

## **There is a Crack in Everything:**

### **Problematizing Masculinities, Peacebuilding and Transitional Justice**

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#### **Abstract**

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

#### **Keywords**

Masculinity; Peacebuilding; Transitional Justice; Gender; Political Violence; Hegemony; Intersectionality

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In 2007, I wrote what I called an exploratory essay on masculinity and transitional justice. At the time, I noted that studies on masculinity and transitional justice were “all but nonexistent” (Hamber, 2007, p.377). I added that although masculinity studies, largely in sociology and psychology, is an enormous field, it in turn has said little about political transitions or transitional justice. I naïvely thought that, after carefully laying out a range of areas for future research in the *International Journal of Transitional Justice*, my article would stimulate debate and discussion on the subject of masculinity in the transitional justice field. This has not happened on a large-scale. In 2009 it was noted in the journal again that men and masculinities are left largely unexplored (Theidon, 2009, p.4), and in 2010, Cahn and Ní Aoláin highlighted that there is still an under-emphasis on masculinities in so-called post-conflict societies and consequently how masculinities are reformulated in such environments. The result has been that “post-conflict societies present a unique and under-analyzed site of examination for masculinities” (Cahn & Ní Aoláin, 2010). Despite their notable contribution and that of others (Cahn & Ní Aoláin, 2010; Theidon, 2009, p.4), and that scholarship is developing in masculinity studies literature on conflict zones (Hollander, 2014; Strier, 2014), the issue of masculinity and transitional justice could still at best only be described as emergent.

For illustrative purposes, of the 266 contributions<sup>3</sup> to the *International Journal of Transitional Justice* since 2007, 17 of them make mention of the concept of masculinity (about 6.3%). Compare this to 48 references to “feminism/feminist” (18%) and some 121 contributions that mention the concept of gender at least once (45.5%). Although this is a crude analysis, it simply highlights the marginal nature of the concept of masculinity in transitional justice studies (and feminism too for that matter).

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

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<sup>3</sup> A contribution includes all editorials, articles, case studies, notes from the field and book reviews or review essays. The analysis included articles from 2007 when the journal was launched up to and including the first edition of 2015. The terms “masculinity” “feminism” or “gender” could have been used more than once in an article, but the figures above simply reflect the overall count of the contributions containing the word.

men's studies a focus on masculinity as it pertains to peacebuilding and transitional justice is a minor concern.

The impressive *Men's Bibliography* lists about 22,400 books and articles on men and masculinities. One of the 36 sections listed has a focus on "Violence and responses to violence", although this mainly deals with domestic, social, criminal and inter-personal violence. There is a sub-section on "war and the military, guns and small arms, and violence prevention" but this is one of some 150 sub-sections on the site. Equally, if you analyse the journal *Men and Masculinities*, since 1998 the term "transitional justice" is not used in a single article, and the term "peacebuilding"<sup>4</sup> features in 5 articles.

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

That said, this rudimentary analysis clearly shows that there is still a limited conceptual engagement with the notion of masculinity in peacebuilding and transitional justice studies. The brief analysis outlined also highlights that those from different disciplinary backgrounds working on masculinity issues, and those working on political conflict, have not always connected and shared knowledge to the degree that one might expect.

### **Why the blinkers?**

Although, as mentioned, there might be logical reasons for the limited focus of masculinity in the transitional justice field (such as the field's relatively new emergence), there is a range of other reasons for this situation.

First, for societies emerging from conflict (I define what I mean by these more specifically in the next section), a range of pressing priorities from basic infrastructure to creating a new judicial system can take precedence. In this context analysing or trying to understand the continuity of violent masculinities and hidden systems of power in a peace process can seem like an indulgent luxury, especially when stopping violence is a priority, removing weapons from the hands of certain

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<sup>4</sup> Alternative spellings of "peace-building" and "peace building" were included in this analysis. Concepts such as peace are more prevalent but used in multiple ways so for the illustrative argument made here has been omitted, although feature in some 70 contributions since 1998.

groups is critical to security, or getting children back to school and food to the hungry is vital. In these contexts state security discourses tend to dominate at the expense of human security (Hamber et al., 2006). The time and scope in the immediate aftermath of destructive political conflict to reflect on wider questions of masculinity outside of immediate needs can be very narrow indeed. Furthermore, a lack of focus on masculinities can also reflect the assumption which linear models of peacebuilding tend to imply, namely that once a peace agreement has been signed, and combatants disarmed, violent masculinities are “tamed” (Cahn & Ní Aoláin, 2010). In addition, and I will return to this later, the individuals (mainly men) who are often seen as the architects of peace agreements are themselves often implicated in violence and enacting certain types of masculinity (“the warrior” “the general” “the revolutionary turned peacemaker”). They not only enact certain masculinities during conflict, but are very often the new (masculine) custodians of the peace. Deconstructing their motives and talking about transforming their militant masculinities within the context of an often fragile peace can be seen as anti-peace process, rather than a genuine concern with sustainable peace.

Second, men’s studies, in which the notion of masculinity is most comprehensively discussed, albeit with a limited focus on issues of political conflict, is still largely Western-centric. A focus on questions pertaining to African masculinities, although explored by some (Morrell, 2001d; Ouzgane & Morrell, 2005; Reid & Walker, 2005c; Walker, 2005a) is limited, and scholarship say, for example, on Indian, Middle Eastern or Asian notions of masculinity – especially with reference to conflict contexts – is even less prevalent in the mainstream academic literature. Arguably, due to the literature on men and masculinities accumulated over the decades largely focusing on Western men (and very often American college students specifically), who tend to be less impacted upon by war or civil strife in terms of massive intra-state conflict, the field naturally leans away from the relationship between masculinity, war and peacebuilding in fragile states. Although men and masculinity studies has a rich and long tradition in considering the role of masculinity within formal armies (say of the West), the focus is rather less developed when it comes to thinking about active guerrilla armies (along with child soldiers and many auxiliary civilians in support roles) and the ways they reconstitute or transform (or not) masculinities as societies move from war to peace.

Third, mainstream masculinities analysis has been accused of focusing on men and their relations to other men, and of treating women as universal and largely invisible persons (Dowd, 2010). Many feminists have been reluctant to engage in the debate about masculinity because of the potential for the notion of masculinity being equated with men’s needs at the expense of those of women and a proper power analysis. Recently Rachel O’Neill presented a robust critique of

inclusive masculinity (a term to which this article will return later) for neglecting to engage the analysis of postfeminism:

Masculinity scholars fail to address how men are implicated in what many feminist scholars regard as the remaking of gender and sexual inequality in new and ever more insidious forms (O'Neill, 2015, p.115).

