Conceptualising Men: Collective Identities and the 'Self' in the History of Masculinity.
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Title of PhD: A study of the Hospitaller Knights of Malta, with reference to nobility, faith and masculinity, c.1580-c.1700.

The origins of the Order of Malta go back to c.1070, when a hospice was founded in Jerusalem to cater for the needs of pilgrims visiting the Holy City. Gradually, it expanded from being a nursing institution to become a military and naval one with the aim of fighting Islam and defending Christendom. As a result of this struggle with Islam, the Order moved its headquarters a number of times, until in 1530 it settled in Malta (until 1798). By the sixteenth century, the requirements to join the Order had become increasingly rigid, especially to enter the more important rank of knight, which was reserved for noblemen.

In this dissertation, I look at elite European noblemen who joined the Order of Malta, an institution of the Roman Catholic Church dedicated to caring for the sick and fighting for the faith. It is a social history of high culture, but one in which the Hospitallers repeatedly brushed shoulders with persons from different backgrounds. The Order of Malta – in parallel with the function of convents where surplus daughters of the nobility were settled – provided a highly respectable outlet for sons not earmarked for marriage. The process of becoming a Hospitaller was a semi-structured one, involving clear-cut (if flexible) social and financial requirements on the part of the candidate, and a mixture of formal and informal socialization into the ways of the Order. Once enrolled, a Hospitaller became part of a very hierarchical and ethnically mixed organisation, within which he could seek offices and status. The Order's motto 'serve the poor and defend the faith' encapsulated the Hospitallers' religious calling. The Order was contemplative and active, belligerent and curative; its members were not monks but religious laymen who took vows. In this dissertation, I adopted an interdisciplinary approach to bring

together the strands of the historiographies of nobility, faith, masculinity and the Order, with the aim of particularising the meaning of being a Hospitaller.

The conceptual framework of this study was that of cultural history; hence, I was particularly concerned with drawing out connections between Hospitaller practices and representations, that is, with understanding the multifaceted experience of belonging to the Order of Malta. I was influenced by R. Chartier's emphasis on practices and representations and P. Burke's focus on encounters and interactions.[1] Hence, my methodology involved extensive use of images, not so much as pictures of what Hospitallers looked like, as much as to understand how images reflect and shape meanings. Attention to the placement of legs, arms and objects and the inclusion or exclusion of beards in an image can help locate subtle elements in otherwise formulaic depictions. Two other books that influenced me were L. Roper's *Oedipus and the Devil* 1994 and A. Shepard's *Meanings of Manhood in Early Modern England* 2003. These works draw attention to masculine gender-systems and how their diversities, ambiguities and contradictions contribute to a fuller understanding of social relations. Roper explores how competing masculinities are shaped by age, sexuality and violence, while Shepard offers a flexible reading of patriarchy; this is based on a case study of Cambridge that highlights the necessity of considering age, status and the alternatives to the household-based model of manhood. These reflections informed my own concern with issues of male fraternity, conflict, and control among the Hospitallers.

In the title of my work I consciously opted to use the term 'masculinity', while in the text itself I used both 'masculinity' and 'manhood'. I am aware that the use of the term 'masculinity' has been contested when it is applied to pre-eighteenth-century contexts.[2] It is argued that ignoring the distinctions between 'masculinity' and 'manhood' and using them interchangeably, distorts pre-industrial meanings of being a man.[3] Still, many studies about medieval and early modern men have used the term masculinity – by itself or interchangeably with manhood – in their quest to understand gender as an aspect of

[1] Roger Chartier, *Cultural History Between Practices and Representations* (1993); Peter Burke, *Varieties of Cultural History* (Oxford, 1997).
[2] Elizabeth Foyster, *Manhood in Early Modern England* (London, 1999), p. 5; Karen Harvey, 'The History of Masculinity, circa 1650-1800', *Journal of British Studies*, 44:2 (2005), 296-311, at 301.
[3]Christopher Fletcher, 'Manhood and Politics in the Reign of Richard II', *Past and Present*, 189:1, (November, 2005), 3- 39, at 12-13.

identity and the related issues of power.[4] In itself, a certain fluidity of terms is not negative and can in fact be illuminating when sensitivity to contemporaneous understandings and subjectivities is shown.

My own use of 'masculinity' and 'manhood' reflects a belief that they both emphasize the contextual experience of being a man. The term 'masculinity' has that political quality that is necessary to underline the central place of gender in this study. In using the term 'political' I want to emphasize the cultural/public dimension of masculinity as indicating how meanings of manhood are forged through interaction with others and different forms of relations of power. It also makes the case for masculinity to be better integrated in studies that deal with the Hospitallers and other military-religious Orders. At the same time, the use of 'masculinity' does not mean that modern usages are imposed on sixteenth- and seventeenth-century understandings; rather early modern contexts, concepts and meanings are recognized and related to modern intellectual concerns. In the early modern frame of mind, religion informed everything, including meanings of manhood. Furthermore, the nobility from which the Hospitallers hailed had its distinct modes of behaviour. This is why this investigation about the Hospitallers looks at masculinity, along with faith and nobility. In this way, I hoped to blend rather than impose conceptual categorisations of men in the past. The study of masculinity involves looking at men as gendered beings, with an emphasis on the relational aspect of history, that is, on studying the relationships between and among the sexes. It also means that masculinity emphasizes the inter-connectedness of those societies being investigated; how any sense of self is created in relation to one's social and material environments.

One of my main conclusions was that the Order – with its peculiar mix of noble, military-religious and celibate ideals – offered a different gender identity to that available to other Catholic laymen. During the PhD viva, one of the examiners remarked that 'masculinity' was the most fruitful theme explored in the dissertation, but at the same time he argued that this conclusion could have been developed further if set in an even

[4] Clare A. Lees (ed.) *Medieval Masculinities* (London, 1994); Anthony Fletcher, 'Men's Dilemma: The Future of Patriarchy in England 1560-1660', *Transactions Royal Historical Society* ,4 (1994), 61-81, at 62; Jeremy Jerome Cohen and Bonnie Wheeler (eds.) *Becoming Male in the Middle Ages* (New York & London, 1997); D. M. Hadley (ed.) *Masculinity in Medieval Europe* (London, 1999); Merry Wiesner, *Women and Gender in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge, 2000), pp.304-5; Derek Neal, ' Suits Make the Man Masculinity in two English Law Courts, c.1500', *Canadian Journal of History*, 37:1 2002, 1-22, at 1-3; Alexandra Shepard, *Meanings of Manhood in Early Modern England* (Oxford, 2003); P. H. Cullum and J. Lewis (eds.) *Holiness and Masculinity in Medieval Europe* (Cardiff, 2004).

wider Counter-Reformation context. In response to the Reformation, a new and much clearer Catholic sexual model was developed for both men and women, with a strong emphasis on celibacy and chastity. Hence the Hospitallers participated in this wider model, with the exception of their commitment to legitimate use of violence to wage permanent war against infidels (Muslims in particular). The examiner therefore suggested that a way to further bridge the gap between the term 'masculinity' and this south European Catholic 'site', is to place greater emphasis on male Catholic sacrificial celibacy.

Since my subject matter was a pan-European organization, in the historiographical survey of 'gender' I addressed the different issues at play in various national historiographies. In British historiography, the predominance of social historical approaches for the period 1500-1650 contrasts with the prevalence of cultural history for the years 1650-1800, thereby creating a dissonance that can make long-term observations difficult.[5] In contrast, in the historiographies of France, Germany and Italy, this divide in social-cultural approaches is generally less pronounced and there has been criticism about applying "English lenses" to view the relationship between gender and identity formation in mainland Europe. Masculine and gender norms need to be considered within their local specificity; perceptions and experiences are culturally and socially constructed. Linking cultural and social approaches in the study of gender highlights the complexity of past subjectivities by emphasizing how ideas, practices, individual experience and local context interact to create meanings of manhood. The second PhD examiner remarked positively on my awareness of non-British historiographies of gender, but suggested that this needs to be accompanied by a similar approach to nobility. Ultimately, the challenge is how to deal with the elusiveness of masculinity and effectively connect cultural attributes and representations with social experiences.

