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BEYOND PATRIARCHY ESSAYS BY MEN ON PLEASURE, POWER, AND CHANGE

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The Construction of Masculinity and the Triad of Men's Violence

Michael Kaufman

The all too familiar story: a woman raped, a wife battered, a lover abused. With a sense of immediacy and anger, the women's liberation movement has pushed the many forms of men's violence against women—from the most overt to the most subtle in form—into popular consciousness and public debate. These forms of violence are one aspect of our society's domination by men that, in outcome, if not always in design, reinforce that domination. The act of violence is many things at once. At the same instant it is the individual man acting out relations of sexual power; it is the violence of a society—a hierarchical, authoritarian, sexist, class-divided, militarist, racist, impersonal, crazy society—being focused through an individual man onto an individual woman. In the psyche of the individual man it might be his denial of social powerlessness through an act of aggression. In total these acts of violence are like a ritualized acting out of our social relations of power: the dominant and the weaker, the powerful and the powerless, the active and the passive ... the masculine and the feminine.

For men, listening to the experience of women as the objects of men's violence is to shatter any complacency about the sex-based status quo. The power and anger of women's responses force us to rethink the things we discovered when we were very young. When I was eleven or twelve years old a friend told me the difference between fucking and raping. It was simple: with rape you tied the woman to a tree. At the time the anatomical details were still a little vague, but in either case it was something "we" supposedly did. This knowledge was just one part of an education, started years before, about the relative power and privileges of men and women. I remember laughing when my friend explained all that to me. Now I shudder. The difference in my responses is partially that, at

twelve, it was part of the posturing and pretense that accompanied my passage into adolescence. Now, of course, I have a different vantage point on the issue. It is the vantage point of an adult, but more importantly my view of the world is being reconstructed by the intervention of that majority whose voice has been suppressed: the women.

This relearning of the reality of men's violence against women evokes many deep feelings and memories for men. As memories are recalled and recast, a new connection becomes clear: violence by men against women is only one corner of a triad of men's violence. The other two corners are violence against other men and violence against oneself.

On a psychological level the pervasiveness of violence is the result of what Herbert Marcuse called the "surplus repression" of our sexual and emotional desires.¹ The substitution of violence for desire (more precisely, the transmutation of violence into a form of emotionally gratifying activity) happens unequally in men and women. The construction of masculinity involves the construction of "surplus aggressiveness." The social context of this triad of violence is the institutionalization of violence in the operation of most aspects of social, economic, and political life.

The three corners of the triad reinforce one another. The first corner—violence against women—cannot be confronted successfully without simultaneously challenging the other two corners of the triad. And all this requires a dismantling of the social feeding ground of violence: patriarchal, heterosexist, authoritarian, class societies. These three corners and the societies in which they blossom feed on each other. And together, we surmise, they will fall.

THE SOCIAL AND INDIVIDUAL NATURE OF VIOLENCE AND AGGRESSION

Origins of Violence

The most vexing question in the matter of men's violence is, of course, its biological roots. It would be very useful to know whether men in particular, or humans in general, are biologically (for example, genetically or hormonally) predisposed to acts of violence against other humans.

From the outset, feminism has been careful to draw a distinction between sex and gender. The strictly biological differences between the sexes form only the substrate for a society's construction of people with gender. Indeed, the appeal of feminism to many men, in addition to the desire to

ally ourselves with the struggle of our sisters against oppression, has been to try to dissociate "male" from "masculine." While many of the characteristics associated with masculinity are valuable human traits—strength, daring, courage, rationality, intellect, sexual desire—the distortion of these traits in the masculine norm and the exclusion of other traits (associated with femininity) are oppressive and destructive. The process of stuffing oneself into the tight pants of masculinity is a difficult one for all men, even if it is not consciously experienced as such.

But the actual relation of sex and gender is problematic. For one thing, what might be called the "gender craft" of a society does its work on biological entities—entities whose ultimate source of pleasure and pain is their bodies.² What makes the relationship between sex and gender even more difficult to understand is that the production of gender is itself an incredibly complex and opaque process. As Michele Barrett and Mary McIntosh point out, although stereotypical roles do exist, each individual is not "the passive victim of a monolithically imposed system."³

In recent years there has been a major attempt to reclaim for biology the social behaviour of human beings. Sociobiology aims at nothing less than the reduction of human social interaction to our genetic inheritance. The study of apes, aardvarks, and tapeworms as a means of discerning the true nature of humans is almost surprising in its naivete, but at times it is socially dangerous in its conception and execution. As many critics have pointed out, it ignores what is unique about human beings: our construction of ever-changing social orders.⁴

Indeed, humans are animals—physical creatures subject to the requirements of genes, cells, organs, and hormones of every description. Yet we do not have a comprehensive understanding of how these things shape behavior and, even if we did, behavior is just a small, fragmented moment to be understood within the larger realm of human desire and motivation. Even if we did have a more comprehensive knowledge, what is important is that humans, unlike apes or even the glorious ant, live in constantly evolving and widely differing societies. Since the era when humans came into existence, our history has been a movement *away* from an unmediated, "natural," animal existence.

Even if we could ascertain that humans in general, or men in particular, are predisposed to building neutron bombs, this does not help us answer the much more important question of how each society shapes, limits, or accentuates this tendency. To take only the question of violence, why, as

societies develop, does violence seem to move from something isolated and often ritualistic in its expression to a pervasive feature of everyday life? And why are some forms of physical violence so widely accepted (corporal punishment of children, for example) while others are not (such as physical attacks on pharaohs, presidents, and pontiffs)?

That much said let us also say this: there is no psychological, biological, or social evidence to suggest that humans are *not* pre-disposed to aggression and even violence. On the other hand, a predisposition to cooperation and peacefulness is also entirely possible. It is even possible that men—for reasons of hormones—are biologically more aggressive and prone to violence than women. We do not know the answer for the simple reason that the men we examine do not exist outside societies.⁵

But in any case, the important question is what societies do with the violence. What forms of violence are socially sanctioned or socially tolerated? What forms of violence seem built into the very structure of our societies? The process of human social development has been one of restraining, repressing, forming, informing, channeling, and transforming various biological tendencies. Could it not be that this process of repression has been a very selective one? Perhaps the repression of certain impulses and the denial of certain needs aggravate other impulses. I think of the man who feels he has no human connections in his life and who goes out and rapes a woman. In spite of a general feminist rejection of sociobiology, this pseudo-science receives a strange form of support among some feminists. In her book, *Against Our Will. Men, Women and Rape*, Susan Brownmiller argues, not only that violent, male aggression is psychologically innate, but that it is grounded in male anatomy. And conversely, the view of female sexuality appears to be one of victimization and powerlessness. She argues, “By anatomical fiat—the inescapable construction of their genital organs—the human male was a natural predator and the human female served as his natural prey.”⁶ Alice Echols suggests that many cultural feminists also tend to repeat many traditional, stereotypical images of men and women.⁷

The essential question for us is not whether men are predisposed to violence, but what society does with this violence. Why has the linchpin of so many societies been the manifold expression of violence perpetrated disproportionately by men? Why are so many forms of violence sanctioned or even encouraged? Exactly what is the nature of violence? And how are patterns of violence and the quest for domination built up and reinforced?

The Social Context

For every apparently individual act of violence there is a social context. This is not to say there are no pathological acts of violence, but even in that case the “language” of the violent act, the way the violence manifests itself, can only be understood within a certain social experience. We are interested here in the manifestations of violence that are accepted as more or less normal, even if reprehensible: fighting, war, rape, assault, psychological abuse, and so forth. What is the context of men’s violence in the prevalent social orders of today?