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

Finally, others maintain that the blame for the limited scholarship on masculinity within mainstream feminist studies has been due to the failure of feminists themselves. It is contended that despite contributions within feminist scholarship that oppose “essentialisation”, men and their

multiple masculinities have, at times, been treated by *some* feminists with an element of suspicion and homogeneity. Dowd (2010) in her book *The Man Question* provides a robust argument in this regard, showing how feminist scholarship has tended not to provide an adequate gender analysis of men, viewing them in an “essentialist, universal, undifferentiated way” (p.13). The result has been an under-developed theoretical analysis. Peter Alilunas reflects on his experience of taking a gender studies course to drive home the way men can be “essentialised” noting:

While scholars such as Judith Butler and Judith Halberstam have eloquently deconstructed the notion of any essential connection between gender and sex, and, indeed, described the performativity of both, the practical reality of the Women’s Studies classroom still holds to many deep-seated beliefs and assumptions about the essentialization of masculinity to men... My body, it seemed, presupposed what my attitudes or opinions would be, as well as automatically deciding both my experiential background and my subject position. (Alilunas, 2011, p.216).

Of course, this is one example and is probably not reflective of all gender studies classes, but others too have maintained that on the whole there remains a propensity in the gender studies literature to talk about gender with “a focus on the construction of female gender norms rather than both female and male norms” (Gaffney & Manno, 2011, p.193).

Clearly, therefore, what we know is that the study of masculinity, particularly in peacebuilding and transitional justice contexts, is still developing or at best is gradually emerging. We can see that fears by some feminist scholars of men as a category being reified to an acontextual framework co-exist with, or so some argue, tendencies to “essentialise” men with a specific type of masculinity rather than multiple masculinities that are continually changing. Dowd concludes that the field of masculinity studies and feminist theory are equally guilty of some theoretical blindness:

Women disappear frequently, or appear only as universal persons, in masculinities analysis. In the same way that men are uni-dimensional and essentialized in feminist theory, so too are women in masculinities theory (p.28).

For various reasons, as Cahn and Ní Aoláin therefore note, “masculinity theorists and feminist analysis have not always worked in tandem, and it is only relatively recently that feminist scholars have sought to address what masculinity studies has to offer feminist theorizing” (Cahn & Ní Aoláin, 2010, p.104). From the brief analysis provided, therefore, it is clear that there are tensions

in the field and between disciplines – interestingly these are seldom discussed and much work remains to be done. I will return to this point in the concluding part of the article.

### **Searching for the cracks**

As noted the study of masculinities in peacebuilding and transitional justice is at best described as emerging, in this section of the paper I will outline some of the work that is developing but more importantly highlight what can be called *the cracks or fissures* evident in this embryonic scholarship. Three fissures will be explored:

- The privileging of direct violence and its limited focus
- The continuities and discontinuities in militarised violence into peace time
- Tensions between new (less violent) masculinities and wider inclusive social change

Space will only permit a cursory treatment of these issues, and for the purposes of the argument I will put forward in the conclusion, it is actually the fissures within the areas discussed I wish to primarily highlight. I will conclude the article by outlining the importance of these fissures and relate this back to the prospects for the study of masculinity in the peacebuilding and transitional justice fields. Before discussing these fissures however it is necessary, for those not familiar with the masculinities literature, to outline a few definitions of terms that will help frame the arguments that follow.

#### *Conflict and peace*

One of the challenges in presenting the arguments that follow is that the field of transitional justice and peacebuilding itself is fraught with false distinctions and categorisations that work against an analysis of masculinity. I too will have to use some of these less than perfect distinctions in this article (e.g. transition, post-conflict) to make my argument. Although I am increasingly uncomfortable with trying to categorise different contexts (“post-conflict”, “post-agreement”, “society in transition”), the assumption behind this article is that we are talking about a certain type of society. While all contexts differ, this article reflects on cases in which armed conflict (of varying intensities) has taken place that has seen not only the loss of life and a range of other human rights violations (for example, torture, rape) but also the destruction of infrastructure and livelihoods. Although normally applied to inter-state conflict, most of the remarks made in this article concern intra-state conflict. Typically these conflicts result in the breakdown of inter-

community relationships and social connections on top of other destructive impacts. After the violent political conflict ends some sort of peace process unfolds. This can include high-level political agreements, constitutional changes, the implementation of justice strategies (e.g. trials) and other dealing with the past mechanisms (e.g. truth commissions), as well as peacebuilding strategies from rebuilding infrastructure to people-to-people reconciliation work. In reality these processes are seldom linear, and reconstruction involves many processes that are not always captured by phrases such as peacebuilding or transitional justice.

### *Masculinities*

The concept of masculinity is a fraught concept. Masculinity is “simultaneously a place in gender relations, the practices through which men and women engage that place in gender, and the effects of these practices in bodily experience, personality and culture” (Connell, 2005e). Masculinity, for the purposes of this article, is therefore defined as a way of “doing gender”, which is related to a social environment (Walker, 2005a) that is simultaneously linked to the widespread social norms and expectations of what it means to be a man (Widmer, 2006). Perhaps more simply, masculinity can be defined, drawing on the work of Connell (1995; 2000) and Whitehead (2002), as the multiple ways of “doing male” (cited in Harland, Beattie and McCready, 2005). That said, most theorists and researchers working on this subject argue that it is more accurate to talk of masculinities than of masculinity (Brittan, 2005; Connell, 2005d; Whitehead, 2006) and there as many masculinities as there are men (MacInnes, 2005). There are many ways of “doing male” (Connell, 2005d) in different places, including in the boardroom, the tribal council, the battlefield, a gay nightclub or the coffee shop where a “metro-sexual” barista serves coffee during the day and writes cowboy novels at night after Taekwondo classes. Throughout this article I will refer to masculinity at times, but it should be taken as read that I am talking about the social construction (Clatterbaugh, 1998; Connell, 2005a; Messerschmidt, 2008) of multiple forms of masculinity in any given context. The ways of “doing male” are also continually changing, shaped – for the purposes of this article – not only by the experience of war but also by the shifting social, economic and political context during and after conflict.

### *Hegemonic masculinity*

The most well-established theoretical frame in the masculinities field concerns the concept of hegemonic masculinity (Connell, 2005a; Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005). It is also now firmly established that masculinities are not uniform and that power relations exist within them.

Hegemonic masculinity is understood as:

The pattern of practice (i.e., things done, not just a set of role expectations or an identity) that allowed men's dominance over women to continue. Hegemonic masculinity was distinguished from other masculinities, especially subordinated masculinities. Hegemonic masculinity was not assumed to be normal in the statistical sense; only a minority of men might enact it. But it was certainly normative. It embodied the currently most honored way of being a man, it required all other men to position themselves in relation to it, and it ideologically legitimated the global subordination of women to men (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005, p.832).