There were many masculine norms which Hospitallers were expected to embrace: as nobles they were meant to display disciplined courtly attributes; as warriors they were supposed to demonstrate physical prowess. Yet their identity was further complicated by their religious dimension and vow of celibacy. Hospitaller masculinity was in effect at a crossroads between these different strands. The prescriptive literature outlined what a Counter-Reformation military-religious male identity should be like and many sought to live up to such models. Many times, however, individuals diverged from prescriptive

[5] Karen Harvey and Alexandra Shepard, 'What Have Historians Done with Masculinity? Reflections on Five Centuries of British History, circa 1500 - 1950', *Journal of British Studies*, 44:2 (2005), 274-280, at 275.

models to forge their own identity. In one instance – of a semi-secret sodimitical society discovered in 1716 – those Hospitallers who belonged to it actually shaped an alternative behaviour/identity, though their own particular badge, rituals and organisation. At the same time, enough Hospitallers were sufficiently committed to their Order to ensure its continued existence.

Henry French, History, University of Exeter

Conceptualising Men: Collective Identities and the 'Self' in the History of Masculinity

The obvious difficulty facing historians dealing with 'masculinity' in the past is that this modern concept parcels together ideals and identities that were not joined together in the period before c.1980. In particular, it implies a consciousness of the contingent, constructed nature of male gender identity – as a 'total' concept – that was only really analysed and discussed by R.W. Connell and others from the 1980s. This consciousness is the real point of separation between this perception of identity, and earlier formulations, even those critical of dominant forms of manliness. In this respect, we could argue that 'masculinity' has a distinct, 'political' dimension that links it directly to a post-feminist view of the world. It operates as a very useful analytical tool for the dissection of earlier forms of male identity, but cannot (as other historians have observed) be used simply to describe this identity in earlier historical periods without anachronism.

In this sense, I would argue that while we use the concept of 'masculinity' to study, analyse and evaluate the experiences of men in the past, and represent them in post-feminist perspective, we are representing male experiences in ways that our historical subjects would not readily have understood. This is no more problematic than, say, representing social experiences of pre-nineteenth-century groups through the idiom of 'class', but it is important to remember that *we* are constituting these experiences in this way, not simply 'reading' them from the sources.

So, *our* notion of masculinity is an amalgam, made up of many different elements, most of which contemporaries *would* have understood and recognized, even if they may not have configured them together as we do today. These elements might include: sexual orientation, sexual behaviour, gendered codes of appropriate behaviour embedded in religion, culture and social identity, values encoded in role models and educational ideals, understandings of the body and bodily difference (including physiology and 'psychology'), and concepts of difference and notions of 'others'.

We tend to use these different scales today to demonstrate that historical gender identities were actually multiple, fractured, inconsistent, overlapping, and fraught with tensions. It is certainly the case that the different scales do not match up, so that an individual's profile on one measure of identity (e.g. their confidence in their social or racial identity) might be entirely different to their 'score' on another scale (e.g. their confidence about their gender identity). This fits *our* perception that these identities *are* complex, and difficult to negotiate. However, it does not always help us understand past societies in which individual identities *were* often complicated, but in which notions *about* identity were often simple and highly reductive.

Sixteenth-, seventeenth-, eighteenth- and nineteenth-century societies assumed that matters of sexual orientation, gender identity, bodily categorisation, and 'maleness' and 'femaleness' *should be* relatively straightforward, even when the experience of daily life showed repeatedly that they were not. Again, we can draw another analogy with social identity. Commentators in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century England all agreed that the boundary between 'gentle' and non-gentle' men and women was real and important, but remained in perpetual disagreement about where this boundary lay, or even about how it should be drawn. The assumption was that the distinction was simple, and this persisted in the face of evidence that it was extremely difficult to apply in practice.

How did people cope with a value-system that, to us, appears ready to collapse under the weight of its own internal contradictions? Our research is beginning to indicate the importance of *boundaries* both in establishing the limits of social consensus about gender identity, but also in *activating* consideration of limits, which were generally unspoken and, we have found, apparently not often discussed explicitly.

In general, our male Gentry correspondents devoted very little space to agonising about their gender identity, or to asking searching questions about the apparent inconsistencies and hypocrisies encoded in their gender ideals. They were similarly negligent in discussing the role of women or their social identity. Why were they so unreflective? We suggest that it was because they lived much of their lives well *within* these boundaries, and interacted with others whose assumptions and behaviour were also concentrated within this 'comfort zone' – or, more intellectually, within a socially constructed *habitus* .

It was in these moments of *transgression* that required these people to think about values, and articulate ideas that could generally be left unsaid. Such moments of transgression often occurred outside the domestic sphere – either when sons were about to leave for school, university or foreign travel, or (often in reaction to such journeys) when correspondents described encounters with those beyond their familiar normative boundaries (other social groups, nationalities or races). These encounters with others could be occasions for introspection, and reflection upon personal ideals and familial or other role models, particularly when these were challenged, ridiculed or threatened.

These experiences produced expressions of identity that were often simply reactive – responses to a confrontation with a behavioural or normative 'other'. They rarely resulted in the articulation of a coherent, fully considered 'world view', because (then as now) most people probably did not carry one around in their heads. In view of this, it is not surprising that such expressions are often inconsistent, vague, or at odds with prescriptive literature. It was more important to be able to justify individual behaviour according to normative precepts, than it was always to follow those precepts to the letter, or that those precepts should link together into a coherent value system.

There *were* boundaries to the acceptable limits of 'manliness', 'honour', 'courage' and 'decency', and a degree of social consensus about the kinds of behaviour exceeded these bounds. These *were* policed, and enforced through the application of real, painful, and severe social sanctions. However, *within* these limits there was a degree of latitude, so that assertive, aggressive women could depict their behaviour as consistent with an ideal of active, protective motherhood, while passive, nurturing men could emphasize the caring dimension of their paternal responsibilities. Norms and ideals that contemporaries conceived of as unambiguous and non-negotiable in theory could therefore be open to considerable manipulation in practice.

Given this, though, why did contemporaries go along with what appear (to us) to have been increasingly tenuous norms? Why did they not appear to see them, as we do, as entirely social constructs that imposed a 'gender order' on a reality that was always much more fluid? This is difficult to answer, because we have far more evidence of individuals trying to cloak their actions in these values, than we do of them expressing any consciousness that such values were open to interpretation. We do have some evidence

of women reflecting ironically on ideas of wifely subordination, and conceiving of female household authority in terms of the 'power behind the throne'. In general, though, such roles seem to have been taken for granted. The reason for this may be because such values functioned like Bourdieu's idea of *habitus*. The gender order may have functioned as a series of assumptions, concepts and ideals that were so firmly engrained in daily life, experiences and routines as to appear 'normal' (even to those who found it extremely difficult to conform to them). Therefore, these values may not often have entered the realm of conscious self-reflection, and when they did, it was because the subject had encountered someone, or something, outside the bounds of the 'normal'. As noted above, while such encounters caused pause for thought about who, or what, was 'normal', they seem rarely to have challenged the view that the concept of 'normality' itself existed, or to have raised the idea that it might in any way be problematic.

These thoughts are still being formulated, and they remain slightly disjointed. However, our project is forcing us to consider such issues in the light of current methodologies. In essence, we are trying to come up with an explanation of why gender identities that look *to us* to have been so multiple, fractured, problematic and incoherent, and which (in practice) were certainly highly variable and inconsistent, appear to have excited *so little* comment, and to have been regarded as so matter-of-fact at the time.