Violence has long been institutionalized as an acceptable means of solving conflicts. But now the vast apparatus of policing and war making maintained by countries the world over pose a threat to the future of life itself.

“Civilized” societies have been built and shaped through the decimation, containment, and exploitation of other peoples: extermination of native populations, colonialism, and slavery. “I am talking,” writes Aime Cesaire, “about societies drained of their essence, cultures trampled underfoot, institutions undermined, lands confiscated, religions smashed, magnificent artistic creations destroyed, extraordinary possibilities wiped out. ... I am talking about millions... sacrificed.”⁸

Our relationship with the natural environment has often been described with the metaphor of rape. An attitude of conquering nature, of mastering an environment waiting to be exploited for profit, has great consequences when we possess a technology capable of permanently disrupting an ecological balance shaped over hundreds of millions of years.

The daily work life of industrial, class societies is one of violence. Violence poses as economic rationality as some of us are turned into extensions of machines, while others become brains detached from bodies. Our industrial process becomes the modern-day rack of torture where we are stretched out of shape and ripped limb from limb. It is violence that exposes workers to the danger of chemicals, radiation, machinery, speedup, and muscle strain. It is violence that condemns the majority to work to exhaustion for forty or fifty years and then to be thrown into society’s garbage bin for the old and used-up.

The racism, sexism, and heterosexism that have been institutionalized in our societies are socially regulated acts of violence. Our cities themselves are a violation, not only of nature, but of human

community and the human relationship with nature. As the architect Frank Lloyd Wright said, "To look at the plan of a great City is to look at something like the cross-section of a fibrous tumor."⁹

Our cities, our social structure, our work life, our relation with nature, our history, are more than a backdrop to the prevalence of violence. They are violence; violence in an institutionalized form encoded into physical structures and socioeconomic relations. Much of the sociological analysis of violence in our societies implies simply that violence is learned by witnessing and experiencing social violence: man kicks boy, boy kicks dog.¹⁰ Such experiences of transmitted violence are a reality, as the analysis of wife battering indicates, for many batterers were themselves abused as children. But more essential is that our personalities and sexuality, our needs and fears, our strengths and weaknesses, our selves are created—not simply learned—through our lived reality. The violence of our social order nurtures a psychology of violence, which in turn reinforces the social, economic and political structures of violence. The ever-increasing demands of civilization and the constant building upon inherited structures of violence suggest that the development of civilization has been inseparable from a continuous increase in violence against humans and our natural environment.

It would be easy, yet ultimately not very useful, to slip into a use of the term "violence" as a metaphor for all our society's antagonisms, contradictions, and ills. For now, let us leave aside the social terrain and begin to unravel the nature of so-called individual violence.

THE TRIAD OF MEN'S VIOLENCE

The longevity of the oppression of women must be based on something more than conspiracy, something more complicated than biological handicap and more durable than economic exploitation (although in differing degrees all these may feature.)
Juliet Mitchell¹¹

It seems impossible to believe that mere greed could hold men to such a steadfastness of purpose.
Joseph Conrad¹²

The field in which the triad of men's violence is situated is a society, or

societies, grounded in structures of domination and control. Although at times this control is symbolized and embodied in the individual father—patriarchy, by definition it is more important to emphasize that patriarchal structures of authority, domination, and control are diffused throughout social, economic, political, and ideological activities and in our relations to the natural environment. Perhaps more than in any previous time during the long epoch of patriarchy, authority does *not* rest with the father, at least in much of the advanced capitalist and noncapitalist world. This has led more than one author to question the applicability of the term patriarchy.¹³

But I think it still remains useful as a broad, descriptive category. In this sense Jessica Benjamin speaks of the current reign of patriarchy without the father. "The form of domination peculiar to this epoch expresses itself not directly as authority but indirectly as the transformation of all relationships and activity into objective, instrumental, depersonalized forms."¹⁴

The structures of domination and control form not simply the background to the triad of violence, but generate, and in turn are nurtured by, this violence. These structures refer both to our social relations and to our interaction with our natural environment. The relation between these two levels is obviously extremely complex. It appears that violence against nature—that is, the impossible and disastrous drive to dominate and conquer the natural world—is integrally connected with domination among humans. Some of these connections are quite obvious. One thinks of the bulldozing of the planet for profit in capitalist societies, societies characterized by the dominance of one class over others. But the link between the domination of nature and structures of domination of humans go beyond this. Various writers make provocative suggestions about the nature of this link.

Max Horkheimer and T.W. Adorno argue that the domination of humans by other humans creates the preconditions for the domination of nature.¹⁵ An important subtheme of Mary O'Brien's book *The Politics of Reproduction* is that men "have understood their separation from nature and their need to mediate this separation ever since that moment in dark prehistory when the idea of paternity took hold in the human mind. Patriarchy is the power to transcend natural realities with historical, man-made realities. This is the potency principle in its primordial form."¹⁶ Simone de Beauvoir says that the ambivalent feelings of men toward nature are carried over onto their feelings toward women, who are seen as

embodying nature. “Now ally, now enemy, she appears as the dark chaos from whence life wells up, as this life itself, and as the over-yonder toward which life tends.”¹⁷ Violence against nature, like violence against women, violence against other men, and violence against oneself, is in part related to what Sidney Jourard calls the lethal aspects of masculinity.¹⁸

The Individual Reproduction of Male Domination

*No man is born a butcher.
Bertolt Brecht*¹⁹

In a male-dominated society men have a number of privileges. Compared to women we are free to walk the streets at night, we have traditionally escaped domestic labor, and on average we have higher wages, better jobs, and more power. But these advantages in themselves cannot explain the individual reproduction of the relations of male domination, that is, why the individual male from a very early age embraces masculinity. The embracing of masculinity is not only a “socialization” into a certain gender role, as if there is a pre-formed human being who learns a role that he then plays for the rest of his life. Rather, through his psychological development he embraces and takes into himself a set of gender-based social relations: the person that is created through the process of maturation becomes the personal embodiment of those relations. By the time the child is five or six years old, the basis for lifelong masculinity has already been established.

Two factors, intrinsic to humans and human development, form the basis for the individual acquisition of gender. These conditions do not explain the existence of gender: they are simply preconditions for its individual acquisition.

The first factor is the malleability of human desires. For the infant all bodily activities—touch, sight, smell, sound, taste, thought—are potential sources of sexual pleasure. Or rather, they *are* sexual pleasure in the sense of our ability to obtain pleasure from our bodies. But this original polysexuality is limited, shaped, and repressed through the maturation process that is necessary to meet the demands of the natural and social world. Unlike other animals our sexuality is not simply instinct: it is individually and socially constructed. It is because of this, and because of the human’s capacity to think and construct societies and ideologies, that

gender can exist in differentiation from biological sex.

As Herbert Marcuse and, following him, Gad Horowitz have pointed out, the demands of societies of domination—of “surplus-repressive” societies—progressively narrow down sexuality into genital contact, with a heterosexual norm. (Marcuse argues that a certain “basic repression”—a damming up or deflection—of human desires is necessary for any conceivable human association. But in addition to this, hierarchical and authoritarian societies require a “surplus repression” to maintain structures of domination.)²⁰

This narrowing down onto genital contact is not simply a natural genital preference but is the blocking of energy from a whole range of forms of pleasure (including “mental” activities). And for reasons discussed elsewhere in this volume by Horowitz and Kaufman, the acquisition of the dominant form of masculinity is an enhancement of forms of pleasure associated with activity and the surplus repression of our ability to experience pleasure passively.