Although men aspire to a certain type of hegemonic masculinity in any given context and many men benefit from the patriarchy that resulted, they generally would not embody all that hegemonic masculinity implies (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005). To this end hegemonic masculinity is not maintained by naked force (although it could be), but rather through complicity and range of institutions, cultural practices and persuasion (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005). The concept of hegemonic masculinity has, until late, been seen as the dominant framework for understanding the problem of masculinity, although it has also be subject to a range of criticisms (Anderson, 2009; Beasley, 2008; Wetherell & Edley, 1999). Some of these and certainly not all will be touched upon later in the article.

### **Privileging direct violence and its limited focus**

It is now well-established that that violent masculinities play a key role in creating and maintaining certain types of violence and in situations of conflict, hypermasculinity can play an elevated role (Cahn & Ní Aoláin, 2010). The cultural and political economy of militarised masculinity that is constructed by both men and women has been identified as key to violence during times of political strife and afterwards (Theidon, 2007). Militarised masculinity is characterised by a narrow set of acceptable behaviours such as obedience, aggression, and masking fear and emotion (Trenholm, Olsson, Blomqvist, & Ahlberg, 2013, p.220). Enacting such masculinities in turn leads to further entrenchment of such behaviours and cycles of violence. Over the last two decades a substantial body of literature has emerged, along with empirical studies and literature reviews (among many others see Kent, 2014; Kirby, 2013; Miranda, 2007; Skjelsbaek, 2001; Wood, 2009), which shows how violent masculinities in particular are linked to war rape and other forms of sexual violence. As a result, direct physical violence, specifically sexual harms, has come to dominate the post-conflict

memory scape (Brown & Ní Aoláin, 2015, p.138).

As important as the issue of violent masculinities and their link to sexual violence is, there is now a growing critique of how sexual violence has become “hypervisible” (Buss, 2014; Lykes & Crosby, 2015; Sharratt, 2011). The South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) is criticised for its narrow focus on individual, physical forms of harm that underplayed the everyday experience of women (Ross, 2003). Crosby and Lykes argue, with reference to Guatemala, that an overly-narrow focus on sexual harm within the international human rights domain has sometimes translated into a hypervisibility of the issue in local accompaniment work with women survivors at the expense of an understanding of the more everyday forms of gendered racialised violence (Lykes & Crosby, 2015). The authors have also noted that this overemphasis on sexual harm and the occlusion of the politics of the everyday can work to preclude women survivors’ own struggles to define their needs and realities (Lykes & Crosby, 2015, p.167). Erikson Baaz and Stern make a similar argument, that is that a single focus on sexual violence committed by men can conceal the realities of daily life for women, which include domestic violence, and the lack of property and inheritance rights, among many others (Eriksson Baaz & Stern, 2010). Forced marital unions or forced domestic labour have to date not been adequately recognised as human rights violations in reparations debates due to overly focusing on specific sexual harms (Rubio-Marín, 2006). A narrow view of violations could also lead to a gendered hierarchy of suffering which focuses primarily on women even if more men are directly affected by what is considered conflict-related violence (Goldblatt, 2006). Equally, if violence against men and boys is over-shadowed, we can fail to see that such violence is also gendered (Eriksson Baaz & Stern, 2010).

More recently, scholars have also started to question not only the hypervisibility of sexual violence in international peacebuilding efforts and allied scholarship, but also the way sexual violence has been characterised in the literature. Erikson Baaz and Stern have provided the most detailed study in this regard. Arguing that soldier’s testimonies suggest that it is problematic to explain rape in the DRC in a reductionist way, that is as either an (almost) unavoidable aspect of warring or simply as a “weapon of war” (Eriksson Baaz & Stern, 2009). If we do this they warn, the myriad relations of power which make up the context in which sexual violence occurs is hidden (Eriksson Baaz & Stern, 2009). As a result they argue that sexual violence must be treated as part of – not as separate from – other forms of violence (Eriksson Baaz & Stern, 2010, p.4). Other scholars too have now shown that there is a great variation in the instances of war-time rape and a plethora of reasons for it taking place or not in different contexts (Wood, 2009; Cohen, 2013).

Therefore, although a large body of literature on sexual violence against women and its relationship to masculinity has emerged, and this has shaped the peacebuilding and human rights fields in particular, as important as the issue of sexual violence is, the field is now widening and

critiques of the violation-centric approach are increasingly being levelled. Transitional justice, with its violation-centric fixation (Cahn & Ní Aoláin, 2010), has found a comfortable confluence with the focus on sexual violence. This has to some degree provided some impetus to enhance the gendered focus of transitional justice mechanisms (such as truth commissions), but it also highlights how masculinity in societies emerging from conflict has been used in a limited way, that is to explain the roots of sexual and militarised violence rather than as core to a framework for a wider understanding of peacebuilding post-conflict.

### **Continuities and discontinuities of militarised violence**

The issue of how different forms of violence mutate and change from a period of intense civil conflict into the so-called peacebuilding context is a further area of significance discussed in some of the peacebuilding and transitional justice literature. Several studies have focused on how violence continues post-Agreement or ceasefire, and during times of political transition (Gregg, 2014; Ní Aoláin, & McWilliams, 2014). Much of this work has focused particularly on paramilitaries and combatants. In societies emerging from political conflict (such as South Africa or Northern Ireland), violence is often spoken about as deeply gendered and linked to masculinities which remain pervasive in the post-Agreement period. Violence during political conflict has been linked to ongoing criminal activity in gangs and xenophobia (Harris, 2001a; 2001b), as well as violence against women in the home with increased levels of domestic violence during periods of peace following a violent political conflict (Rehn & Johnson Sirleaf, 2002; Ní Aoláin, & McWilliams, 2014).

Some have contended that, for example, violent masculinities of the anti-apartheid era have become even more violent in the present South Africa (Walker, 2005a). The notion of “struggle masculinity” has been mooted in the South Africa context where the status attached to the violence of the freedom fighter, although no longer fully acceptable post-apartheid, has continued to permeate into the present (Xaba, 2001) finding expression in other ways such as violent crime (Harris, 2001a; 2001b). Others too have argued that, although acknowledging multiple forms of masculinity, there is often a continuation of a warrior tradition of resistance in contemporary South Africa politics (Suttner, 2009). Similarly in Timor-Leste, the resistance narrative that lauds militarised masculine figures and roles continues to have ramifications in the society today (Kent, 2014). Similar arguments have also been made in Northern Ireland (Ashe, 2009; Ashe, 2015).