Mark Hailwood, History, University of Warwick

Conceptualising Men: Collective Identities and the 'Self' in the History of Masculinity

I am rapidly approaching the end of my second year as a PhD student at Warwick, where I am working on a thesis entitled 'Alehouses and Sociability in Seventeenth-Century England'. It is essentially a thesis of two halves: the first, entitled 'The Alehouse in the Community', focuses on the ways early modern people understood the functions of alehouses in their communities, as well as their relationship to authority and the Church. Based primarily on quarter sessions court records, the main issues with which this section is concerned are: the political culture of the alehouse; the operation of the 'politics of the parish'; and the ways in which the alehouse might reflect social relations. The second half of the thesis, entitled 'The Community in the Alehouse', shifts the focus to some extent from these more traditional social history concerns towards those of cultural history: what meanings and values did seventeenth-century people attach to alehouse drinking? What can a study of alehouse sociability tell us about the identities—both collective and individual—of the people involved? This section of the thesis also draws upon court record material—especially depositions—for evidence of the practice of alehouse sociability, but also seeks to supplement this approach with an analysis of seventeenth-century broadside ballads. I argue that this particular form of cheap print may offer a real opportunity for historians interested in the cultural values and attitudes of relatively humble men and women, especially with regard to drinking and sociability.

This second section of the thesis will include a chapter (as yet unwritten) that explores the relationship between gender and sociability, touching on issues such as female participation, all-female sociability, mixed-gender sociability, and—most relevant here—exclusively male sociability and the relationship between patriarchy and male drinking. Alexandra Shepard's work has demonstrated the potential that a study of drinking sociability has to contribute to the history of masculinity, and vice versa, and her work was one of the major influences on my early thinking about my thesis project and direction. In particular, the notion of a 'hegemonic' masculinity—drawn from R.W. Connell—existing in conflict with 'subordinate' or 'alternative' codes of masculinity, seemed to offer great potential for decoding male drinking behaviour. Shepard suggested

that male drinking rituals based on the display of excess, prodigality and bravado were part of a 'counter-code' of masculinity that was developed by seventeenth-century men who found themselves excluded from the dominant code—patriarchy—because the latter was based upon being a head of a household, something which young men, and an increasing number of poor men, were excluded from doing. Instead, then, of basing their masculine identity upon the values of patriarchy—thrift, sobriety, industriousness—they exalted different aspects of behaviour as especially manly, such as the ability to drink and handle large quantities of alcohol. However, despite my initial hopes that masculinity might hold the key to understanding male sociability, as my thesis has developed so have several doubts on this front. The first was an outcome of the first of these workshops and relates to terminology: certainly, in many cases drinking had something to do with what *we* call 'masculinity' or the creation/display of 'masculine identity', but patrons of the seventeenth-century alehouse rarely made explicit reference to either of these labels. This has raised the question of how to reconcile an approach that attempts to recreate this culture on its own terms with a desire to draw on the valuable analytical tools offered by the history of masculinity and gender identity. Seventeenth-century sources do refer to the relationship between drinking and being a man: such as the conduct writer who suggested drinking 'unmans a man', or the ballad that described a company of soldiers drinking together as carriers of 'stout manhood'. Is a change of terminology the key? Does the term 'manhood' provide an answer? Perhaps, but there is the further issue that whilst drinking may in part be about displaying 'manhood', it is rarely exclusively so, and it becomes very difficult—and would perhaps be artificial—for the historian to try to disentangle attitudes towards 'manhood' from the complex web of cultural values (relating to class, age, occupation etc) that inform sociable practices and social identity. For example, much of my research so far has suggested that the values that informed alehouse sociability were articulated in response to difficult socio-economic conditions and the perceived failings of social superiors—rather than as an explicit reaction against the values of patriarchy. Whilst 'manhood' no doubt played some part in informing these attitudes, it rarely did so explicitly, and this begs the question as to whether changing the label really makes 'masculinity' any easier to identify in the alehouse?

I am also very interested in my work in the relationship between individual and collective identity. The cultural values and behavioural norms that are revealed by studying sociability are inherently collective: what we get is a 'group mentality'. What can this tell

us about individual male identities though? Did all the individuals joining in a drinking song or ritual championing the qualities of ‘manhood’ share a uniform and fixed set of ideas about being a man? Or did these individuals express one type of masculinity in the alehouse (one defined by prodigal spending and drinking to excess) but a rather different type of masculinity (pious, sober, thrifty) within their households? The issue here then is that even when we can identify attitudes towards ‘manhood’ we have a further difficulty of knowing what to make of them: were they part of abstract ideals of ‘manhood’ which do not reflect practice? Were they held and practised by individuals? Do they represent an exclusively cohered to code of manhood, or one of many codes which an individual could subscribe to, even though they may not all be compatible?

At this stage, then, I have more questions than answers with regard to how to integrate the insights of the history of masculinity into my work on sociability.

Tim Reinke-Williams, History, King's College London

Thinking with bodies

In examining how the physical appearance and clothing of women affected their reputations in early modern London, I became aware of how little attention early modernists had paid to the bodies of men.[6] This stands in marked contrast to medieval and modern historians of gender.[7] What follows summarizes what has been written and suggests how thinking about bodies would help early modern historians studying men as gendered subjects.

Although humoral theory posited that men's bodies were hotter, drier and thus superior to those of women, medical texts tended to emphasize the instability of the male body as well as that of the female. The bodies of different sorts of men were contrasted and ranked against each other, as well as against those of women and animals, and there was little consensus as to what constituted the ideal male body. As the temperate corporeal ideal depended on age, diet, exercise, morality, religiosity, and social rank, as well as time and the environment, only certain sorts of men could seek to achieve it.[8] Early modern men thus had some control over their bodies, but particularly for impoverished men at the bottom of the social ladder disease and malnutrition were not only physical threats, but also threats to their attempts to conform to dominant expectations of what it meant to be a man in corporeal terms.

Strength and reason were criteria by which early modern manhood was defined. Men were expected to use reason to control their bodies, for example, by avoiding emotional outbursts that resulted in 'womanish' tears. This is not to suggest that displaying emotion through crying was unacceptable, merely that tears had to be the right sort, and that men could give in to their emotions under certain circumstances. Signs of physical strength and courage were looked for in boys from an early age. Football and wrestling matches along with hunting, fencing and running offered opportunities for male youths

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[6] Tim Reinke-Williams, 'The Negotiation and Fashioning of Female Honour in Early Modern London', unpublished University of Warwick PhD thesis (2006), pp.32-114.

[7] On the medieval male body see Dyan Elliot, *Fallen Bodies: Pollution, Sexuality, and Demonology in the Middle Ages* (Philadelphia, 1999); Peggy McCracken, *The Curse of Eve and Wound of the Hero: Blood, Gender and Medieval Literature* (Philadelphia, 2003). On the modern male body see Joanna Bourke, *Dismembering the Male: Men's Bodies, Britain and the Great War* (London, 1996). I would like to thank Serena Ferente and Will Cavert for discussing Elliot's work with me.

[8] Alexandra Shepard, *Meanings of Manhood in Early Modern England* (Oxford, 2003), pp.47-69.

to demonstrate their manliness through competitive activities and endurance of physical pain. Being able to defend one's honour by the use of physical violence against other men was important too, whether on the battlefield, in the alehouse, or by duelling.[9] How far through the lifecycle it would have been possible for men to engage in such physical pursuits has not been explored to any great extent, and if physical strength and sporting or martial prowess were measurements of manhood, where might that leave the status of scholars and clerics as men? Certainly the potency, power and productivity of the male body was suggested by euphemisms which referred to the penis as an everyday tool and to the scrotum as a 'bourse' or 'purse'; by the imagining of sexual intercourse as a chivalric duel; and by graffiti of phalluses on the walls of public houses.[10] Moreover sloth and idleness were held to make men effeminate, suggesting that the praiseworthy male body, at least amongst the middling and poorer sorts, needed to be capable of labour.[11] How such beliefs changed with industrialisation and broader socio-economic changes remains to be examined.