We try to compensate for this surplus repression with the pleasures and preoccupations of work, play, sports, and culture. But these are not sufficient to offset the severe limits placed on love and desire. To put this crudely, a two-day weekend cannot emotionally compensate for five days of a deadening job. And what is more, these social activities are themselves sources of struggle and tension.

The second factor that forms the basis for the individual’s acquisition of gender is that the prolonged period of human childhood results in powerful attachments to parental figures. The passionate bonding of the young child to the primary parental figures obtains its particular power and salience for our personal development in societies where isolated women have the primary responsibility for nurturing infants and children, where the child’s relation with the world is mediated most strongly through a small family rather than through a small community as a whole, and in which traits associated with the “opposite” sex are suppressed.

This prolonged period of human childhood is a prolonged period of powerlessness. The intense love for one or two parents is combined with intense feelings of deprivation and frustration. This natural ambivalence is greatly aggravated in societies where the attention parents are able to provide the young is limited, where social demands place additional frustrations on top of the inevitable ones experienced by a tiny person, and where one or two isolated parents relive and repeat the patterns of their own

childhood. As will be seen, part of the boy's acquisition of masculinity is a response to this experience of powerlessness.

By the time children are sufficiently developed physically, emotionally, and intellectually at five or six to have clearly defined themselves separately from their parents, these parental figures have already been internalized within them. In the early years, as in later ones, we identify with (or react against) the apparent characteristics of our love objects and incorporate them into our own personalities. This is largely an unconscious process. This incorporation and internalization, or rejection, of the characteristics of our love objects is part of the process of constructing our ego, our self.

This internalization of the objects of love is a selective one, and it is a process that takes place in specific social environments. The immediate environment is the family, which is a "vigorous agency of class placement and an efficient mechanism for the creation and transmission of gender inequality."²¹ Within itself, to a greater or lesser extent, the family reflects, reproduces, and recreates the hierarchical gender system of society as a whole.²²

As noted above, the child has ambivalent feelings toward his or her primary caring figures. Love combines with feelings of powerlessness, tension, and frustration. The child's experience of anxiety and powerlessness results not only from the prohibitions of harsh parents but also from the inability of even the most loving parents who cannot exist solely for their young, because of the demands of society, demands of natural reality, and demands of their own needs.

Both girls and boys have these ambivalent feelings and experiences of powerlessness. But the feelings toward the parents and the matter of power are almost immediately impregnated with social meaning. Years before the child can put words to it, she or he begins to understand that the mother is inferior to the father and that woman is inferior to man. That this inferiority is not natural but is socially imposed is beyond the understanding of the child and even beyond the understanding of sociobiologists, presidents, and popes. (Size itself might also feed into this perception of inferiority, or perhaps it is simply that in hierarchical, sexist society, size becomes a symbol of superiority.) In the end the biological fact of "otherness" becomes overlaced with a socially imposed otherness. The child is presented with two categories of humans: males, who embody the full grandeur and power of humanity, and females, who in Simone de Beauvoir's words, are defined as "other" in a phallogentric society.²³

The human's answer to this powerlessness and to the desire to find pleasure is to develop an ego and a superego, that is, a distinct self and an internal mechanism of authority. An important part of the process of ego development is the identification with the objects of love. Progressively, both sexes discover and are taught who the appropriate figures of identification are. But the figures of identification are not equal.

Society presents the young boy with a great escape. He may feel powerless as a child, but there is hope, for as an adult male he will have privilege and (at least in the child's imagination) he will have power. A strong identification—that is, an incorporation into his own developing self—of his image of his father in particular and male figures in general is his compensation for his own sense of powerlessness and insecurity. It is his compensation for distancing himself from his first love, his mother.

In this process the boy not only claims for himself the activity represented by men and father. At the same time he steps beyond the passivity of his infantile relationship to the mother and beyond his overall sense of passivity (passivity, that is, in the sense of feeling overwhelmed by desires and a frustrating world). He embraces the project of controlling himself and controlling the world. He comes to personify activity. Masculinity is a reaction against passivity and powerlessness and, with it comes a repression of all the desires and traits that a given society defines as negatively passive or as resonant of passive experiences. The girl, on the other hand, discovers she will never possess men's power, and henceforth the most she can aspire to is to be loved by a man—that is, to actively pursue a passive aim. Thus the achievement of what is considered the biologically normal male character (but which is really socially created masculinity) is one outcome of the splitting of human desire and human *being* into mutually exclusive spheres of activity and passivity. The monopoly of activity by males is not a timeless psychological or social necessity. Rather, the internalization of the norms of masculinity require the surplus repression of passive aims—the desire to be nurtured. The repression of passivity and the accentuation of activity constitute the development of a "surplus-aggressive" character type. Unfortunately, such a character type is the norm in patriarchal societies, although the degree of aggressiveness varies from person to person and society to society.

Part of the reason for this process is a response to the fear of rejection and of punishment. What does one fear? Loss of love and self-esteem. Why, in the child's mind, would it lose love and self-esteem? Because it does

what is prohibited or degraded. In order to not do what is prohibited or degraded, during this process of identification the child internalizes the values and prohibitions of society. This is the shaping of the superego, our conscience, sense of guilt, and standards of self-worth. Through the internalization of social authority, aggressiveness is directed against oneself.²⁴

This whole process of ego development is the shaping of a psychic realm that mediates between our unconscious desires, the world, and a punishing superego. But as should now be clear, the development of the ego is the development of masculine or feminine ego. In this sense, the ego is a definition of oneself formed within a given social and psychological environment and within what Gayle Rubin calls a specific sex-gender system.²⁵

The boy is not simply *learning* a gender role but is becoming *part* of that gender. His whole self, to a greater or lesser extent, with greater or lesser conflict, will be masculine. Ken Kesey magnificently captured this in his description of Hank, a central character in *Sometimes a Great Notion*: “Did it take that much muscle just to walk, or was Hank showing off his manly development? Every movement constituted open aggression against the very air through which Hank passed.”²⁶

The Reinforcement of Masculinity

Masculinity is unconsciously rooted before the age of six, is reinforced as the child develops, and then positively explodes at adolescence. Beauvoir's comment about girls is no less true for boys: “With puberty, the future not only approaches; it takes residence in her body; it assumes the most concrete reality.”²⁷

It is particularly in adolescence that masculinity obtains its definitive shape for the individual. The masculine norm has its own particular nuances and traits dependent on class, nation, race, religion, and ethnicity. And within each group it has its own personal expression. Adolescence is important because it is the time when the body reawakens, when that long-awaited entrance into adulthood finally takes place, and when our culture makes the final socio-educational preparations for adult work life. In adolescence the pain and fear involved in repressing “femininity” and passivity start to become evident. For most of us, the response to this inner pain is to reinforce the bulwarks of masculinity. The emotional pain created by obsessive masculinity is stifled by reinforcing masculinity itself.

The family, school, sports, friends, church, clubs, scouts, jobs, and the media all play a role as the adolescent struggles to put the final touches on himself as a real man. The expression of male power will be radically different from class to class. For the middle class adolescent, with a future in a profession or business, his own personal and social power will be expressed through a direct mastering of the world. Workaholism or at least a measuring of his value through status and the paycheck might well be the outcome. Fantasies of power are often expressed in terms of fame and success.