Furthermore, it is also now commonplace to assert that war changes gender relations, often with women taking over traditionally male roles (Meintjies, Pillay, & Turshen, 2001; Sideris, 2001). As a result of war, women can take on roles as workers and labourers outside of the home;

opportunities which might not be available if the society was not in conflict (Cahn & Ni Aolain, 2010). After conflict, men often use domestic and other forms of violence and cohesion to reassert their dominance, undermining wartime gains (Meintjies et al., 2001; Ní Aoláin & McWilliams, 2014; Sideris, 2001).

Emasculation co-existing with the glorification of past political violence within a context of brutal living conditions and deprivation, are routinely identified in the literature as key to the ongoing manifestations of violent masculinities as societies ostensibly transition away from political violence. Violence and masculinity are interconnected with social and economic conditions (Reid & Walker, 2005a, p.7). It is ubiquitously asserted that demobilisation can often lead to a sense of emasculation and a resulting desire in some men, both ex-combatants and security forces, to reassert their power through violence (Gear, 2005). Enforced dependence and destitution (often the consequences of war) are also said to be experienced in particular emasculating ways by some men (Sankey, 2014). Poverty and rising expectations have “proved a tragic mixture of fostering violent masculinities” after conflicts (Morrell, 2001a, p.19). In a situation where men were deprived of their masculine roles, men use their physical strength, the one masculine attribute not affected by their social deprivation, to try to gain control in their environment (Hollander, 2014). As a male participant in a research study conducted by myself and others in South Africa noted (Hamber, 2007; Hamber et al., 2006):

So I think that's the reason why you'd find that incidents of violence against women...not that they were not there in the past ... but right now they are so in the open because it's the only weakness that you can now use against women. You can't use financial resources against them because now they are pretty much earning more than us. So we can't use that, whereas in the past we've had that leverage of saying I am working alone, I don't need your money, but right now you can't say that ... they are looking for another weakness within a woman. And that weakness right now is sexual weakness. That we can always rape you, we can physically show you our strength.

In summary, research from across the globe has proven that there is a relation between disempowered men, thwarted masculinities, and violent and destructive behaviour (Hollander, 2014; Jewkes, 2002, p.1424) meaning the legacy of political violence lingers long into the future. Although this thesis is now fairly well-established, there also seems to be a growing scholarship that is seeking to understand the discontinuities and not only the continuities between past and present in societies emerging from conflict.

Simply focusing on militants and soldiers as the main custodians of violence in societies

with a politically violence history, risks stereotyping them (Cock, 2001; Gear, 2005) when they are generally a heterogenous group (Hamber, 2010; Suttner, 2009). It is argued that we need to disaggregate the monolithic figures of the “paramilitary” or the “guerrilla” in order to capture the “variations that exist in each group with regard to rank, motivations, life projects and experiences of the war” (Theidon, 2007, p.75). It has been empirically shown that rape is not inevitable in war and that not all armed groups, either from non-state actors or state militaries, commit sexual violence (Wood, 2009), either during or after conflict. Causal explanations for rape during war are not borne out by research, and there is substantial variation between and within conflicts in terms of war-time rape (Cohen, 2013).

In the same way that sexual violence can be hypervisible, the violent masculinity of combatants can become the focus of attention at the expense of understanding the more insidious and wider role of masculinity in war and peace. We need to guard against a focus merely on the expressions of masculinity, however critical these are, which do not address structural factors such as unemployment and living conditions that exacerbate violent masculinities, and are directly linked to a range of other structural violations. Not to mention that post-conflict violent dispositions are not shared or typical of all ex-combatants, or of all men for that matter.

In societies such as South Africa, a focus on the direct violence of former political proponents (especially perpetuated by the violation focus of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission) has often over-shadowed the violence embedded in everyday life: on the sports field, in the classroom, in the home, in public spaces, in language and the media. Many whites sanctioned the use of violence, colluding, whether actively or not, with the “ordinary” violence perpetuated against black workers through state and enforced “benignly” by white citizens (e.g. acceptance of the Pass Laws and policing of the movement of black South Africans, paying poor wages, racism, participating in the destruction of families due to the migrant labour system). In the South African context the long-term brutalizing effect of the past is evidenced by the “masculine” solutions sought by many to social problems such as crime. Support for the death penalty and a desire for relaxed gun ownership laws are the truly non-racial issues in the new South Africa.<sup>5</sup> The result is that both everyday life for most citizens and the violent masculinities of those involved in direct violence (combatants, police, and the military) are deeply enmeshed with the violence of the everyday. Ongoing violence is not simply the result of the moments of exceptionality (e.g. torture, disappearance) carried out by far smaller numbers of people slipping into the present. In fact it may well be the very opposite, the moments of exceptionality were made possible by the violence of the everyday.

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<sup>5</sup> In a recent survey in South Africa it was found that three in four young South Africans think the death penalty should be reinstated see SAPA (2013). Bring back death penalty: survey, 22 February, 2013 available at <http://www.timeslive.co.za/local/2013/02/22/bring-back-death-penalty-survey>. Accessed 12 February 2015.

Furthermore, if we look at a society like South Africa with its high levels of domestic and criminal violence, as well as violent xenophobia, it would be difficult to sustain an argument that former combatants are responsible for the bulk of this, especially considering that those who were part of or witnessed the worse part of the apartheid conflict are now on average well over forty years old, themselves parents, carers or aging. Violence is considerably more endemic in the society than that which is simply linked narrowly to past political incidents, and now extends intergenerationally and across the categories of race and class.

Finally, as noted, although a link has and can be drawn between violent militarised masculinities as performed by perpetrators of violence during periods of armed conflict and violence that manifests in the present, there is increasing evidence that shows that how this manifests during periods of peace can vary enormously. If there is variation in the nature and motivation for violence in conflict (Eriksson Baaz & Stern, 2010; Wood, 2009; Cohen, 2013), it is logical to expect the same after a formal political conflict ends. In Northern Ireland, for example, paramilitary groups provided a hypermasculine environment, which young men used to assert dominance and social control, even if inwardly perhaps they feel the opposite (Gallagher & Hamber, 2015). However, now in a post-conflict Northern Ireland young men's roles have changed and there is little need for the defender/protector. The aggressive behavior of young men that was once accepted and applauded has now become a matter of criticism (Gallagher & Hamber, 2015). As a result, *some* young men continue to engage in risk-taking behavior and dissident paramilitary activity, but others have increasingly turned this violence inward and growing rates of self-harm and suicide have been identified (Hamber & Gallagher, 2014). Far from becoming a new generation of outwardly violent men, many of these young men have retreated from society and suffer mental health problems and low self-esteem (Gallagher & Hamber, 2015; Gallagher, Hamber, & Joy, 2012).