As well as offering insights into gender and work, thinking about men's bodies might lead to a reappraisal of men's sociability. Alan Bray argued that the gift of the male body signified power and security between male friends, demonstrated through the exchange of kisses and embraces; through eating and drinking together; through sharing a bed or bedchamber; through the exchange of jewellery and clothes; through joking about the male body; and in some instances through being buried together.[12] Bray's arguments rest on a narrow range of sources and need further investigation. Drinking was central to male sociability and good fellowship, whilst being able to hold one's drink and remain convivial was essential, but if a man became so drunk that his behaviour became anti-social he risked damaging his manhood by losing his reason and descending into a beast-like state, for example, by vomiting. Moreover, drunkenness was held to weaken men's mental abilities, physical strength and sexual potency, and some men made concerted efforts to control their drinking. In corporeal terms it might have been worse for a man

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[9] Elizabeth Foyster, *Manhood in Early Modern England: Honour, Sex and Marriage* (London: Longman, 1999), pp.28-31, 35-36, 177-81. On crying men see Bernard Capp, 'Jesus Wept but did the Englishman?' (unpublished conference paper). I would like to thank Professor Capp for providing me with a copy of this paper.

[10] Laura Gowing, *Common Bodies: Women, Touch and Power in Seventeenth-Century England* (New Haven and London, 2003), pp.20-29.

[11] Shepard, *Meanings of Manhood*, pp.28-29.

[12] Alan Bray, *The Friend* (Chicago and London, 2003), pp.140-76.

than for a woman to be drunk since women's bodies were believed to be inherently unstable.[13]

Men's bodies also need to be considered in relation to hetero- as well as homo-sociability. Historians of courtship need to think more deeply about signs of affection and gifts of clothing and jewellery as references to such exchanges often emerge in disputes over marriage contracts. Going beyond the concerns of the courts to think about how the recipients of such gifts felt on an emotional level would be a major breakthrough. Certainly contemporaries regarded men who had fallen hopelessly in love as being like women, wracked with anxiety and unable to perform sexually. The prominence of cuckoldry as a theme in much cheap print reveals the importance of the body in defining manhood since the ability of a husband to satisfy his wife sexually and to make her pregnant, both of which were age-related, were seen as means of avoiding cuckoldry.[14] Indeed, fathering children was central to the imperatives of patriarchy. A man's blood produced sperm and transmitted qualities of character to his offspring, and blood was a metaphor for lineage and immortality. Fathering legitimate children enhanced a man's status, showing him to be a 'complete man' and blessed by God, but it was impossible for a man to be sure that he was the biological father and difficult for him to defend himself against charges of illicit paternity.[15] Moreover ejaculation was paradoxical since it combined the patriarchal duty of procreation with an effeminate loss of bodily control, whilst excessive sex was warned against as it risked weakening and drying up the male body, resulting in mental instability, premature ageing and disfigurement.[16] Thinking about biological fatherhood also raises broader questions about change in gender history. Mary Fissell suggests that the Restoration witnessed a 'crisis in paternity' whilst Lisa Forman Cody has highlighted anxieties about masculinity and reproduction across the eighteenth century.[17] No one has asked if the Henrician Reformation witnessed a 'crisis in paternity', but parallels with the sixteenth century would be worth drawing.

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[13] Foyster, *Manhood*, pp.40-41; Shepard, *Meanings of manhood*, pp.27-28, 66-67.
[14] Foyster, *Manhood*, pp.56-57, 67-71.
[15] Patricia Crawford, 'Blood and paternity' in *Blood, Bodies and Families in Early Modern England* (Harlow, 2004), pp.113-39.
[16] Foyster, *Manhood*, pp.73-77; Shepard, *Meanings of Manhood*, pp.26-27.
[17] Mary E. Fissell, *Vernacular Bodies: The Politics of Reproduction in Early Modern England* (Oxford: Oxford, 2004), pp.196-243; Lisa Forman Cody, *Birthing the Nation: Sex, Science and the Conception of Eighteenth-Century Britons* (Oxford, 2005). I would like to thank Laura Gowing for highlighting these developments for me.

By contrast in erotica and pornography the male body could be depicted as an object of adoration. In eighteenth-century erotica male genitals stood for whole male bodies, which were differentiated according to size, age, nationality and fertility, reflecting concerns about how the state of the nation rested on men's strength and potency. Attitudes towards viewing the male body changed over the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, so that whilst men could view muscular male bodies, softer male bodies had to be viewed by women. This allowed male bodies to be shown in states of grandeur and plenitude, but also as receptive and sensitive. In guises of hard erect completeness and soft, sensitive receptivity male bodies were depicted as beautiful objects of adoration desired by imaginary insatiable female viewers.[18] Such literature raises important questions as to whether an ideal male body was promoted and for what reasons.

In conclusion it is clear that more work needs to be undertaken focussing specifically on the early modern male body. In particular the corpus of primary sources needs to be expanded beyond medical texts, erotica and pornography, and connections need to be made to the more advanced scholarship on the bodies of medieval and modern men. The challenge for gender historians lies in refuting the myth of the immutable male body whilst not downplaying the ways in which women's corporeality led to their denigration in the past.

[18] Karen Harvey, *Reading Sex in the Eighteenth Century: Bodies and Gender in English Erotic Culture* (Cambridge, 2004), pp.124-45; cf. Sarah Toulalan, *Imagining Sex: Pornography and Bodies in Seventeenth-Century England* (Oxford, 2007) who argues that pornographic discourses could mock the male body too.

Alison Montgomery, History, University of Durham

'The robust male' and 'the stronger sex'. Or, men had bodies too.

Despite its great variety of interests, the history of manhood/masculinity has of yet had surprisingly little to say about the male body. We seem to need reminding that men had (and were) bodies, and that this was and is an important way of conceptualising males. The body might even have been the one overarching conceptualisation of 'the male' that embraced all men as members of one sex.[19] It was also perhaps the most fundamental facet of men's *lived reality*, both as individuals and as a sex, and the basis on which various other identities and roles were reliant. That it has often been neglected is, therefore, surprising. I would argue that there are at least three ways in which we can access and benefit from a medico-cultural analysis of the male body and men's bodies. Firstly, considering the male body as 'constructed' in medical literature, the bodily parts and attributes seized on as being paradigmatically male at a particular point in time, and the cultural values that might have been read into (or out of) this masculine form. Secondly, in the illnesses suffered by men, sex-specific or otherwise, the male experience that this reveals, and the lifestyle that such afflictions can hint at. Thirdly, men's personal experiences of health and sickness, the ways in which they chose to represent these encounters with the body, and the cultural codes that might have shaped this. My own area of study is Britain, c.1640-c.1780, yet I believe that these questions can be, and need to be, applied to men of all periods.

Should the absence of the male body from the history books surprise us? It is hardly a problem unique to the study of manhood and masculinity, or even to historical research itself. After all, how many people today have heard of 'andrology', the field of male reproductive health? Only in the past two or three decades have sociologists and masculinists managed to turn such subjects as male health care, the effects of masculinity on men's health, and men's sexual and reproductive anxieties and illnesses into legitimate and socially important topics. This interest is still to trickle down to cultural, gender and medical historians, many of whom appear to have yet to discover the male body and men's bodies. This is strange, as the current interests and paradigms of Western historical

19 In a historiography that, by focusing on subgroups and classes, often seems to identify only fragmented and divisive, class-based, 'masculini*ties*'.

writing seem to offer such fertile ground. The history of medicine pays enormous attention to gendered and sexed bodies and their 'cultural construction', as does the 'history of the body' to past thought on sex difference and sexual anatomy, with great interest in the cultural pressures allegedly behind these models. Yet these sexed bodies, with their culturally-inscribed gendered attributes, are almost always female.

The histories of medicine and the body then have made little recognition of *manhood/masculinity*, and the histories of *masculinity* and *manhood* acknowledged only certain facets of the body. Whilst women's history gives great emphasis to the female corporeality, both as 'imagined' and as a quintessential part of the feminine experience, men's history seems to primarily recognize the *social* male, with his various familial, social and public behaviours, roles and identities. Where the body *does* feature it is more indirectly and tangentially, in dress and gesture, violence, homosexuality or, in Alexandra Shepard's work, aged variations in the presumed capacity for rational self-control.[20] Other historical scholarship and literary criticism *does* exist – mainly on male aesthetics and the male *sexual* body, especially in pornography or in relation to impotence and eunuchism.[21] Yet what about the physical core of the body itself, men's physicality as a whole, the experience of being and having a (male) body?