For a working class boy, the avenue of mastering the world of business, politics, the professions, and wealth is all but denied. For him male power is often defined in the form of working class machismo. The power to dominate is expressed in a direct physical form. Domination of the factors of production or of another person is achieved through sheer bravado and muscle power. In an excellent examination of the development of white male, working class identity in Britain, Paul Willis demonstrates that the acquisition of a positive working class identity is coterminous with the development of a particular gender identity. Though stigmatized by society as a whole, manual labor becomes the embodiment of masculine power. “Manual labor is suffused with masculine qualities and given certain sensual overtones for ‘the lads.’ The toughness and awkwardness of physical work and effort ... takes on masculine lights and depths and assumes a significance beyond itself.”²⁸

Adolescence is also the time of our first intense courtships. Although so much of pre- and early-adolescent sexual experience is homosexual, those experiences tend to be devalued and ignored. Relations with young women are the real thing. This interaction furthers the acquisition of masculinity for boys because they are interacting with girls who are busy acquiring the complementary femininity. Each moment of interaction reinforces the gender acquisition of each sex.

The Fragility of Masculinity

Masculinity is power. But masculinity is terrifyingly fragile because it does not really exist in the sense we are led to think it exists, that is, as a biological reality—something real that we have inside ourselves. It exists as ideology; it exists as scripted behavior; it exists within “gendered” relationships. But in the end it is just a social institution with a tenuous

relationship to that with which it is supposed to be synonymous: our maleness, our biological sex. The young child does not know that sex does not equal gender. For him to be male is to be what he perceives as being masculine. The child is father to the man. Therefore, to be unmasculine is to be desexed—"castrated."

The tension between maleness and masculinity is intense because masculinity requires a suppression of a whole range of human needs, aims, feelings, and forms of expression. Masculinity is one half of the narrow, surplus-repressive shape of the adult human psyche. Even when we are intellectually aware of the difference between biological maleness and masculinity, the masculine ideal is so embedded within ourselves that it is hard to untangle the person we might want to become (more "fully human," less sexist, less surplus-repressed, and so on) from the person we actually are.

But as children and adolescents (and often as adults), we are not aware of the difference between maleness and masculinity. With the exception of a tiny proportion of the population born as hermaphrodites, there can be no biological struggle to be male. The presence of a penis and testicles is all it takes. Yet boys and men harbor great insecurity about their male credentials. This insecurity exists because maleness is equated with masculinity; but the latter is a figment of our collective, patriarchal, surplus-repressive imaginations.

In a patriarchal society being male is highly valued, and men value their masculinity. But everywhere there are ambivalent feelings. That the initial internalization of masculinity is at the father's knee has lasting significance. Andrew Tolson states that "to the boy, masculinity is both mysterious and attractive (in its promise of a world of work and power), and yet, at the same time, threatening (in its strangeness, and emotional distance)... It works both ways; attracts and repels in dynamic contradiction. This simultaneous distance and attraction is internalized as a permanent emotional tension that the individual must, in some way, strive to overcome."²⁹

Although maleness and masculinity are highly valued, men are everywhere unsure of their own masculinity and maleness, whether consciously or not. When men are encouraged to be open, as in men's support and counseling groups, it becomes apparent that there exists, often under the surface, an internal dialogue of doubt about one's male and masculine credentials.

One need think only of anxieties about the penis, that incomparable scepter, that symbol of patriarchy and male power. Even as a child the boy experiences, more or less consciously, fearful fantasies of "castration." The child observes that the people who do not have penises are also those with less power. In the mind of a four- or five- year-old child who doesn't know about the power of advertising, the state, education, interactive psychological patterns, unequal pay, sexual harassment, and rape, what else can he think bestows the rewards of masculinity than that little visible difference between men and women, boys and girls?

Of course at this early age the little penis and testicles are not much defense against the world. Nor can they measure against the impossibly huge genitals of one's father or other men. I remember standing in the shower when I was five or six years old, staring up in awe at my father. Years later I realized a full circle had turned when I was showering with my five-year-old son and saw the same crick in his neck and the same look in his eyes. This internalized image of the small, boyish self retains a nagging presence in each man's unconscious. This is so much so that, as adults, men go to war to prove themselves potent, they risk their lives to show they have balls. Expressions such as these, and the double meaning of the word impotent, are no accident.

Just the presence of that wonderfully sensitive bit of flesh, as highly valued as it is in patriarchal culture, is not enough to guarantee maleness and masculinity. But if there are indeed such great doubts in adolescence and beyond about one's masculine credentials, how is it that we combat these doubts? One way is by violence.

Men's Violence Against Women

In spite of the inferior role which men assign to them, women are the privileged objects of their aggression.

*Simone de Beauvoir*³⁰

Men's violence against women is the most common form of direct, personalized violence in the lives of most adults. From sexual harassment to rape, from incest to wife battering to the sight of violent pornographic images, few women escape some form of male aggression.

My purpose here is not to list and evaluate the various forms of violence against women, nor to try to assess what can be classed as violence per se.

It is to understand this violence as an expression of the fragility of masculinity and its place in the perpetuation of masculinity and male domination.³¹

In the first place, men's violence against women is probably the clearest, most straightforward expression of relative male and female power. That the relative social, economic, and political power can be expressed in this manner is, to a large part, because of differences in physical strength and in a lifelong training (or lack of training) in fighting. But it is also expressed this way because of the active/passive split. Activity as aggression is part of the masculine gender definition. That is not to say this definition always includes rape or battering, but it is one of the possibilities within a definition of activity that is ultimately grounded in the body.

Rape is a good example of the acting out of these relations of power and of the outcome of fragile masculinity in a surplus-repressive society. In the testimonies of rapists one hears over and over again expressions of inferiority, powerlessness, anger. But who can these men feel superior to? Rape is a crime that not only demonstrates physical power, but that does so in the language of male-female sex-gender relations. The testimonies of convicted rapists collected by Douglas Jackson in the late 1970s are chilling and revealing.³² Hal: "I felt very inferior to others.... I felt rotten about myself and by committing rape I took this out on someone I thought was weaker than me, someone I could control." Carl: "I think that I was feeling so rotten, so low, and such a creep ..." Len: "I feel a lot of what rape is isn't so much sexual desire as a person's feelings about themselves and how that relates to sex. My fear of relating to people turned to sex because ... it just happens to be the fullest area to let your anger out on, to let your feelings out on."

Sometimes this anger and pain are experienced in relation to women but just as often not. In either case they are addressed to women who, as the Other in a phallogocentric society, are objects of mystification to men, the objects to whom men from birth have learned to express and vent their feelings, or simply objects with less social power and weaker muscles. It is the crime against women par excellence because, through it, the full weight of a sexually based differentiation among humans is played out.

This anger and pain are sometimes overlaid with the effects of a class hierarchy. John: "I didn't feel too good about women. I felt that I couldn't pick them up on my own. I took the lower-class woman and tried to make her look even lower than she really was, you know. 'Cause what I really

wanted was a higher-class woman but I didn't have the finesse to actually pick these women up."