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

Informants who had effaced their masculine identities had a strong sense of self-reflection and they accepted the new reality. They accepted their loss of power and they

saw that they had to reconfigure themselves in a new social, political, and economic environment (Hollander, 2014).

In a similar vein, it is now increasingly evident that although violent masculinity is beneficial to men in certain contexts such as war and many aspire to the power that comes with it, peace can bring a different set of expectations and desires that move away from militarised or overtly violent masculinities.

A survey of depictions of manhood in Africa has shown that there are many different versions of masculinity, including, among many others, the warrior, the farmer, a form of masculinity shaped by the Western media, and religious constructions (Barker & Ricardo, 2005). Masculinity is depicted as not merely as typical masculine behaviours such as aggression or dominance using force or overt coercion, but rather the ability to earn a good salary, have financial independence and provide for the family (Barker & Ricardo, 2005). Similar findings are evident in Colombia, where despite histories of violence, most men aspired to a civilian life and positive economic prospects, but unfortunately the militarised nature of the society often forced many of them back into war (Theidon, 2007). In the DRC, research has shown that soldiers aspire more to a good desk job in the military doing management or administration with the prospect of an urban lifestyle, car and being a provider to women, than being an iconic idolised soldier fighting heroic battles (Eriksson Baaz & Stern, 2012). The construction of new types of militarised masculinity has also been observed in armies elsewhere, where the warrior mentality has been replaced with the compassionate soldier who can win hearts and minds, and also be intelligent enough to manage and offer rational and technocratic solutions to military problems (Joachim & Schneiker, 2012).

All this of course, does not mean that the technocratic soldier, or the poor man who aspires to economic success before a paramilitary lifestyle, are not performing a range of different new (and old) and changing masculinities. However, by pointing out the fissures and alternative masculinities that are on offer during peace time, we can see that focusing on violent masculinities associated with armed conflict, only tells part of the story. Of course, given the pernicious nature of violent masculinities and their ability, especially when coupled with poverty, to manifest in a multitude of destructive ways, we equally cannot ignore them.

### **Tensions between new (less violent) masculinities and inclusive social change**

Drawing on the arguments made above, therefore, in societies moving out of political conflict or post-Agreement it is unlikely that discourses challenging violent masculinities will not be present in the society at the same time as violent masculinities persist and mutate into the present. The

peacebuilding context will inevitably bring a new set challenges for certain type of masculinities post-conflict. Peacebuilding and transitional justice processes are often linked to the liberal peacebuilding agenda (Cahn & Ni Aolain, 2010), which comes with a push towards constitutionalism, equality legislation, human rights and more recently concepts such as reconciliation. It is probable, at least at the level of discourse and new policy, that violent masculinities will go unchecked. Given the internationalisation of peacebuilding processes, a gender equality discourse and subsequent reform, whether effective or not, will more than likely be present in the peacebuilding milieu. On top of this there are a range of global shifts towards legislative equality and arguably a rights revolution (Pinker, 2011). Certainly in many societies there are now higher levels of gender equality, recognition of the rights of others and tolerance of homosexuality, for example. It is not the purpose of this article to analyse how shifts in the global equality and rights agenda have come about and how real these changes are, or how global peacebuilding concepts have inserted themselves into many domestic agendas and whether this is positive or not, but rather to point out *some* of the consequences of this.

The first consequence is that in some societies an ostensibly reformed Western notion of manhood has started to emerge. In South Africa, the “new man” discourse has been documented. This is a vision of masculinity that is non-violent, monogamous, modern, responsible, and built on respect for themselves and others (Walker, 2005a). The “new man” does not hold stereotypical views, such as “women are nags”, “their place is in the home”, and “they should be beautiful and say little” (Morrell, 2001a). Although the “new man” is normally seen as a middle-class white phenomenon, it is being adopted in other contexts too, for example, in South Africa some black men are adopting this approach (Morrell, 2001a). Although violent masculinities are enacted in a multitude of places everyday in South Africa as the crime and domestic violence statistics would indicate, new and changing masculinities are also present.

Eric Anderson, although skeptical of the concept of the “new” man,<sup>6</sup> identifies in a range of so-called Western contexts changes in some masculinities that now allow men to more freely associate with femininity (Anderson, 2009). He argues that although orthodox masculinities continue to exist (e.g. inflating masculine worth, distancing oneself from issues perceived as feminine, and using “guy talk”), there is now evidence of what he calls inclusive masculinity (Anderson, 2005). He notes:

Those who subscribed to inclusive masculinity were shown to behave in effeminate ways without experiencing social stigma. This group largely chose not to value whether

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<sup>6</sup> Anderson draws on the work of Edwards (2006) to note that concept of the “new” man, like metro-sexuality, are invented by the media and risk being associated with a pattern of consumption rather than necessarily a gendered change (Anderson, 2009).

people perceived them as gay or straight, masculine or feminine. In this respect, they were less (or not at all) defensive about their heterosexuality, and they regularly stated support for homosexuality. Because these men had a culturally positive association with homosexuality, homophobia ceased to be a tool of masculine marginalization. Conversely, homophobic expression was stigmatized among men in this group. In fact, the inclusive form of masculinity proposed by this group was the near-antithesis of orthodox masculinity. Many self-identified heterosexual men in this (equally large) group found the label “metro-sexual” useful for self-identification of their modified masculine perspective (Anderson, 2005, p.351).

Anderson (2005; 2009; 2011) argues that in the so-called Western world homophobia is on the decline making his work optimistic about these changes as they signal new spaces for masculinities. He notes however this does not mean that Western societies are completely free of oppression and subordination between men and that there is no gender utopia; men still rule and orthodox masculinities still exist (Anderson, 2009; 2011). However, crucially, he shows that these can co-exist with inclusive masculinities and this brings into question hegemonic masculinity theory as multiple masculinities can cohabit without a hierarchy, which is at the core of the idea of hegemony in masculinities (Anderson, 2009; 2011).

Anderson is up front in saying that he makes “no claims as to the utility of inclusive masculinity theory in other than Anglo-American cultures” (p.98), but it is worth considering if there is any purchase on his observations and if he is highlighting yet another potential fissure in contexts where not only orthodox masculinities (using Anderson’s definition) and violent masculinities have been dominant.