What can we learn from printed medical literature about past ways of conceptualising the male body, the body beyond the sexual organs? In the mid seventeenth century it was the male *humoral* body, defined by its heat and dryness (compared to the moist, cold female), and the attributes and features that this in turn created - hairiness and the beard, a superior size and strength, muscularity, the deep voice and a more rational mind.[22] By the eighteenth century it was the product of fibres stronger, and nerves less irritable, than those of the female, which again created men's unrivalled strength.[23] Indeed, in both centuries (as before), men were ultimately conceived of as 'the stronger sex' (the phrase itself used as an encapsulation of their entire bodily attributes), designed for and needing a level of physical exertion that women could never achieve. This period may have witnessed the alleged great chasm between early modern 'manhood' and eighteenth-

20 Alexandra Shepard, *Meanings of Manhood in Early Modern England* (Oxford, 2003).
21 Angus McLaren, *Impotence. A Cultural History* (Chicago, 2007); David Friedman, *A Cultural History of the Penis* (The Free Press, 2001); Piotr O. Scholz, *Eunuchs and Castrati: A Cultural History* (Markus Wiener, 2001).
22 S. H., *Anthropologia or, a Philosophic Discourse Concerning Man* (London, 1680).
23 For example Richard Russell, *The Oeconomy of Nature in .... Diseases of the Glands* (London, 1755).

century 'masculinity', but medical ways of conceptualising, imagining and instructing the male body were surprisingly constant. Throughout (and beyond) the period, it was the beard and deep voice, with the penis and testicles, that remained the central medical and medico-scientific ways of conceptualising and identifying men, the 'markers' of bodily masculinity, as, furthermore, they had been in classical times. This was true long after they had apparently lost their humoral basis, and even though eighteenth-century physiology seemed to show little interest in providing any new biological rooting for these 'manly' features.

The male body as created in puberty was essentially a 'hard', and muscular one. Again and again, whether in health-manuals, natural histories, elite anatomies, or texts on the glands and illnesses, we see men referred to and summarized as 'strong men', 'the stronger sex', or 'the robust male'. Writing in the 1770s, the physician-novelist Oliver Goldsmith essentially described human male puberty as a transition from the soft, slender, womanly body of childhood to the firm, muscular form of the male 'Age of manhood', not complete until the age of 30.[24] This model filtered down into medicalised ideas of sexed proportion and male aesthetics, for '[t]he body of a well-shaped man ought to be square; the muscles should be expressed with boldness, and the lines of the face strongly marked.... Strength and majesty belong to the man, grace and softness are the peculiar embellishments of the other sex'.[25] These medical constructions of the male body are important in themselves, showing us the cultural and gendered codes and societal expectations that were read into/out of the male body. 'Men's work' was men's destiny. Yet, they also have wider implications for other sub-topics of manhood/masculinity, particularly 'sensibility', foppery and effeminacy, reminding us that these were not only cultural or sexual labels, but also had physical, medical underpinnings and meanings.

Men's health is also a neglected area, but its implications and significance can stretch well beyond the simple topic of well-being. There are numerous questions that we could be asking about the sick male body as conceived. Was the male body and its needs, functions, failures and subsequent recovery seen as being dominated by the penis and testicles, by its sex and the sexual body? Was there a notion of specific 'men's illnesses', and/or a particular type of man that medical authors thought the weakest, the most

24 Oliver Goldsmith, *An History of the Earth, and Animated Nature* (London, 1779), p. 79.
25 Ibid., p. 80.

sickly? And were such men, perhaps the 'effeminate' or the idle, the subject of authorial attack? My own research suggests that medical authors in my period did *not* demonstrate a notion of there being a specifically male illness profile, a distinct or distinctively male experience of illness and the body gone wrong. Nor did they uniformly single out idle and weak men, except as part of a general (and generally unsexed) indictment of gluttony and inertia. Never in their patient records did practitioners castigate individual sick men as somehow being unmanly or behaving in what they termed an un-masculine way. This does warn us against assuming that every aspect of the body, every bodily phenomenon, was automatically and necessarily conceptualized as being sexed. Surgeons knew about and treated testicular and (to a much lesser extent) penile ills, yet never seemed to develop any notion at all of 'men's illnesses' to rival that of 'women's illnesses'. Nor was there any *sustained* interest in the notion of certain ailments, such as gout or stone, being more frequent or more severe in the specifically male body, at least by the eighteenth century. Does this necessarily mean that there was only a weak concept of the biological and physical male, or that while woman's 'nature' was rooted in her biology (and the psychology that this produced), man's 'nature' was thought to come from somewhere else? Or, alternatively, is it just that men as a sex were expected, medically and culturally, to be hardier, less vulnerable, with implications for men's behaviour when they *did* get ill? It might be that a historian looking at pre-1650 or post 1800 sources would be faced with a very different situation to that of my period.

If we turn to the male body as experienced, it seems that the lived reality of the male body was not necessarily constantly dominated and dictated by those uniquely male organs, the penis and testicles. Men *did* suffer from afflictions in these parts (mainly hernia or testicular swellings), and it seems that many were resigned to the long-term 'management' of such complaints, usually with trusses. Perhaps many also suffered from sexual or reproductive anxieties and disorders, although these show up even more rarely in the records of medical treatment. Yet, whilst afflictions of and in the male genitals might have been an important part of the male experience, they were not necessarily *the* male experience or its only constituent, or in themselves what it meant to live with (and in) a male body every single day. Likewise, whilst some men did suffer from gout or stone (seen by some historians as 'men's illnesses'), the sick male body as treated by practitioners seemed subject to a whole range of *unsexed* ills, coughs and colds, aches, fevers and agues, ulcers and tumours. Less exciting to the historian, and unsexed, these

may be, but they were a key component of men's lives. That this illness profile was not unique to men, or did not necessarily distinguish them in any way from women (except for the occasional hernia), does not make it any less important to those interested in what it really meant to be a living man. Men were, after all, first and foremost human beings, and only secondly the male sex.

Yet, men's medical care can tell us about the experience of being male in other ways, with an important contribution to make to cultural, gender and urban histories. James Makittrick Adair, writing in the 1770s, thought that male mortality rates exceeded those of women by 12 to 11 (and 15 ½ to 12 ½ after marriage), but not because of men's biology.[26] Masculinity was, in effect, killing men. Modern scholars of men's health say the same. Adair pointed to men's hazardous occupations, both civilian and military, and a male culture of drinking as the cause of this. With no systematic method of note-keeping, and a frequent preference for brevity and personal shorthand, the medical evidence is ambiguous as to how far drink was thought to be responsible for individual men's afflictions. Yet, a surprisingly small number of men were receiving medical care for what were *recorded* as being the consequences of violence and brawling, creating a picture very different to that which court records and other sources can give. Instead, practitioners' records suggest that a surprising number of men's injuries were attributed to strains from heavy lifting, falls at work (often plasterers or glaziers), and accidents involving horse and coaches. At the eighteenth-century Edinburgh Infirmary a significant number of men had illnesses that they or their practitioner linked to hard work (the heating of the body by labour, or furnaces or ovens), or exposure (in itself or after the body was heated through such exertion).[27] Would we find the same in women (and to the same degree) or was this somehow related to a male lifestyle, to the cultural and economic role given to men as the stronger sex? Imperfect as the sources may be, they do offer at least one way of accessing at least some aspects of the male work culture(s).