Within relationships, forms of male violence such as rape, battering, and what Meg Luxton calls the "petty tyranny" of male domination in the household³³ must be understood both "in terms of violence directed against women as women and against women as wives."³⁴ The family provides an arena for the expression of needs and emotions not considered legitimate elsewhere.³⁵ It is the one of the only places where men feel safe enough to express emotions. As the dams break, the flood pours out on women and children.³⁶ The family also becomes the place where the violence suffered by individuals in their work lives is discharged. "At work men are powerless, so in their leisure time they want to have a feeling that they control their lives."³⁷

While this violence can be discussed in terms of men's aggression, it operates within the dualism of activity and passivity, masculinity and femininity. Neither can exist without the other. This is not to blame women for being beaten, nor to excuse men who beat. It is but an indication that the various forms of men's violence against women are a dynamic affirmation of a masculinity that can only exist as distinguished from femininity. It is my argument that masculinity needs constant nurturing and affirmation. This affirmation takes many different forms. The majority of men are not rapists or batterers, although it is possible that the majority of men have used superior physical strength or physical coercion or the threat of force against a woman at least once as a teenager or an adult. But in those who harbor great personal doubts or strongly negative self-images, or who cannot cope with a daily feeling of powerlessness, violence against women can become a means of trying to affirm their personal power in the language of our sex-gender system. That these forms of violence only reconfirm the negative self-image and the feeling of powerlessness shows the fragility, artificiality, and precariousness of masculinity.

Violence Against Other Men

At a behavioral level, men's violence against other men is visible throughout society. Some forms, such as fighting, the ritualized display violence of teenagers and some groups of adult men, institutionalized rape in prisons, and attacks on gays or racial minorities are very direct expressions of this violence. In many sports, violence is incorporated into

exercise and entertainment. More subtle forms are the verbal putdown or, combined with economic and other factors the competition in the business, political, or academic world. In its most frightening form, violence has long been an acceptable and even preferred method of addressing differences and conflicts among different groups and states. In the case of war, as in many other manifestations of violence, violence against other men (and civilian women) combines with autonomous economic, ideological, and political factors.

But men's violence against other men is more than the sum of various activities and types of behavior. In this form of violence a number of things are happening at once, in addition to the autonomous factors involved. Sometimes mutual, sometimes one-sided, there is a discharge of aggression and hostility. But at the same time as discharging aggression, these acts of violence and the ever-present potential for men's violence against other men reinforce the reality that relations between men, whether at the individual or state level, are relations of power.³⁸

Most men feel the presence of violence in their lives. Some of us had fathers who were domineering, rough, or even brutal. Some of us had fathers who simply were not there enough; most of us had fathers who either consciously or unconsciously were repelled by our need for touch and affection once we had passed a certain age. All of us had experiences of being beaten up or picked on when we were young. We learned to fight, or we learned to run; we learned to pick on others, or we learned how to talk or joke our way out of a confrontation. But either way these early experiences of violence caused an incredible amount of anxiety and required a huge expenditure of energy to resolve. That anxiety is crystallized in an unspoken fear (particularly among heterosexual men): all other men are my potential humiliators, my enemies, my competitors.

But this mutual hostility is not always expressed. Men have formed elaborate institutions of male bonding and buddying: clubs, gangs, teams, fishing trips, card games, bars, and gyms, not to mention that great fraternity of Man. Certainly, as many feminists have pointed out, straight male clubs are a subculture of male privilege. But they are also havens where men, by common consent, can find safety and security among other men. They are safe houses where our love and affection for other men can be expressed.

Freud suggested that great amounts of passivity are required for the establishment of social relations among men but also that this very passivity

arouses a fear of losing one's power. (This fear takes the form, in a phallogentric, male-dominated society, of what Freud called "castration anxiety.") There is a constant tension of activity and passivity. Among their many functions and reasons for existence, male institutions mediate this tension between activity and passivity among men.

My thoughts take me back to grade six and the constant acting out of this drama. There was the challenge to fight and a punch in the stomach that knocked my wind out. There was our customary greeting with a slug in the shoulder. Before school, after school, during class change, at recess, whenever you saw another one of the boys whom you hadn't hit or been with in the past few minutes, you'd punch each other on the shoulder. I remember walking from class to class in terror of meeting Ed Skagle in the hall. Ed, a hefty young football player a grade ahead of me, would leave a big bruise with one of his friendly hellos. And this was the interesting thing about the whole business; most of the time it was friendly and affectionate. Long after the bruises have faded, I remember Ed's smile and the protective way he had of saying hello to me. But we couldn't express this affection without maintaining the active/passive equilibrium. More precisely, within the masculine psychology of surplus aggression, expressions of affection and of the need for other boys had to be balanced by an active assault.

But the traditional definition of masculinity is not only surplus aggression. It is also exclusive heterosexuality, for the maintenance of masculinity requires the repression of homosexuality.³⁹ Repression of homosexuality is one thing, but how do we explain the intense fear of homosexuality, the homophobia, that pervades so much male interaction? It isn't simply that many men may choose not to have sexual relations with other men; it is rather that they will find this possibility frightening or abhorrent.

Freud showed that the boy's renunciation of the father—and thus men—as an object of sexual love is a renunciation of what are felt to be passive sexual desires. Our embrace of future manhood is part of an equation:

male = penis = power = active = masculine.

The other half of the equation, in the language of the unconscious in patriarchal society, is

female = castrated = passive = feminine.

These unconscious equations might be absurd, but they are part of a socially shared hallucination of our patriarchal society. For the boy to deviate from

this norm is to experience severe anxiety, for what appears to be at stake is his ability to be active. Erotic attraction to other men is sacrificed because there is no model central to our society of active, erotic love for other males. The emotionally charged physical attachments of childhood with father and friends eventually breed feelings of passivity and danger and are sacrificed. Horowitz notes that the anxiety caused by the threat of losing power and activity is “the motive power behind the ‘normal’ boy’s social learning of his sex and gender roles.” Boys internalize “our culture’s definition of ‘normal’ or ‘real’ man: the possessor of a penis, therefore loving only females and that actively; the possessor of a penis, therefore ‘strong’ and ‘hard,’ not ‘soft,’ ‘weak,’ ‘yielding,’ ‘sentimental,’ ‘effeminate,’ passive. To deviate from this definition is not to be a real man. To deviate is to arouse [what Freud called] castration anxiety.”⁴⁰

Putting this in different terms, the young boy learns of the sexual hierarchy of society. This learning process is partly conscious and partly unconscious. For a boy, being a girl is a threat because it raises anxiety by representing a loss of power. Until real power is attained, the young boy courts power in the world of the imagination (with super heroes, guns, magic, and pretending to be grown-up). But the continued pull of passive aims, the attraction to girls and to mother, the fascination with the origin of babies ensure that a tension continues to exist. In this world, the only thing that is as bad as being a girl is being a sissy, that is, being like a girl.⁴¹ Although the boy doesn’t consciously equate being a girl or sissy with homosexual genital activity, at the time of puberty these feelings, thoughts, and anxieties are transferred onto homosexuality per se.

For the majority of men, the establishment of the masculine norm and the strong social prohibitions against homosexuality are enough to bury the erotic desire for other men. The repression of our bisexuality is not adequate, however, to keep this desire at bay. Some of the energy is transformed into derivative pleasures—muscle building, male comradeship, hero worship, religious rituals, war, sports—where our enjoyment of being with other men or admiring other men can be expressed. These forms of activity are not enough to neutralize our constitutional bisexuality, our organic fusion of passivity and activity, and our love for our fathers and our friends. The great majority of men, in addition to those men whose sexual preference is clearly homosexual, have, at some time in their childhood, adolescence, or adult life, had sexual or quasi-sexual relations with other males, or have fantasized or dreamed about such relationships. Those who

don’t (or don’t recall that they have), invest a lot of energy in repressing and denying these thoughts and feelings. And to make things worse, all those highly charged male activities in the sports-field, the meeting room, or the locker room do not dispel eroticized relations with other men. They can only reawaken those feelings. It is, as Freud would have said, the return of the repressed.