First, the “new man” who is sensitive, engaged in equal power relations in the office and home, and so on, is essentially a concept generated in the well-resourced West, as noted. The extent to which the notions of such ideas as the “new man” will serve or will suit men in a poorly resourced context is, at least, debatable (Morrell, 2005). By his own admission Anderson notes that he has not analyzed the concept of inclusive masculinity completely within the context of race, religiosity, or other demographic variables (with the exception of class) (Anderson, 2011). What we know, for example, is that homophobia is alive and well in many societies. The International Men and Gender Equality Survey (IMAGES)<sup>7</sup> asked men from a range of so-called non-Western

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<sup>7</sup> The International Men and Gender Equality Survey (IMAGES) is a comprehensive household questionnaire on men’s attitudes and practices – along with women’s opinions and reports of men’s practices – on a wide variety of topics related to gender equality. From 2009 to 2010, household surveys were administered to more than 8,000 men and 3,500 women ages 18-59 in Brazil, Chile, Croatia, India, Mexico and Rwanda.

countries if being around homosexual men made them uncomfortable, and results ranged from a low of 21 percent of men in Brazil to a high of 89 percent in India (Barker et al., 2011).

Anderson (2009) notes that it is possible that inclusive masculinities may have socio-positive implications for men's cultural dominance over women. However, he primarily focuses on the relationships between men, rather than teasing out the full implications of changing (seemingly more positive) masculinities for women. Rachel O'Neill critiques Anderson's work arguing that his inclusive masculinity theory reflects and reproduces a postfeminist logic in which sexual politics is consigned to the past (O'Neill, 2015). Although she is not sure of hegemonic masculinity as a preferred concept, she feels at least it engages in the treatment of power. She notes that, despite the seeming positive shift taking place in Western societies with regard to homosexuality in particular, masculinity scholars should ask (among other questions):

How are men located in post-feminist culture, and how do these locations differ by virtue of race, class, sexuality, and age? How do men respond to and interact with postfeminist representations, discourses, and practices? (O'Neill, 2015, p.16).

If we attempt to answer such questions in the South African context, for example, it is clear that responses to what could be considered postfeminist representations (e.g. equality between the sexes is well on its way to being entrenched), the response from large groups of South African men has been less than encouraging. Elsewhere I and others have demonstrated through empirical research with men and women that a security-insecurity cycle can be seen in South Africa; that is that some of the advances in security for women, in social, political and egalitarian terms, even if not completely realised, have led to other physical insecurities for them as some men have opposed these changes often with violence in the private sphere (Hamber, 2010; Hamber et al., 2006). In other societies too an "uneasiness with changing dynamics of gender relations and public discourses about gender equality" has been observed, with men sometimes viewing "women's newly empowered position as marginalizing and disempowering to them"(Levtov, Barker, Contreras-Urbina, Heilman, & Verma, 2014, p.3). Men's violence against women and girls in this context can be seen not only as an attempt to reassert heteropatriarchal domination over women and girls but perhaps always an attempt to discursively and bodily invalidate these gains (Ratele, 2014, p.4-5). To alter these masculinities, radical change and challenge is needed that moves beyond recognising that some men feel their roles are in crisis or threatened, or that certain men practice a form of inclusive masculinity. What my and other research has shown is that on the whole men will probably not fully embrace the equality agenda, without at least a strong nudge and will often

actively and passively resist it (Hamber, 2010). This is not to say that all men will react in this way, some men will acquiesce (reluctantly) and still others will embrace it (Hamber, 2010).

Analysing data from a later IMAGES survey which focused on 8 countries<sup>8</sup> some positive trends in a range of countries are evident, although they co-exist with the negative:

It is clear that some men are practicing and living at least some elements of gender equality. Efforts to promote gender equality should tap into the support that some men already show for gender equality and women's empowerment, despite the apparent contradictions in men's responses that support for gender equality in the abstract while resisting it in practice (Levtov et al., 2014, p.28).

In other words, there clearly are trends towards a greater recognition of equality, but at the same time the notion of an inclusive masculinity (if one thinks of it beyond the notion of inclusivity as being about being comfortable with homosexuality) is a long way off in many countries. When one thinks of such concepts in societies in the extreme grip of conflict, or when war is prevalent and violent masculinities are linked to war crimes such as rape, the positive glow of inclusivity seems even further from the mark.

Therefore, concepts such as inclusive masculinity perhaps demonstrate what might be possible in some contexts and it highlights the changes that are and can happen with regard to masculinities—yet it remains questionable if such terms fully capture the complexity present in deeply divided societies and those in or emerging from armed military conflict. Indeed as Anderson (2009) observes, inclusive masculinities and how they play themselves out depends on the setting. Given the pernicious nature of male resistance to equality in many societies, and to return to Anderson's work, the question then becomes not why do some men practice an inclusive masculinity, but how did they get there? Given the types of societies where such masculinities have been observed, it is likely that access to resources has a role to play in this. So, are new inclusive masculinities a demonstration of yet another rupture in hegemonic masculinities, a new trajectory when social conditions are more favourable? Or if we are thinking about times of rapid political change, perhaps a drive to equality could also be about something completely different, that is a re-organising of power away from the violently performative to a more hidden set of masculine power relations or at least a range of tensions between the old and the new as peace unfolds.

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<sup>8</sup> The article quoted below presents findings from the International Men and Gender Equality Survey (IMAGES), one of the most comprehensive efforts of its kind to gather data on men's attitudes and practices related to gender equality in eight low- and middle-income countries: Brazil, Chile, Mexico, India, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Democratic Republic of Congo, and Rwanda. IMAGES gathered data from 10,490 males (Levtov et al., 2014).

## **Masculinities, peacebuilding and transitional justice**

*There is a crack in everything. That's how the light gets in – Leonard Cohen*

The brief overview of some areas of scholarship and empirical work that is emerging in the peacebuilding and transitional justice field, reveals that there are many possibilities for how the study of masculinities can be taken forward in a more concerted way. However, before discussing this, it is important to return to the observations about why masculinities as a field of study has not grown more rapidly especially in the area of transitional justice. As noted, there may be blind spots within various theoretical frameworks, as well as concerns and challenges that have prevented a more robust engagement with the field. These need to be engaged with and discussed more openly. Surfacing tensions between theorists coming from different perspectives is an important part of grappling with the difficult problem of masculinity.

To conclude this article I will now add two broad directions of travel for future exploration of the relationship between masculinity, peacebuilding and transitional justice.

### **Highlighting ruptures between hegemonic and new masculinities**

Violation-centric notions of transitional justice have found a fruitful, albeit limited, confluence with the issue of sexual violence, which has created opportunities and risks. As has been argued, the prevalence of certain types of violent masculinity “poses complex issues for undoing violence” (Cahn & Ni Aolain, 2010). An awareness of the impact and the various masculinities in post conflict times is necessary for a successful transition to sustained peace (Gallagher & Hamber, 2015). To this end, much work remains to be done in dealing with hyper-masculinity in times of war and peace, and ongoing attention is required to the continued exploration of the ability for violent masculinities to linger and transform long after the formal political conflict is over. Although I have tried to steer the reader’s gaze away from sexual violence, how violent masculinities link to domestic violence, and how the violence of men of violence in war can permeate the peace, this does not mean I do not see these as a critical area of intervention and scholarship. Direct sexual harm, despite being horrific and demanding support for its victims, provides a potential framework for unpacking the relationship between gender, violence, masculinity and sexual politics. The point I wish to make in this article however is that currently the limited work that is being done in the peacebuilding and transitional justice field on masculinity is leaning too heavily in that direction at the expense of other concerns.