It may be that the historian can never get beyond 'representations' of the body, but we can certainly attempt to move to what claimed to represent the lived reality itself. On the one hand we can consider how illness operated in a typically or exclusively male 'public' world, and its effects upon men's social, occupational and familial duties, their

26 James Makittrick Adair, Commentaries *On the Principles And Practise of Physic* (London, 1772), p. 83.
27 For example 'Cases & Reports from Drs. Monro, Cullen & Whyte 1763-5', MS 468, Royal College of Physicians of London.

professional identities or relations of dependence with other men. This is significant in itself, but we should also remember that not only at home but also at work, and, indeed, elsewhere in 'the public sphere', men had emotions, fears, and personal bodily experiences. What role did men's intimate, body-related emotions and anxieties play within or upon these 'public' relationships and identities? On the other hand, however, as the history of masculinity moves into the domestic sphere and family, the time seems ripe to explore other realms of male life. We can ask how the issues of health and illness helped to create a personal, *domesticated* male culture, one based around networks of sympathy and concern, the exchange of medical advice and consolation, and even the performance of medical services and personal care. Letters and diaries allow us to access men's more 'personal' experiences, how, when and why they became ill, how they explained and behaved during this illness, and whether they were able to acknowledge their suffering or felt forced (whether by masculinity or something else) to 'be a man'. Was there a particular male sick role? Or was illness itself, or choosing to take to the sick bed, a sign of mental or physical weakness incompatible with being part of 'the stronger sex'?

Although little has been said about the sexed body here, this should not be taken to mean that it was unimportant to conceptualisations of the male sex, just that men's bodies also extended beyond the sexual. 'Manhood' and 'masculinity' were not necessarily the only codes affecting both how men's bodies were conceptualised and how men behaved when ill, and not all of these cultural factors had to be specific to men. Yet, it does appear that conceptualisations and experiences of the male body were closely inter-related, in a symbiotic, two-way relationship, although not always the *same* relationship. It seems vital that we consider the body – and 'cultural constructions' of the body- if we are to understand constructions of the male and maleness.

Lydia Plath, History, University of Warwick

'Honour, Race and Violence in the Mississippi Slave Insurrection Scare of 1835'

My thesis concerns the rumours of slave insurrection that swept central Mississippi in July 1835. Deviant white men, with bad characters and dishonourable motives, were—or so the residents of the small towns along the Big Black River in Madison County believed—plotting to incite the slaves to rebellion so that during the resulting panic they could rob the banks and plunder the cities. These rumours were entirely unfounded, but within a few weeks, groups of white citizens calling themselves 'committees of safety' had examined and tortured an unknown number of men (both white and black) who they thought to be involved in the conspiracy, and by the end of July about a dozen white men and around twenty or thirty slaves had been put to death in Mississippi. My thesis is therefore about white men, and the ways in which they conceived of their identity as white men and constructed a notion of masculinity—one of honour—to which all white men, regardless of class, could aspire. As a moment during which white men not only articulated their notion of what it meant to be a 'man', but also demonstrated and violently enforced it, the insurrection scare is an opening, a window, into the lives of men in the antebellum South. Through this window, we can see how performances of honour (and its opposite, dishonour, or shame) functioned to create a cohesive community of 'respectable gentlemen' in the state of Mississippi.

Using the general historiographical consensus that men throughout history have had to prove their 'manhood' or 'manliness' in order to be considered 'manly,' 'a man,' or 'masculine' (as opposed to women, who have not had to prove their femininity). For example, David D. Gilmore argues that 'there is a constantly recurring notion that real manhood is different from simple anatomical maleness, that it is not a natural condition . . . but rather is a precarious . . . state that boys must win against powerful odds' (Gilmore, 1990). Using such ideas, I have developed the concept of Southern 'honour' made famous by Bertram Wyatt-Brown (1982) by utilising the notion of performance. Honour, put simply, was reputation—the public evaluation of a man's actions, and its most explicit form was the duel. This means that honour cannot necessarily describe how all white men thought of themselves in private, and it is problematic when applied to

masculinity among the enslaved or Native Americans. However, I argue that honour was considered the 'ideal' form of masculinity amongst southern white men of all social groups, regardless of how they actually felt and acted in the private sphere. No matter what ideas of 'manhood' or 'manliness' individual men felt in their own homes, they had to conform to the honour paradigm in public, or face violent retribution. The events in Mississippi in 1835 are an example of such violence—the men targeted by the committee of safety in Madison County were those who failed, or refused to act correctly; to perform their honour.

As my focus is on the performances of 'honour' of Southern men, I have so far used the terms 'masculinity,' 'manliness' and 'manhood' interchangeably throughout my thesis, but I may have overlooked the nuances of these terms. I would tend to regard 'manliness' and 'manhood' as synonymous, but with both having to be proved—they cannot be held by boys. 'Masculinity,' on the other hand, I consider an overarching (and therefore not necessarily useful) term for the cultural implications of 'maleness'—all men have 'masculinity' whereas they don't always have 'manhood.' This means that 'manhood' must relate to some kind of hegemonic or cultural norm for a particular social group.

Laura King, History, University of Sheffield

Concepts and Periods in the History of Twentieth-Century Masculinity

My thesis is on fatherhood and masculinity between 1918 and the 1950s. I am using two broad sorts of sources: those containing a representation of fathers (for example newspapers, films, novels) and those documenting the experiences of fathers (such as memoirs, survey material, interviews). As such, a key theme within my research is the examination of the relationship between conceptions of identity in public and individual's conceptions of their selves. In my case, I am examining how and to what extent versions of fatherhood promoted in public arenas were drawn upon in men's own experiences of fatherhood, and fathers' masculine identities. The relationship between fatherhood and masculinity is therefore another key consideration, and again of wider significance. It is important to explore the various aspects of manhood and masculinity, of which fatherhood is a key part. There has been a somewhat false division in the study of gender in history and beyond within which men are associated with the public sphere, and women with the private, and thus 'private' aspects of men's lives and masculinity have received lesser attention. In my research into fatherhood, I hope to move beyond this, to analyse fatherhood within masculinity as a whole, and within the wider framework of gender. Considering femininity as well as masculinity, as the two halves of the gender dichotomy, is of course important in research into men.

The concept of masculinity is therefore central to my research. Whilst this concept is more frequently used, and analysed, today than in the period I am studying, it is a very useful one in my research. In the period between the First World War and the 1950s, masculinity was understood as men's gendered identities, in a similar way to present understandings, though it is arguably more frequently and openly challenged and analysed in the present day. However, whilst bearing this in mind, I believe that this is still an appropriate concept to use, and certainly not an anachronistic term, as it may well be when applied to the nineteenth century and earlier. My understanding of the term is a broad one, and I use the concept to analyse men's gendered identities, men's conceptions of themselves as men, as opposed to women and femininity.

In terms of the periodization of masculinity, the First World War is in my mind a key event. The Great War is seen as a turning point in many histories, political, cultural, social and otherwise. However, it would be counterproductive to disregard its importance in terms of the history of masculinity because of its extensive use in the traditional periodisation of the twentieth century. Indeed, the First World War could even be perceived as the start of the modern history of masculinity. The nature and scale of the war led to a questioning and perceived crisis of masculinity, and the analysis of this in the aftermath of the war could be seen to signal a real change. Perhaps this is the point when the term 'masculinity' in its modern sense really becomes an appropriate concept to use historically, as opposed to terms such as 'manliness' that are sometimes seen as more appropriate in analysis of the nineteenth century and earlier. The First World War and its aftermath arguably represent the beginnings of modern masculinity.

In the period I am researching, there are several significant world events that cannot be ignored, such as world wars and a global depression. One challenge will be to analyse the relationship between such world events, which of course had a massive impact on many people, and individuals' and families' ordinary, private lives. The extent to which world events affect mundane, everyday events of family life, and fatherhood, will form an important research question. There are arguably two parts to this question. Firstly, these events will indeed have a direct substantial impact, such as a father experiencing long-term unemployment during the depression. Secondly, and more indirectly, the general state and climate of the nation, its politics and society, could arguably influence ideas about and discourses relating to gender and the family. For example, in Britain during the Second World War, public conceptions of masculinity were influenced by the perceived hyper-masculinity of the Nazis, and so accepted notions of masculinity for British men were 'tempered', as Sonya Rose has persuasively argued (2003). Thus, in thinking about the periodisation of the history of masculinity, and how it relates to more traditional and well-known chronologies, I would suggest it is important to think of the two as closely connected. Historians of masculinity must by all means consider developments regarding the history of men, masculinity and manhood in their own terms, but disregarding wider developments in society, culture, politics and the economy would be going too far in this sense, to the detriment of the pursuit of influential gender history. What would be beneficial is a greater understanding of the history of these concepts across long time-

periods, and greater communication between historians of masculinity of all time periods.