Nowhere has this been more stunningly captured than in the wrestling scene in the perhaps mistitled book, *Women in Love*, by D.H. Lawrence. It was late at night. Birkin had just come to Gerald’s house after being put off following a marriage proposal. They talked of working, of loving, and fighting, and in the end stripped off their clothes and began to wrestle in front of the burning fire. As they wrestled, “they seemed to drive their white flesh deeper and deeper against each other, as if they would break into a oneness.” They entwined, they wrestled, they pressed nearer and nearer. “A tense white knot of flesh [was] gripped in silence.” The thin Birkin “seemed to penetrate into Gerald’s more solid, more diffuse bulk, to interfuse his body through the body of the other, as if to bring it subtly into subjection, always seizing with some rapid necromantic fore-knowledge every motion of the other flesh, converting and counteracting it, playing upon the limbs and trunk of Gerald like some hard wind. . . . Now and again came a sharp gasp of breath, or a sound like a sigh, then the rapid thudding of movement on the thickly-carpeted floor, then the strange sound of flesh escaping under flesh.”⁴²

The very institutions of male bonding and patriarchal power force men to constantly re-experience their closeness and attraction to other men, that is, the very thing so many men are afraid of. Our very attraction to ourselves, ambivalent as it may be, can only be generalized as an attraction to men in general.

A phobia is one means by which the ego tries to cope with anxiety.

Homophobia is a means of trying to cope, not simply with our unsuccessfully repressed, eroticized attraction to other men, but with our whole anxiety over the unsuccessfully repressed passive sexual aims, whether directed toward males or females. But often, Otto Fenichel writes, “individuals with phobias cannot succeed in avoiding the feared situations. Again and again they are forced to experience the very things they are afraid of. Often the conclusion is unavoidable that this is due to an unconscious arrangement of theirs. It seems that unconsciously they are striving for the very thing of which they are consciously afraid. This is

understandable because the feared situations originally were instinctual aims. It is a kind of 'return of the repressed.'" 43

In the case of homophobia, it is not merely a matter of an individual phobia, although the strength of homophobia varies from individual to individual. It is a socially constructed phobia that is essential for the imposition and maintenance of masculinity. A key expression of homophobia is the obsessive denial of homosexual attraction; this denial is expressed as violence against other men. Or to put it differently, men's violence against other men is one of the chief means through which patriarchal society simultaneously expresses and discharges the attraction of men to other men.⁴⁴

The specific ways that homophobia and men's violence toward other men are acted out varies from man to man, society to society, and class to class. The great amount of *directly expressed* violence and violent homophobia among some groups of working class youth would be well worth analyzing to give clues to the relation of class and gender.

This corner of the triad of men's violence interacts with and reinforces violence against women. This corner contains part of the logic of surplus aggression. Here we begin to explain the tendency of many men to use force as a means of simultaneously hiding and expressing their feelings. At the same time the fear of other men in Particular the fear of weakness and passivity in relation to other men helps create our strong dependence on women for meeting our emotional needs and for emotional discharge. In a surplus-repressive patriarchal and class society, large amounts of anxiety and hostility are built up, ready to be discharged. But the fear of one's emotions and the fear of losing control mean that discharge only takes place in a safe situation. For many men that safety is provided by a relationship with a woman where the commitment of one's friend or lover creates the sense of security. What is more, because it is a relationship with a woman, it unconsciously resonates with that first great passive relation of the boy with his mother. But in this situation and in other acts of men's violence against women, there is also the security of interaction with someone who does not represent a psychic threat, who is less socially powerful, probably less physically powerful, and who is herself operating within a pattern of surplus passivity. And finally, given the fragility of masculine identity and the inner tension of what it means to be masculine, the ultimate acknowledgment of one's masculinity is in our power over women. This power can be expressed in many ways. Violence is one of them.

Violence Against Oneself

When I speak of a man's violence against himself, I am thinking of the very structure of the masculine ego. The formation of an ego on an edifice of surplus repression and surplus aggression is the building of a precarious structure of internalized violence. The continual conscious and unconscious blocking and denial of passivity and all the emotions and feelings men associate with passivity—fear, pain, sadness, embarrassment—is a denial of part of what we are. The constant psychological and behavioral vigilance against passivity and its derivatives is a perpetual act of violence against oneself.

The denial and blocking of a whole range of human emotions and capacities are compounded by the blocking of avenues of discharge. The discharge of fear, hurt, and sadness, for example (through crying or trembling), is necessary because these painful emotions linger on even if they are not consciously felt. Men become pressure cookers. The failure to find safe avenues of emotional expression and discharge means that a whole range of emotions are transformed into anger and hostility. Part of the anger is directed at oneself in the form of guilt, self-hate, and various physiological and psychological symptoms. Part is directed at other men. Part of it is directed at women. By the end of this process, our distance from ourselves is so great that the very symbol of maleness is turned into an object, a thing. Men's preoccupation with genital power and pleasure combines with a desensitization of the penis. As best he can, writes Emmanuel Reynaud, a man gives it "the coldness and the hardness of metal." It becomes his tool, his weapon, his thing. "What he loses in enjoyment he hopes to compensate for in power; but if he gains an undeniable power symbol, what pleasure can he really feel with a weapon between his legs?"⁴⁵

BEYOND MEN'S VIOLENCE

Throughout Gabriel Garcia Marquez's *Autumn of the Patriarch*, the ageless dictator stalked his palace, his elephantine feet dragging forever on endless corridors that reeked of corruption. There was no escape from the world of terror, misery, and decay that he himself had created. His tragedy was that he was "condemned forever to live breathing the same air which asphyxiated him."⁴⁶ As men, are we similarly condemned, or is there a road

of escape from the triad of men's violence and the precarious structures of masculinity that we ourselves recreate at our peril and that of women, children, and the world?

Prescribing a set of behavioral or legal changes to combat men's violence against women is obviously not enough. Even as more and more men are convinced there is a problem, this realization does not touch the unconscious structures of masculinity. Any man who is sympathetic to feminism is aware of the painful contradiction between his conscious views and his deeper emotions and feelings.

The analysis in this article suggests that men and women must address each corner of the triad of men's violence and the socioeconomic, psychosexual orders on which they stand. Or to put it more strongly, it is impossible to deal successfully with any one corner of this triad in isolation from the others.

The social context that nurtures men's violence and the relation between socioeconomic transformation and the end of patriarchy have been major themes of socialist feminist thought. This framework, though it is not without controversy and unresolved problems, is one I accept. Patriarchy and systems of authoritarianism and class domination feed on each other. Speaking of the relation of capitalism and the oppression of women, Michele Barrett says that male-female divisions "are systematically embedded in the structure and texture of capitalist social relations ... and they play an important part in the political and ideological stability of this society. They are constitutive of our subjectivity as well as, in part, of capitalist political and cultural hegemony. They are interwoven into a fundamental relationship between the wage-labour system and the organization of domestic life and it is impossible to imagine that they could be extracted from the relations of production and reproduction of capitalism without a massive transformation of those relations taking place."⁴⁷

Radical socioeconomic and political change is a requirement for the end of men's violence. But organizing for macrosocial change is not enough to solve the problem of men's violence, not only because the problem is so pressing here and now, but because the continued existence of masculinity and surplus aggressiveness works against the fundamental macrosocial change we desire.

