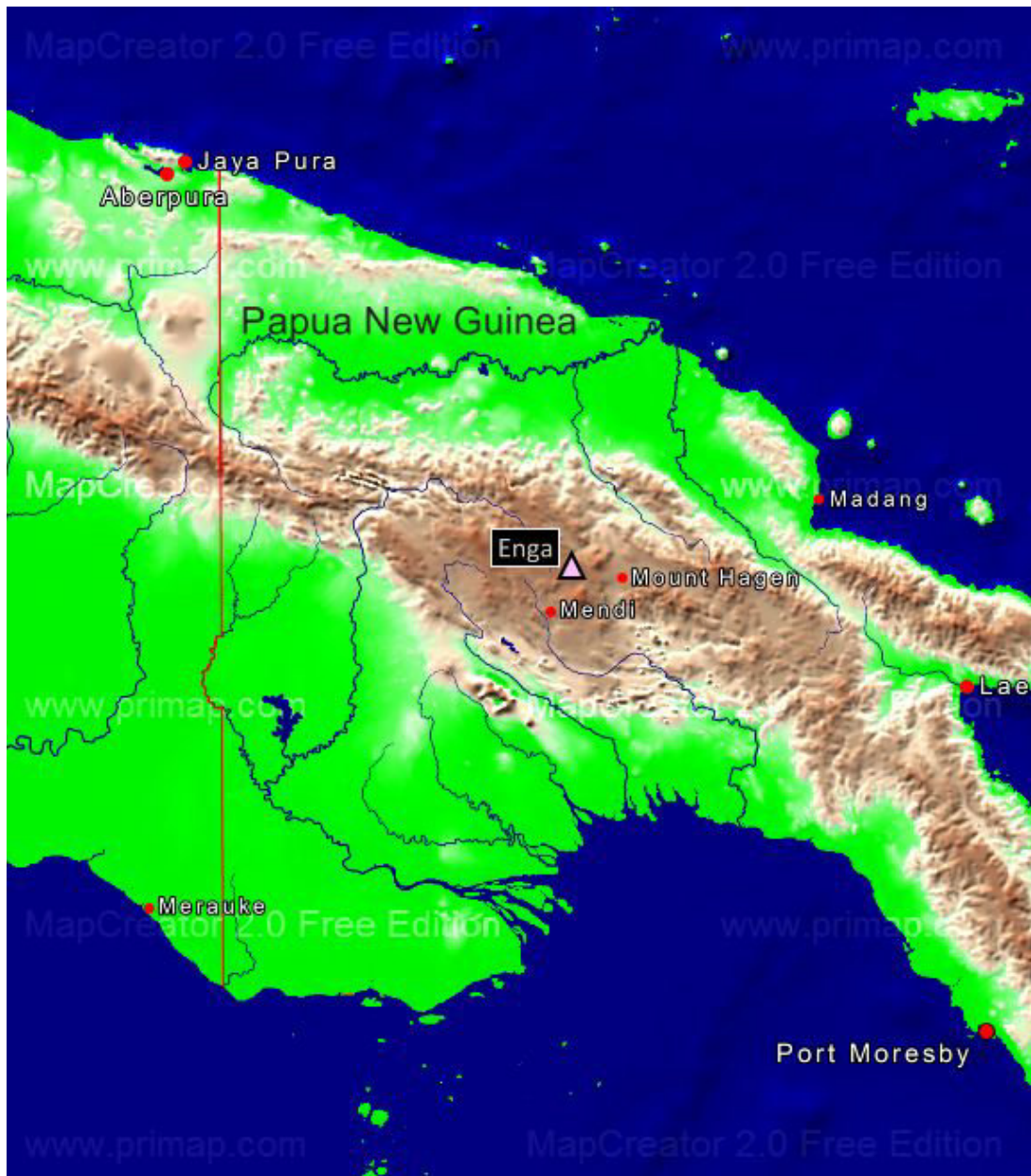
Based on these differences, Wiessner (2006) argued that early human groups did not seek to automatically dominate other (smaller/weaker) groups. Human reproductive success was furthered by security and stability ("balance of power"). Warfare was, in fact, "exacting revenge to establish such a balance" ("balance of power" hypothesis). "Balance of power through warfare may be sought vis-a-vis the enemy to restore parity or vis-a-vis allies to establish mutual respect within an alliance against a common enemy. When managed culturally, revenge restores reputation and equality so essential to reciprocity. Only with increasing population pressure, hierarchical organization, or competition over essential resources does the quest for dominance and acquisition of resources play an ever greater role in warfare" (Wiessner 2006 p168).