My research into fatherhood as an aspect of masculinity offers an interesting way into the subject, and a different perspective to the study of masculinity as a whole. As mentioned above, the more 'private' aspects of masculinity and men's experiences have been researched less than topics such as masculinity and war, and men in the workplace. Fatherhood is a crucial aspect of masculinity, common to the vast majority of men in some point of their lives, yet the role it plays within masculinity as a whole has changed rather dramatically over the last hundred years. In thinking about this relationship, it is useful to consider R. W. Connell's concept of 'hegemonic masculinity' (2005) and at what points in the century fatherhood has played a central part within hegemonic masculinity. This is not always an applicable concept, however, and in some ways this idea does not adequately represent the reality of multi-faceted, complex, fluid and fragmented identities that work together and in contradiction in a society to make up a loose public understanding of what it means to be a man.

For example, I have found a range of material that celebrates fatherhood as a part of modern masculinity in newspapers in the 1950s. This can be seen in the *Daily Mirror*'s focus on celebrities as fathers, and the many photographs of sports stars, actors and royals happily and openly being affectionate with their babies and children. In contrast, another masculinity was simultaneously being promoted, by such magazines as *Men Only*, which created in its articles a fantasy male figure who travelled the world, played sports, might occasionally work in the City, and charmed women along the way. This was reflected in the articles within the magazines detailing such activities by regular writers for the magazine, but was also by implication supposed to reflect the lives of readers. This is conveyed by the fairly regular encouragement for readers to contribute to the magazine, as well as an inclusive tone, suggesting the commonality of experience amongst all those involved in the magazine, from editor to reader. Fatherhood and children are rarely mentioned, yet of course many readers would not have fitted the description of this fantasy character; instead they would have been married men with children. This is betrayed by both advertising and cartoons, which are both designed to appeal to the 'family man'; advertising overtly, by suggesting appropriate Christmas presents for children, for example, and cartoons implicitly, by satirising married life. The

pretence is upheld elsewhere, however, and a clear 'escapist' version of masculinity is touted in such magazines, a theme which continues today. In this sense, perhaps the concept of hegemonic masculinity has to be broken down, and within it can be found a fantasy masculinity, of men's magazines; an everyday public masculinity, to be found in newspapers; and other conceptions of masculinity found in a range of public discourses. As such, masculinity can be seen as fragmented, arguably to a much greater degree than femininity, operating in the public arena on several interconnected but distinct levels. Arguably, in this sense, the idea of 'hegemonic masculinity' indicates to a too great extent a united and accepted version of public masculinity, to be rejected or accepted by individuals as they please. It is thus a useful term but not to be used too simplistically. The ways in which men drew on these various public conceptions of masculinity constitutes another key aspect of my research.

The relationship between these public representations of masculinities, and how men interpreted, internalized, and experienced them remains a complex and under-explored area. The conclusions I will be able to draw after extensively researching public conceptions of masculinity and fatherhood and men's and family's experiences should be of interest to the discipline of gender history and beyond, whether there is a clear disjuncture or substantial similarity between the two. This is a key point for historians of masculinity as a whole – historians need to combine the approaches and methods of both social and cultural history to write the most comprehensive and useful histories of gender identities, as Harvey and Shepard have suggested (2005). As well as researching the lives and identities of individuals, historians should also examine the cultural context in which identities are forged. It is impossible to fully understand the history of gender without examining how norms of masculinity and femininity are produced and shaped. If gender is defined as the social construction of identities, based on biological differences, it should be researched in its cultural context – the way masculinity and femininity are constructed in discourse – as well as in terms of social history – the way in which these identities are experienced by individuals. The way in which this can be achieved will depend on the period being studied, amongst other things, but it seems clear that this combined approach is appropriate in most situations.

In my research into masculinity thus far, I have therefore come to the conclusion that we must see masculinity as complex, fragmented and operating on a variety of levels. It is

formed in public discourses, both explicitly and implicitly, and in the experiences of men and families, and thus influenced by society's expectations, the necessities of family life, and by individuals' personalities. Any study of identities should recognize this, and strive to analyse the forging of identities in public and private, using a range of source material to analyse the representation and expectations of men (or women), as well as their personal experiences and attitudes.

Ali Haggett, Centre for Medical History, University of Exeter

Men's Health and Masculinity in Post-War Britain

The broad objective of this new project, funded by the Wellcome Trust, is to investigate the apparent rise of psychological and psychosomatic conditions amongst British men between 1950 and 1990. In particular, its aim is to analyse debates about men's health within the context of shifting understandings of masculinity. Cultural representations of the male role promoted responsibility, financial dependability, and obligation; attributes that possibly discouraged men from openly discussing the causes and manifestation of their problems. Exploratory research suggests that when emotional illnesses did occur in men, they often presented in primary care as somatic conditions that masked possible psychological origins.

Concerns about the social determinants of psychological health were explored in my doctoral dissertation (2008),[28] which examined the experiences, representations and treatment of neurotic illnesses amongst housewives following the Second World War. Interestingly, many of the women interviewed during that research recalled that their husbands had been prescribed psychotropic medication and often drank alcohol with worrying regularity. Minor mental symptoms thus frequently affected men, a phenomenon that was also reflected in advertising campaigns for psychotropic medications that were increasingly directed at a wide range of individuals of both sexes and all ages. Close examination of advertising for tranquillizing drugs, for example, revealed that while a number of preparations were promoted primarily for dyspepsia and peptic ulcers, they included a 'hidden' psychotropic compound for the 'psychological element' of `gastric disorders'.[29] Such preparations were directed almost exclusively at 'the businessman'.

The pressures on men did not pass unnoticed. In 1957, Helen Hacker, an American sociologist, wrote an article in *Marriage and Family Living* entitled 'The new burdens of masculinity'. In it she suggested that cultural and social developments in western society had begun to pose new problems of 'personality fulfilment' for men.[30] She observed that

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[28] Ali Haggett, *Housewives, Neuroses and the Domestic Environment in Britain, 1945-1970* (PhD thesis, University of Exeter, 2008).
[29] For example, the drugs 'Nactisol' and 'Pro-Banthine'.
[30] Helen Mayer Hacker, 'The New Burdens of Masculinity', *Marriage and Family Living* (1957), 19, pp. 227-33.

research into men's social roles had been 'eclipsed by the voluminous concentration on the more spectacular developments and contradictions in feminine roles'.[31] Hacker concluded that men were experiencing a range of 'new burdens' in the arenas of employment, family life, marriage and intimate relations, and called for academic enquiry both into the ways in which the masculine role was changing and into 'how men [were] handling these changes'.[32] In 1949, the psychosomatic theorist James Halliday had also noted that gastric disorders in men had shown a 'remarkable increase' in Britain, and suggested that 'emotions must be taken into account in any understanding of [such] affections'.[33] According to Halliday, 'something very peculiar' was happening to modern western man.[34]

Hacker observed, 'Everyone thinks they know what is masculine and how to recognize a "real man", but no-one can give an adequate definition'.[35] I take her article as a starting point for my discussion of the concept of masculinity since the Second World War. Although Hacker uses 'masculinity' in her title, the terms 'men's social role', 'masculinity' and 'manhood' are all used interchangeably in her analysis. As Tosh has noted, the use of the term 'masculinity' as we know it is a relatively recent phenomenon.[36] Unlike the single standard of manhood implied by the term 'manliness' in the nineteenth century, mid-twentieth-century 'masculinity' reflects a proliferation of identities and contradictory discourses.[37] These complex contradictions are indeed at the heart of Hacker's analysis and her varied use of terms is indicative of the confusion inherent both in men's experience of, and understandings about the male role during the post-war period. As she pointed out, although men were still expected to be 'trouble shooters on all fronts', and had not been 'relieved of the necessity of achieving economic success'; they were increasingly expected to bring patience, understanding and gentleness to their human dealings.[38]