The many manifestations of violence against women have been an important focus of feminists. Women's campaigns and public education against rape, battering, sexual harassment, and more generally for control

by women of their bodies are a key to challenging men's violence. Support by men, not only for the struggles waged by women, but in our own workplaces and among our friends is an important part of the struggle. There are many possible avenues for work by men among men. These include: forming counselling groups and support services for battering men (as in now happening in different cities in North America); championing the inclusion of clauses on sexual harassment in collective agreements and in the constitutions or by-laws of our trade unions, associations, schools, and political parties; raising money, campaigning for government funding, and finding other means of support for rape crisis centers and shelters for battered women; speaking out against violent and sexist pornography; building neighborhood campaigns on wife and child abuse; and personally refusing to collude with the sexism of our workmates, colleagues, and friends. The latter is perhaps the most difficult of all and requires patience, humor, and support from other men who are challenging sexism.

But because men's violence against women is inseparable from the other two corners of the triad of men's violence, solutions are very complex and difficult. Ideological changes and an awareness of problems are important but insufficient. While we can envisage changes in our child-rearing arrangements (which in turn would require radical economic changes) lasting solutions have to go far deeper. Only the development of non-surplus-repressive societies (whatever these might look like) will allow for the greater expression of human needs and, along with attacks on patriarchy per se, will reduce the split between active and passive psychological aims.⁴⁸

The process of achieving these long-term goals contains many elements of economic, social, political, and psychological change each of which requires a fundamental transformation of society. Such a transformation will not be created by an amalgam of changed individuals; but there *is* a relationship between personal change and our ability to construct organizational, political, and economic alternatives that will be able to mount a successful challenge to the status quo.

One avenue of personal struggle that is being engaged in by an increasing number of men has been the formation of men's support groups. Some groups focus on consciousness raising, but most groups stress the importance of men talking about their feelings, their relations with other men and with women, and any number of problems in their lives. At times these groups have been criticized by some antisexist men as yet another

place for men to collude against women. The alternatives put forward are groups whose primary focus is either support for struggles led by women or the organization of direct, antisexist campaigns among men. These activities are very important, but so too is the development of new support structures among men. And these structures must go beyond the traditional form of consciousness raising.

Consciousness raising usually focuses on manifestations of the oppression of women and on the oppressive behavior of men. But as we have seen, masculinity is more than the sum total of oppressive forms of behavior. It is deeply and unconsciously embedded in the structure of our egos and superegos; it is what we have become. An awareness of oppressive behavior is important, but too often it only leads to guilt about being a man. Guilt is a profoundly conservative emotion and as such is not particularly useful for bringing about change. From a position of insecurity and guilt, people do not change or inspire others to change. After all, insecurity about one's male credentials played an important part in the individual acquisition of masculinity and men's violence in the first place.

There is a need to promote the personal strength and security necessary to allow men to make more fundamental personal changes and to confront sexism and heterosexism in society at large. Support groups usually allow men to talk about our feelings, how we too have been hurt growing up in a surplus-repressive society, and how we, in turn, act at times in an oppressive manner. We begin to see the connections between painful and frustrating experiences in our own lives and related forms of oppressive behavior. As Sheila Rowbotham notes, "the exploration of the internal areas of consciousness is a political necessity for us."⁴⁹

Talking among men is a major step, but it is still operating within the acceptable limits of what men like to think of as rational behavior. Deep barriers and fears remain even when we can begin to recognize them. As well as talking, men need to encourage direct expression of emotions—grief, anger, rage, hurt, love—within these groups and the physical closeness that has been blocked by the repression of passive aims, by social prohibition, and by our own superegos and sense of what is right. This discharge of emotions has many functions and outcomes: like all forms of emotional and physical discharge it lowers the tension within the human system and reduces the likelihood of a spontaneous discharge of emotions through outer- or inner-directed violence.

But the expression of emotions is not an end in itself; in this context it

is a means to an end. Stifling the emotions connected with feelings of hurt and pain acts as a sort of glue that allows the original repression to remain. Emotional discharge, in a situation of support and encouragement, helps unglue the ego structures that require us to operate in patterned, phobic, oppressive, and surplus-aggressive forms. In a sense it loosens up the repressive structures and allows us fresh insight into ourselves and our past. But if this emotional discharge happens in isolation or against an unwitting victim, it only reinforces the feelings of being powerless, out of control, or a person who must obsessively control others. Only in situations that contradict these feelings—that is, with the support, affection, encouragement, and backing of other men who experience similar feelings—does the basis for change exist.⁵⁰

The encouragement of emotional discharge and open dialogue among men also enhances the safety we begin to feel among each other and in turn helps us to tackle obsessive, even if unconscious, fear of other men. This unconscious fear and lack of safety are the experience of most heterosexual men throughout their lives. The pattern for homosexual men differs, but growing up and living in a heterosexist, patriarchal culture implants similar fears, even if one's adult reality is different,

Receiving emotional support and attention from a group of men is a major contradiction to experiences of distance, caution, fear, and neglect from other men. This contradiction is the mechanism that allows further discharge, emotional change, and more safety. Safety among even a small group of our brothers gives us greater safety and strength among men as a whole. This gives us the confidence and sense of personal power to confront sexism and homophobia in all its various manifestations. In a sense, this allows us each to be a model of a strong, powerful man who does not need to operate in an oppressive and violent fashion in relation to women, to other men, or to himself. And that, I hope, will play some small part in the challenge to the oppressive reality of patriarchal, authoritarian, class societies. It will be changes in our own lives inseparably intertwined with changes in society as a whole that will sever the links in the triad of men's violence.