The motivation for revenge is what has the evolutionary basis (ie: re-establish the balance of power). Out of control aggression is costly as in the "war trap" (van der Dennen 1995). But this can be restricted by moral codes (eg: "an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth") or "cultures of honour" (eg: tit-for-tat retaliation) which limit the size of the revenge.

## **2.2. ENGA PEOPLE**

Wiessner (2006) used work among the Enga people of highland Papua New Guinea to support her argument (figure 2.1). This horticultural population traditionally places great emphasis on ceremonial exchange between clans, sub-clans, and lineages, and equality among men. Yet, in recent years, they have seen violence out of control.

Wiessner (2006) collected data on 84 Enga "wars" from traditional oral records (pre-European contact) and historical records (post-European contact from 1930s-50s onwards). Traditionally, the Enga do not laud war or war heroes.



(Drawn with MapCreator2)

Figure 2.1 - Position of Enga lands in Papua New Guinea.

Early "wars" (pre-19th century) were triggered by incidents like theft of game from traps or quarrels over possessions among hunter-gatherers, and usually led to the splitting of a group too large to co-operate. When this was achieved, exchange occurred between the groups. In the 19th century (7th and 6th generations in oral history), the Enga settled as horticulturalists.

"Many of the wars of the seventh and sixth generations were not only large in scale, but also extremely destructive. It appears that no holds were barred, and some of the larger conflicts went on for years or even decades. In the Ambum Valley conflict, it

is said that until recently one could still find the physical remains of a fleeing party of the defeated, all of whom were mercilessly slaughtered. The wars of the seventh and sixth generations were attempts to make order out of chaos in a period of shifts in subsistence and residence. However, with few mechanisms to curb violence, they created disorder. To restore the balance of power, secure alliances, and put evicted groups back on the map of trade and exchange, three large ceremonial exchange networks of Enga were formed..." (Wiessner 2006 p176-177).

The period of the late 19th century and early 20th century (5th and 4th generations in oral history) were based around whole groups where insult or injury against one member was taken as against the whole group.

Historical narratives from the end of this period bring tactical and emotional aspects of warfare into focus. Before going to war, a clan meeting was held to gain consensus and draw up plans, followed by rallies to dehumanise the enemy with songs and taunting insults. Friends of yesterday were transformed into sub-human foes of today. Virtually all warriors interviewed about pre-[European] contact warfare mention the exhilaration, sport-like competition, and feelings of brotherhood that warfare evoked - until somebody was killed and anger kicked in. A deeply rooted desire to avenge the death of slain "brothers" was backed by beliefs that an unavenged death would anger the ancestors. Where the real difference lies between the fifth and fourth generations and preceding ones is in the outcome of wars. For the first time in Enga history, traditions tell of war reparations that were formerly paid to allies only being extended to the enemy in order to restore peace without resorting to spatial separation (Wiessner 2006 p177).

Peace-making procedures to end "war" was now key, and men able to negotiate these were valued as "big-men".

Australian administration began in the late 1930s until independence for Papua New Guinea in 1975, and banned "tribal fighting". Post-independence saw an upsurge in fighting, but the triggers were now more likely to be alcohol, motor vehicle accidents and roadblocks, cash, gambling, and election politics. Homemade shotguns appeared in the 1980s along with other guns later (eg: M-16s). Wiessner (2006) described the situation thus:

Wealthy businessmen or politicians who live in the cities fuel the arms race of today to a significant extent... Driven both by traditional loyalties and a desire to enhance their reputations at home, they procure high-powered weapons, such

as M-16s and AK 47s, for their clans... Businessmen from enemy clans are then challenged to outdo their rivals in providing arms. For the first time, the concepts of "winning" or "losing" a war becomes central in narratives, perhaps because so many are killed that it will not be possible to compensate all deaths. Formerly, people had sought to terminate hostilities early on, so as to avoid high reparation payments. Triggering incidents for wars with firearms indicate the new imbalances of modern times - for example, failure to pay court-ordered compensation, and activities that incite conflict among youth: cash, alcohol, and gambling. Land disputes have declined radically after independence, even though the population has more than doubled and pressure on land has been accentuated by an increase in the cultivation of cash crops. Though politics ignite only a small percentage of fights, political alliances are the underlying causes of many wars as indicated by the practice of burning the schools, aid posts, or stores of clans favoured by successful opposing political candidates. Finally, a new triggering incident for warfare has appeared: deaths by "friendly fire" (p182).