Other contemporary texts and archival material from the 1960s and 1970s indicate that the term 'masculinity' is increasingly used to encompass the physical, the emotional and

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[31] Ibid., p.227.
[32] Ibid., p.223.
[33] James Halliday, *Psychosocial Medicine: a Study of the Sick Society* (London, 1949), p.52.
[34] Ibid., p.11.
[35] Hacker, 'New burdens . . .', p.233.
[36] John Tosh, *Manliness and Masculinities in Nineteenth-Century Britain* (Harlow, 2005), p.2.
[37] Ibid., p.3.
[38] Hacker, 'New burdens . . .', p.229.

the social.[39] However, although Hacker proposed that men were increasingly being persuaded to get in touch with their emotions; in reality, the concept of 'masculinity' remained firmly associated with the traditional male attributes of physical strength, the ability to earn money, keep a 'stiff upper lip' and conceal doubt and vulnerability. Any expression of male-to-male affection was also tempered by the enduring belief that homosexuality was pathological – as one contemporary commentator described: 'the spectre of homosexuality seems to be the dragon at the gateway to self-awareness, understanding and acceptance of male-to-male needs'.[40] The term 'manliness' was often employed in the negative – communication of feelings and emotions to others, for example, was seen as 'unmanly'. Childhood behaviour in boys was still expected to be rough and noisy, otherwise the child would be labelled a 'sissy' or a 'softie'.

My research suggests that, as a possible result of such constrictions, men presented regularly in primary care during the 1950s and 1960s with anxiety states and depressive disorders.[41] However, patients usually described symptoms such as indigestion or headache which were ostensibly unrelated to emotional distress.[42] GPs with a special interest in gastric disorder commented that peptic ulcers were more common in men than women. Although not seen as the direct cause, work-related fatigue, 'bottling up' and 'worrying inwardly' were noted as aggravating factors and as a cause of further complications.[43] Male patients were more frequently addicted to alcohol, and GPs explicitly noted that the 'inability to cope with job and work' led to accident-proneness, absenteeism, drinking and smoking and tranquillizer addiction.[44] Concerns continued through the 1970s in the medical and popular press in a range of articles that proposed links between men, executive stress, alcohol abuse, gastric disorders and addiction to tranquillizers and sleeping tablets.[45] Newspaper articles proclaimed that the 'skid-row'

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[39] Tosh, *Manliness and Masculinities* . . ., p.24.
[40] Don Clark, 'Homosexual Encounter in All-Male Groups', in Joseph H Pleck and Jack Sawyer (eds), *Men and Masculinity* (New Jersey, 1974), p.92.
[41] Interview with Professor Sir Denis Pereira Gray, retired GP and former President of the Royal College of GPs.
[42] Ibid.
[43] F Avery Jones, 'Clinical and Social Problems of Peptic Ulcers', *BMJ*, 30 March 1957, pp. 719-23; Personal papers of John Fry, B FRY C2-1, Research notes: peptic ulcers c1950-c1980.
[44] Dr T S Beveridge, 'Psychiatry and the General Practitioner, Working Party Papers 1956-1958', A CE G12-2.
[45] A headline article, 'The face of Britain', in *The Mirror*, 6 December 1979, suggested that the British were now 'better fed and better read'; however, they got divorced more often, drank too much and took too many tranquillizers. See also 'Middle-aged Pill and Alcohol Addicts', *The Times*, 22 September 1970, p.4.

image no longer accurately reflected the problem of alcoholism, which was now also a hazard of 'the professions'.[46]

The official start-date for this project was the 1st July 2009 and therefore my contribution to this colloquium is limited to the tentative findings of early research. Although the project is in its infancy, there are nevertheless already a number of sites in which the concept of masculinity is clearly problematic. Firstly, the project will focus largely on the experience of middle-class, white British and (to a lesser extent) American males. This will tell us little about how men from other social groups viewed the male role. As others have noted, a focus on the experience of class-privileged men leaves out the experiences of the great majority.[47] However, as early researchers on masculinity such as Pleck and Sawyer noted, advantaged men in the post-war period perhaps began to find that the traditional masculine pursuit of power, prestige and profit did not fulfil their lives.[48] As my initial findings suggest, one of the consequences of 'advantage' was ill-health. Secondly, it would be desirable to explore how men themselves gained a sense of 'masculine identity'. However, the prospect of interviewing a statistically significant and representative sample of men for this purpose is too ambitious for a project of this size. Findings will be limited to the views expressed in the media and popular press and in surveys (such as the General Household Survey and the Health and Lifestyle survey). I hope, nevertheless, that the proposed oral history project with retired GPs will offer an insight into 'illness narratives' – how male patients constructed meaning about their illnesses.

Since this research is in its infancy, comments and views on the conceptualisation of 'masculinity' as it relates to this project would be welcomed.

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[46] 'Alcohol is Hazard of Professions', *The Times* 24 March 1972; see also '40 to 50 Undiscovered Abnormal Drinkers in One GP's Practice', *The Times*, 12 July 1972.
[47] Michael Messner, '"The Male Sex Role": An Analysis of the Men's Liberation and Men's Rights Movements' Discourse', *Gender and Society*, 12 (3), June 1998, pp. 255-76.
[48] Pleck and Sawyer, *Men and Masculinity*, p.2.

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Male Cross-Dressing and Conceptions of Masculinity within Anglo-American Sexology and Society, 1930-1970.

My research examines the complex interrelationship between medical models of transvestism, defined by sexology and psychoanalysis, and social understandings of male cross-dressing during the mid twentieth-century. My current MA dissertation explores the influence which developments in sex reassignment surgery had upon medical usage of the term 'transvestism'. The project also examines the dissemination of medical knowledge to the public, considering the extent to which the popular media adopted the sexological taxonomies. My proposed PhD thesis investigates the changing interplay between medical perspectives of cross-dressing and emerging social support networks for male transvestites. Two important groups which I will investigate are Virginia Prince's American organisation Phi Pi Epsilon (Foundation for Full Personality Expression or FPE, established 1952), and its British counterpart group The Beaumont Society (established 1966).

Both of these projects explore regionally and culturally specific notions of masculinity and their influence in shaping constructions of transvestism within medical and social contexts. In defining the characteristics of transvestism, sex researchers described how the 'perversion' deviated from conventional masculine behaviour. In doing so, the sexologists detailed occupations, hobbies, mannerisms, etc. which were associated with manliness and the male sex. However, the conceptions of what defined being male and female varied between the two nations, and models of transvestism proposed by sexologists were informed by the researchers' own cultural backgrounds. Models of transvestism offered by American based sexologists, such as Harry Benjamin and David O. Cauldwell, were therefore distinct in comparison to the perceptions provided by British researchers like Clifford Allen and John Randell.

The different ways in which disparate cultures understood masculinity also directed the depiction of male cross-dressing within the popular media. Analysing the press reaction to transvestism reveals national differences in how masculinity was conceived by American and British newspapers and how male cross-dressing was presented to the

wider public. Through examining press clippings it is also possible to examine how the different types of media, such as broadsheet newspapers, tabloids, magazines, and television, understood masculinity. This also enables us to explore how male cross-dressing was perceived by the diverse audiences of these varied forms of media, providing insight into how people from different classes, as well as different political leanings, viewed masculinity.

Multiple conceptions of masculine aspirations were also significant in forming the objectives of transvestite support groups, and therefore in constructing a myriad of transvestite identities. Male transvestites from the two countries understood themselves in relation to perceptions of masculinity (as well as femininity) which were unique to their own regional, racial, political, class and religious backgrounds. This is evident through examining autobiographical accounts from male cross-dressers published in specialist transvestite magazines such as *Transvestia* and the *Beaumont Bulletin* published during the 1950s and 1960s.