NOTES

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1. Herbert Marcuse, *Eros and Civilization* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1975; New York: Vintage, 1962); Gad Horowitz, *Repression* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1977).
2. Part of Freud's wisdom was to recognize that, although the engendered psychology of the individual was the product of the maturation of the individual within an evolving social environment, the body was in the last analysis the subject and the object of our desires.
3. Michele Barrett and Mary McIntosh, *The Anti-Social Family* (London: Verso/New Left Books, 1982), 107.
4. See the critical remarks on biological determinism by Carmen Schifellite elsewhere in this volume.
5. On the range of societies, see the article by Richard Lee and Richard Daly in this volume.
6. Susan Brownmiller, *Against Our Will: Men, Women and Rape* (New York: Bantam Books, 1976), 6.
7. Alice Echols, "The New Feminism of Yin and Yang" in Ann Snitow *et al.*, eds., *Power of Desire* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1983) 439-59; and Alice Echols, "The Taming of the Id: Feminist Sexual Politics, 1968-83," in Carol Vance, ed., *Pleasure and Danger* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1984), 50-72. The two articles are essentially the same.
8. Aime Cesaire, *Discourse on Colonialism* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1972), 21-2; first published in 1955 by Editions Presence Africaine.
9. C. Tunnard, *The City of Man* (New York: Scribner, 1953), 43. Quoted in N.O. Brown, *Life Against Death* (Middletown: Wesleyan University Press, 1959), 283.
10. This is the approach, for example, of Suzanne Steinmetz. She says that macrolevel social and economic conditions (such as poverty, unemployment, inadequate housing, and the glorification and acceptance of violence) lead to high crime rates and a tolerance of violence that in turn leads to family aggression. See her *Cycle of Violence* (New York: Praeger, 1977), 30.
11. Juliet Mitchell, *Psychoanalysis and Feminism* (New York: Vintage, 1975), 362.
12. Joseph Conrad, *Lord Jim*, (New York: Bantam Books, 1981), 146; first published 1900.
13. See for example Michele Barrett's thought-provoking book, *Women's Oppression Today* (London: Verso/New Left Books, 1980), 10-19, 250-1.
14. Jessica Benjamin, "Authority and the Family Revisited: or, A World Without Fathers?", *New German Critique* (Winter 1978), 35.
15. See *ibid.* 40, for a short discussion of Adorno's and Horkheimer's *Dialectic of Enlightenment*.
16. Mary O'Brien, *The Politics of Reproduction* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1981), 54-5.
17. Simone de Beauvoir, *The Second Sex* (New York: Vintage, 1974). 162; first published 1949. Dorothy Dinnerstein pursues a similar line of argument but, in line with the thesis of her book, points to mother-raised-children as the source of these ambivalent feelings toward women. See Dinnerstein, *op. cit.* especially, 109-10.
18. Sidney Jourard, "Some Lethal Aspects of the Male Role" in Joseph H. Pleck and Jack Sawyer, eds., *Men and Masculinity* (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1974), 21-9.
19. Bertolt Brecht, *Threepenny Novel*, trans. Desmond I. Vesey (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1965), 282.
20. Marcuse, *op. cit.* and Horowitz, *op. cit.*
21. Barrett and Macintosh, *op. cit.* p. 29.
22. This is true not only because each socioeconomic system appears to create corresponding family forms, but because in turn, that family structure plays a large role in shaping the society's ideology. In Barrett's and McIntosh's words, in our society a family perspective and family ideology have an "utterly hegemonic status" within society as a whole. And there is a dialectical interaction between family form and the organization of production and paid work (*ibid.* 78, 130).
23. De Beauvoir, *op. cit.*, *passim*.
24. Sigmund Freud, *Civilization and Its Discontents* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1962), 70, 72.
25. Gayle Rubin, "The Traffic in Women: Notes on the 'Political Economy' of Sex" in Rayna R. Reiter, ed., *Toward an Anthropology of Women* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1975), 157-210.
26. Ken Kesey, *Sometimes a Great Notion* (New York: Bantam, 1965), 115. (One is eerily reminded of St. Augustine's statement, "Every breath I draw in is a sin." Quoted in Horowitz, *op. cit.*, 211.)
27. De Beauvoir, *op. cit.*, 367.
28. Paul Willis, *Learning to Labor* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1981), 150. And see Stan Gray's article elsewhere in this volume.
29. Andrew Tolson, *The Limits of Masculinity* (London: Tavistock, 1977), 25.
30. Simone de Beauvoir, in the *Nouvel Observateur*. Mar. I, 1976. Quoted in Diana E.H. Russell and Nicole Van de Yen, eds., *Crimes Against Women* (Millbrae, Calif.: Les Femmes, 1976), xiv.
31. Among the sources on men's violence that are useful, even if sometimes problematic, see Leonore E. Walker, *The Battered Woman* (New York: Harper Colophon, 1980); Russell and Van de Yen, *op. cit.*; Judith Lewis Herman, *Father-Daughter Incest* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1981); Suzanne K. Steinmetz, *The Cycle of Violence* (New York: Praeger, 1977); Sylvia Levine and Joseph Koenig, *Why Men Rape* (Toronto: MacMillan, 1980); Susan Brownmiller,

- op. cit.*, and Connie Guberman and Margie Wolfe, eds., *No Safe Place* (Toronto: Women's Press, 1985).
32. Levine and Koenig, *op. cit.*, pp. 28, 42, 56, 72.
33. Meg Luxton, *More Than a Labour of Love* (Toronto: Women's Press, 1980), 66.
34. Margaret M. Killoran, "The Sound of Silence Breaking: Toward a Metatheory of Wife Abuse" (M.A. thesis, McMaster University, 1981), 148.
35. Barrett and Macintosh, *op. cit.*, 23.
36. Of course, household violence is not monopolized by men. In the United States roughly the same number of domestic homicides are committed by each sex. In 1975, 8.0% of homicides were committed by husbands against wives and 7.8% by wives against husbands. These figures, however, do not indicate the chain of violence, that is, the fact that most of these women were reacting to battering by their husbands. (See Steinmetz, *op. cit.*, p. 90.) Similarly, verbal and physical abuse of children appears to be committed by men and women equally. Only in the case of incest is there a near monopoly by men. Estimates vary greatly, but between one-fifth and one-third of all girls experience some sort of sexual contact with an adult male, in most cases with a father, stepfather, other relative, or teacher. (See Herman, *op. cit.*, 12 and *passim.*)
37. Luxton, *op. cit.*, p. 65.
38. This was pointed out by I.F. Stone in a 1972 article on the Vietnam war. At a briefing about the U.S. escalation of bombing in the North, the Pentagon official described U.S. strategy as two boys fighting: "If one boy gets the other in an arm lock, he can probably get his adversary to say 'uncle' if he increases the pressure in sharp, painful jolts and gives every indication of willingness to break the boy's arm." ("Machismo in Washington," reprinted in Pleck and Sawyer, *op. cit.*, 131). Although women are also among the victims of war, I include war in the category of violence against men because I am here referring to the causality of war.
39. This is true both of masculinity as an institution and masculinity for the individual. Gay men keep certain parts of the self-oppressive masculine norm intact simply because they have grown up and live in a predominantly heterosexual, male-dominated society.
40. Horowitz, *op. cit.*, 99.
41. This formulation was first suggested to me by Charlie Kreiner at a men's counselling workshop in 1982.
42. H. Lawrence. *Women in Love* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1960), 304-5; first published 1921.
43. Fenichel, *op. cit.*, 212.
44. See Robin Wood's analysis of the film *Raging Bull* in this volume.
45. Emmanuel Reynaud, *Holy Virility*, translated by Ros Schwartz (London: Pluto Press, 1983), 41-2.
46. Gabriel Garcia Marquez. *Autumn of the Patriarch*. trans. Gregory Rabassa

(Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1972). Ill: first published 1967.

47. Barrett, *op. cit.*, pp. 254-5. Willis follows a similar line of thought in his discussion of the development of the male working class. He says that patriarchy "helps to provide the real human and cultural conditions which ... actually allow subordinate roles to be taken on 'freely' within liberal democracy" (Willis, *op. cit.*, 151). But then in turn, this reinforces the impediments to change by the maintenance of a division within the working class. As an article in the early 1970s in *Shrew* pointed out. "the tendency of male workers to think of themselves as men (i.e., powerful) rather than as workers (i.e., members of an oppressed group), promotes a false sense of privilege and power, and an identification with the world of men, including the boss," Kathy McAfee and Myrna Wood, "Bread and Roses." quoted by Sheila Rowbotham, *Woman's Consciousness. Men's World* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1973).
48. For a discussion of non-surplus-repressive societies, particularly in the sense of being complementary with Marx's notion of communism, see Horowitz, *op. cit.*, particularly chapter 7, and also Marcuse, *op. cit.*, especially chaps. 7, 10, and II.
49. Rowbotham, *op. cit.*, 36.
50. As is apparent, although I have adopted a Freudian analysis of the unconscious and the mechanisms of repression, these observations on the therapeutic process—especially the importance of a supportive counselling environment, peer-counselling relations, emotional discharge, and the concept of contradiction—are those developed by forms of co-counselling, in particular, Re-evaluation Counselling. But unlike the latter, I do not suppose that any of us can "discharge" all of our hurt, grief, and anger and uncover an essential self simply because our "self" is created through that process of frustration, hurt, and repression. Rather I feel that some reforming of the ego can take place that allows us to integrate more fully a range of needs and desires, which in turn reduces forms of behavior that are oppressive to others and destructive to ourselves. Furthermore, by giving us greater consciousness of our feelings and the means of discharge, and by freeing dammed-up sources of energy, these changes allow us to act more successfully to change the world.