Masculinity as a concept has become swamped with discussions about how it relates to

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

Furthermore, if we continue on the violation-centric route then the first entry into thinking about masculinity more seriously in the transitional justice field will invariably come through an engagement with male victims of sexual violence. Again this is important work (see for example Carlson, 2006; Dolan, 2014; Loncar, Henigsberg & Hrabac, 2010; Zawati, 2007), but a very small part of truly understanding the relationship between masculinities, peacebuilding and transitional justice.

Therefore the first challenge concerns how we locate the notion of masculinity within processes of political transition. The starting point here is not merely to look for the continuities between the violent masculinities of the past and present, but to ensure we pay adequate attention to the discontinuities between past and present too. Through the brief review provided in this article it is clear masculinities are changing (or arguably have always been changing). There are multiple reactions to political violence and brutalisation that move beyond the re-enactment of violent masculinities during times of peace. Liz Walker says that in South Africa we need to think about masculinities as not essentially gender-equitable, alternative or progressive, but new, ambivalent and embryonic, and vying for space for expression (Walker, 2005a, 2005e). The new South Africa, with all its liberalism, has exposed different masculinities, past, present and evolving (Hamber, 2010). Discussion of masculinity must therefore be infused with an analysis that addresses different racial and class positions, not to mention sexual locations. An intersectionality-driven analysis of transitional justice and masculinity is needed (Ní Aoláin & Rooney, 2007; Rooney, 2007). Such an analysis must recognise that all masculinities influence one another (Morrell, 2001d).

Again turning to South Africa, although white masculinity has been hegemonic, urban black and rural African masculinities are now jostling for ascendancy (Morrell, 2001d). Different masculinities are co-existing in tension in different social spaces. In this regard perhaps Anderson (2009) is correct in asserting that the concept of hegemonic masculinity is limited in that it implies there is a single over-arching hegemonic masculinity in any context. I am not fully convinced, however, that the notion of inclusive masculinities can fill this gap in societies where most

masculinities are anything but inclusive, and as such Beasley's idea of *supra* and *sub* hegemonic forms, which permits discussion of hegemonic masculinities in vertical as well as horizontal terms is more appropriate (Beasley, 2008). In this context different hegemonic masculinities may exist but are constantly negotiated and resisted (Beasley, 2008).

Whether this is theoretically correct or not, however, what the discussion highlights is that masculinities are always in tension, infused with power and changing, and perhaps even undergoing more rapid change in societies going through dramatic shifts such as emerging from war. To fully understand this, ethnographic observations and/or thick descriptions of the complex diversity of masculinities in peacebuilding and transitional justice processes in the everyday are needed. In doing this, the task at hand, as Kimberly Theidon reminds us, becomes one to open the space for alternative masculinities (Theidon, 2009). This requires pointing to the ruptures between masculinities as they emerge and change. These should be accentuated to increase contestation between masculinities, seeking change through confrontation. This is where transformation will happen, not merely in highlighting what new and more inclusive masculinities might be possible or enshrining change in law. In other words, both a structural analysis and a more comprehensive understanding of the interrelationships between men and women, and among men themselves, is needed. Therefore, a robust debate should begin among transitional justice experts. The point of departure should be to look into the cracks that are continually emerging between masculinities, rather than to narrow the discussion from the start by over-analysing violent masculinities and their ramifications.

### **Deconstructing masculinities in the structural and everyday**

Like Rachel O'Neill, however, I think the notion of considering the multiple levels of power implicit within and between different masculinities, and masculinities and femininities, is a worthwhile project and that the concept of hegemonic masculinity nudges us in that direction. As we try to analyse complex systems of masculinity it is important to remember that Connell notes that hegemonic masculinity "is achieved largely through an ideological ascendancy over a cultural mix – moral persuasion and consent rather than brute force (although such ascendancy may be backed up by force)" (Hooper, 2001 referring to Connell's work). As alluded to earlier in the article, particular masculinities are valorised, not necessarily consciously or deliberately, creating a norm to which men aspire even if they often do not achieve this (Hooper, 2001). In short, my reading of hegemonic masculinity, or at least what I am extracting from it, is the normative and invisible nature of masculinities and how they operate at multiple sites and levels. It might mean that certain masculinities at particular times might be dominant (during a political conflict, e.g.

militarised violence), but it does not mean they are necessarily the same as a hegemonic masculinity (or the layers of hegemony that can arguably exist within and across societies). As Connell and Messerschmidt (2005) argue:

[I]t is difficult to see how the concept of hegemony would be relevant if the only characteristics of the dominant group were violence, aggression, and self-centeredness. Such characteristics may mean dominant but hardly would constitute hegemony—an idea that embeds certain notions of consent and participation by the subaltern groups (cited in Messerschmidt, 2008, p.105).

A power analysis, which is concerned with the invisible rather than visible manifestations of masculinity, moves us away from thinking about masculinity merely as a set of violent and visibly oppressive practices, but rather as an embedded social construct linked to intersectionalities of race, ethnicity and class that can adapt and change. This type of analysis, to draw on Beasley's work, is concerned with hegemony as a political mechanism that can produce solidarity between different masculinities in a hierarchical order (Beasley, 2008). This type of thinking is vital if we are to consider masculinity more seriously within societies in transition characterised by the ending of armed conflict and the emergence of new forms of power. It is one way we can understand why some man in a conflict zone see more masculine power in a military desk job than being a soldier on the battlefield. Power distribution has changed; he can wield more masculine power, in different ways, if he has a stable salary, flashy car and luxurious house, while being linked commanding or managing other men. At the same time his ability to exercise this new masculinity can also have been legitimated by the foot soldiers on the battlefield who might have limited social power, but exercise a different form of masculinity and help uphold a certain form of hegemonic masculinity, as does the soldier in a suit.<sup>9</sup>

It also helps explain why choosing the political party over revolutionary armed insurrection (in South Africa and Northern Ireland) is not merely about political pragmatism, but also involves a realisation (conscious or not) that (masculine) power can also be exercised in different ways. Of course, party political politics is better than violence, but by looking for the less visible manifestation of direct violent masculinities we can start to see how politics too can replicate (always changing) masculinities. Masculinity provides a framework for thinking about how the guerilla turned peacemaker can be still be the rational and decisive “big man” who brings the revolutionaries with him into a peace process bringing an end to hostilities, but at the same time

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<sup>9</sup> I am drawing here, but changing and applying to a war context, Beasley's notion that “Working-class blokes may not actually wield power, but they can provide the means to legitimate it” (Beasley, 2008, p.91).

institutes a new government that is male-centric and still controls resources through new, less violent means. Masculinities are therefore deeply entangled with these power systems and we need to carefully consider how masculinities are interconnected with the post-conflict social, political, and economic outcomes.