Wiessner interviewed, in 2004, nine (eight men) young "skilled fighters" who now have status in a clan. "Those with reputations as good fighters were hired by clans of relatives and eventually by clans to whom they had only distant ties. When fighting for clans of distant relatives, they were paid in pigs and money and given access to women during their stays in the host clan. Clanswomen were pressured to sleep with fighters from other clans to encourage them to stay and then were praised for their sacrifices. Fighters described working themselves into a frenzy for revenge, driven in part by loyalty and in part by the tension of fighting with modern weapons. Some said that they felt half-human, half-animal during the fighting, living in the forest for days and caring little about food or sleep. When they had killed, they returned home, went through cleansing ceremonies, and resumed daily life. Those who received payment used it to cover needs of fellow clan member..." (p183).

Meggitt (1977) explained the "wars" of the Enga as motivated by the desire for land (a version of the "imbalance of power" hypothesis). Wiessner (2006) challenged this argument as land gained by victors was often left barren and unoccupied. For her, "most wars drew on sentiments of retaliation following insult or injury to pursue another social goal: to re-establish the balance of power necessary for enchained exchange to flow".

Unfortunately, the arrival of weapons post-independence has produce "runaway violence" where retaliation to maintain balance has gone. Wiessner (2006)



concluded: "At the moment, two opposing forces are struggling in Enga. One is composed of families with much to lose, who seek new paths to peace. The other is made up largely of youth, who have little to lose, who feel that the future holds little promise, and whose actions have come to be governed by the euphoria of fame from fighting and by the chemistry of revenge. With the destabilising factors of globalization and the cash economy becoming stronger every day, it is difficult to know how long it will take Enga to establish balance this time around" (pp186-187).

### **2.3. CONSTRUCTION OF MASCULINITY**

Aggression is closely linked to masculinity<sup>13</sup>. Andersson (2008) reported the analysis of an interview with 17 year-old "Salim" at a youth detention centre in Sweden. From the interview came details of the construction of masculinity and violence including what constitutes a victim and a perpetrator.

Salim does not use the term "violence", but "fighting" and "giving punches", nor "perpetrator", rather "troublesome" and "nasty". He presents himself as non-aggressive despite being charged with assault three times. Andersson observed that: "Being categorised as violent can implicate being positioned in a troublesome 'perpetrator' category" (p147).

He claims to never start a fight nor unwarrantedly hit or hurt somebody. Thus, he cannot be positioned as perpetrator as his violence is self-defence. "Being attacked by someone means that you have the right to defend yourself, using violence, without being held responsible for the violence, and without being categorised as either violent or non-violent" (Andersson 2008 p148). Nor is Salim a victim.

Violence also demonstrates that Salim is not a "non-man" (Whitehead 2005), but is potentially a "hero" (Wetherell and Edley 1999) ("courageous, physically tough, and able to keep one's cool"; Andersson 2008).

### **2.4. APPENDIX 2A - HEGEMONIC WHITENESS**

Hughey (2010) undertook interviews with males in the USA in a White nationalist organisation ("National Equality for All"; NEA; pseudonym) and a White anti-racist organisation ("Whites for Racial Justice"; WRJ; pseudonym). Both groups used similar discourses in

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<sup>13</sup> The construction of masculinity and violence has also been linked to racism in the form of "hegemonic whiteness" (appendix 2A).

different ways.

The main discourse of "hegemonic whiteness" involved "positioning Whites as essentially different from and superior to non-Whites" (p1301) (and was a response to loss of power as in hegemonic masculinity).

Hughey (2010) found different versions of the "hegemonic whiteness" discourse:

i) White victimology - especially in relation to "political correctness" in the NEA; eg: "George" (NEA): "poor whites... have been corrupted by all the undue excitement of multiculturalism... Whites are clearly victims of this social order" (p1295).

ii) Black and brown pathology - eg: "Joey" (NEA): where you put different races together, conflicts rise, standards fall" (p1297).

iii) "White debt and epidermal capital: perceptions of empty whiteness" - individuals use social relationships with non-Whites as evidence that they know what talking about.

Hughey (2010) also described the differentiation of "hegemonic whiteness" from subordinate/complicit White identity.

a) Affective whiteness - expressing appropriate emotions for groups: sadness at racism in WRJ and anger over "reverse racism" in NEA.

b) Conscious whiteness - challenging mainstream views.

c) Simplistic whiteness - simple explanations for reality; eg: "Derek" (NEA): "People call it 'racial realism'. It's simple. Blacks are more likely to steal, more likely to commit violent crimes, Whites have higher IQs. It's not rocket science. People try to explain these realities away with statistics that adjust and skew the numbers... (Hughey 2010 p1306).

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