To this end, it is unlikely that the notion of inclusive masculinities is completely relevant to the type of contexts discussed in this article.<sup>10</sup> Indeed such masculinities are more tolerant and could even start to rival or at least co-exist with what Anderson calls orthodox masculinities. But a notion like hegemonic masculinities beckons us to consider relational and hidden issues of power, while a term like inclusive masculinity perhaps sets us on a path searching for pre-defined notion of what a more “favourable” masculinity might look.

To return to a question I posed earlier, the issue is why have inclusive masculinities emerged in some contexts? As noted, one issue might be that more inclusive forms of masculinity emerge where men have more choice and feel less emasculated by their society – this would fit with the theories I outlined earlier. That said, I am less interested in the nature of inclusive masculinities, and more interested in what is underneath their emergence. In a similar way that the revolutionary movement that gives up violence for constitutional politics, or the Western society that is slowly moving away from homophobia, is to be welcomed, we need to be careful that the promise of these changes does not mask new forms of power still linked primarily to the male subject.

Think of it this way, who is more powerful and demonstrating a type of hegemonic masculinity: the gun-toting homophobic macho gang member in the *barrio* or the metrosexual male buying Apple shares from his laptop in Starbucks? A farmer who lost his land during political conflict and now is a labourer in the city, drinks too much and takes it out on his wife violently, or a politician in an expensive suit banging the table while he outlines the merits of welfare cuts, limited worker rights, austerity and increasing the size of the military? The former combatant who has lost his livelihood, cannot find employment and is prone to depression and bar fights, or the white, tolerant, open-minded male academic speculating about his woes in academic journals? How did all these men attain their power and how are they inter-related? And finally, where are the women, either as dominated by the men in the vignettes outlined above or resisting or complicit in propping them up?<sup>11</sup>

These brief examples highlight what I consider concepts such as hegemonic, subordinate,

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<sup>10</sup> In fairness to Eric Anderson’s work, as noted earlier in this article he never claims that his concept of inclusive masculinity is universal and applicable to all contexts. And I am trying to rise to Anderson’s challenge (Anderson, 2009, p.98) to utilise his theory in other contexts to test its utility.

<sup>11</sup> Although I am using caricatures of certain men in this example, I do this to demonstrate the relationship of masculinity to different forms of social power. The aim is to highlight the context in which hegemony operates, breeds and replicates. The highlighting of specific behaviours does not mean hegemony is defined by such characteristics as it is a more insidious invisible process.

and marginal masculinities are trying to articulate (Connell, 2005a; Whitehead & Barrett, 2005). Male dominant systems clearly are built on power hierarchies among men (Cockburn, 2001) and we also know that women often actively participate in facilitating men's militarized masculinity (Theidon, 2009).<sup>12</sup> The examples used earlier in the article also highlight the types of analyses that are needed if we are to begin to properly grapple with questions of masculinity within the transitional justice field. We need to move beyond the fixation with the practice and expression of violent masculinity to articulate the hidden forces that drive or at least intersect with and exacerbate such behavior. Drawing on Beasley's (2008) analysis we should consider how different types of masculinity, gender relations and masculine practice can legitimate hegemonic masculinities. To put this another way, the arms dealer with his penchant for Big Game angling and mega unethical arms sales, and the militant in the jungle, are intimately connected in the creation of violent masculinities that fuel conflict, just as the arms dealer's wife who lovingly prepares his dinner and irons his shirts, and the militant's war-bride forced into servitude, are part of picture. In the same way, masculinity is not merely about the violence of the past and present and how it is embodied in the actions of militants during and after conflict, but can also be expressed within the peace process itself.

This is a project of intellectual and activist deconstruction, as much as a question for policy makers, who need to consider how the manifestations of masculinity that drive conflict are interlinked with many factors from private capital, post-conflict economics and the availability of weapons that all exist within a web of intersectional social relations. To this end, we need to move beyond a violation-centric notion of masculinity and transition to an analysis of the everyday.

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

Peace processes, especially those structured around national identity politics, are invariably male-crafted and imbued with value-laden constitutional hierarchies (Brown & Ní Aoláin, 2015). The masculinity of the constitutional settlement is often linked to recognition politics in ethnically divided societies (Brown & Ní Aoláin, 2015). Handrahan (2004) posits that like the conflict

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<sup>12</sup> There are many reasons for this that are beyond the scope of this article, but in short is linked to "an odd intersectionality as women themselves take on board a role in reproducing dominant social and cultural norms" (Ní Aoláin & McWilliams, 2014, p.21).

environment, the post-conflict environment is also “vividly about male power systems, struggles and identity formation” (Handrahan, 2004, p.433) (p. 433). In Northern Ireland, it has been argued that peacebuilding is also a gendered terrain. The way that former male paramilitaries have adopted roles as peacebuilders post-Agreement, especially in community restorative justice processes, has also hidden the role of women in such processes and created peacebuilding processes that are shaped around historical forms of masculinity (Ashe, 2015), although these practices have also been helpful at other times in formalizing an array of local restitution practices (Rooney & Swaine, 2013). As Cahn and Ní Aoláin remind us, peace processes and transition bring significant changes that are linked to men and masculinity:

So, men who were in power are losing power, other men (domestic and international) are taking their place, and as is often the case when a conflict stalemate arises, internationals (generally culturally and politically differentiated other males) are coming into a society to fill a vacuum. (Cahn & Ní Aoláin, 2010) (check quote and page).

In the final instance, therefore, we need an analysis of masculine power within and between the very structures that are said to be essential to bringing and building the peace in societies moving out of violence. We need to understand how structures such as truth commissions, government inquiries and committees, funding agencies, demobilization processes, transnational corporations, development processes, strategic plans, international monetary bodies, educational institutions and the media, among many others, reinforce different forms of masculinity and power. The question is therefore not just how to prevent violent masculinities manifesting through the actions of individuals or groups of men (and some women), but how to stop pervasive masculinities that marginalise the poor, not only through the naked exercise of power, but through the hidden masculine cultures operating within a variety of hierarchies and social spaces.

### **Acknowledgement**

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