Roman Catholic Masculinities: A Korean Roman Catholic Ethical Perspective

Hoon Choi

Loyola University Chicago
LOYOLA UNIVERSITY CHICAGO

ROMAN CATHOLIC MASCULINITIES:
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HOON CHOI

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS</th>
<th>iii</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LIST OF TABLES</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ABSTRACT</td>
<td>xi</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## INTRODUCTION

- Historical Consideration: Dualism 2
- Theological Scholarship 7
  - Women Writers (Roman Catholic) 7
  - Men Writers 7
  - Christine E. Gudorf 9
- Scientific Scholarship 10
- Global Consideration- Korea 12
- Reconstruction 13
- Review of Literature 14
- Contribution of Dissertation 20
- Research Methods 21
- Chapter Outlines 23
  - Chapter One: Historical Consideration 23
  - Chapter Two: Feminist Criticisms 24
  - Chapter Three: Theological Criticisms by men… and Beyond 24
  - Chapter Four: Scientific Criticisms 25
  - Chapter Five: Global Consideration 26
  - Chapter Six: Constructing a More Just Model for Masculinities 26
  - Conclusion and Epilogue 27

## CHAPTER ONE: HISTORICAL CONSIDERATION

- Origins of Dualism 29
- Judaism: Procreation, Patriarchy, and Nuptial Metaphor 32
- Androcentrism and the First Two Centuries CE 37
- Ethics of the Pastoral Epistle 41
  - Identifying the “Problem” 42
  - Comments on the Background of the Text 43
  - Comments on the Text 45
  - A Necessary Digression 52
  - Galatians 3:28 60
  - The Postmodern View 65
- Early Christianity 69
  - Tertullian 69
  - Augustine 71
  - Thomas Aquinas 76
Workplace 201
Persistent Masculinity 204
Refutation: Mythopoetic Men’s Movement 206
Explaining the Omnipresence of Sex Differentiation 210
   Table 3. Conspicuous Descriptors of Gender Attributions 211
Conclusion 213

CHAPTER FIVE: MASCULINITY IN SOUTH KOREA 216
Gender Roles in Korea 217
Sŏnglihak 220
Korean Masculinity—Taejangbu 224
Korean Femininity 226
Korean Gender 228
Militarization of a Nation 230
Korean Military Culture 230
Masculinity in Contemporary Korean Society 238
The Roman Catholic Church in Korea 243
The Dangers 248
Signs of Hope: Changes in Korea 250
Veritatis splendor 256
Octogesima adveniens 261
Conclusion 264

CHAPTER SIX: CONSTRUCTING A MORE JUST MODEL: MASCULINITIES 266
Mutuality 267
Jesus Christ as the Model 271
Autonomy 273
Nonmaleficence and Beneficence 275
Justice 278
Men, Body, and Sacramentality 281
Richard Rohr, O.M.F. 285
The Knights of Columbus and Fathers for Good 288
Sacramental Moments for Men 290
Conclusion 297

EPILOGUE 299
   A Case for Men’s Experience, Men’s Narrative 299
   Men Become Real Men after the Service! 300

BIBLIOGRAPHY 306

VITA 331
LIST OF TABLES

Table 1. Types of Sexual Complementarity in Magisterial Teaching 102
Table 2. Occurrence of Physical Diversity Chart 187
Table 3. Conspicuous Descriptors of Gender Attributions 211
ABSTRACT

Over the last thirty or so years, feminist scholars have been highly critical of the ways that gender roles have been understood, particularly in religious institutions, including Roman Catholicism. Although some changes have been made (e.g., women are able to take on roles that were prohibited in the recent past), serious problems still remain. Gender roles are seen as “given” by God and/or as a part of our human nature. The many problems relating to gender roles affect not only women, but also men, yet very little attention has been paid to their negative implications for men. This dissertation proposes to develop a more adequate understanding of masculinity from a Roman Catholic perspective. In order to develop this, I will draw on historical perspectives, feminist scholarship, scholarship by men on gender, and recent scholarship in the natural and social sciences. In addition, I will show how this idea of masculinity relates to a culture outside the West: Korea. It is possible, I will argue, to develop an understanding of masculinity that moves beyond gender complementarity (i.e. “separate but equal” attitude towards gender), that allows for the flourishing of both sexes, and that promotes a just and loving way of living as a man.
INTRODUCTION

In the recent past, scholarly treatments concerning gender highlighted problems—from unfair treatment of individuals to the unjust structures of institutions of the society—for women. While many people around the world have benefited from these wonderful and pioneering works, what has largely been missing from them, especially from the theological community, and more specifically from works by Roman Catholic theologians, are works by and about men. That is, there has been no extensive study about what kind of effects these old constructions of gender might also have for and on men. I intend to show in this dissertation that the policies and ideologies that have been and still are harmful for women are also simultaneously harmful for men. There has not been a project dedicated to finding out just how harmful the complementary norms for gender roles are for men, or to developing a more just outlook on masculinity by and in the context of Roman Catholic men. There certainly has been some work on masculinity in the Protestant context and some discussion of masculinity in the Roman Catholic context. Nevertheless, none of them deal directly with the Roman Catholic vision of masculinity per se.

The significance of this project will go beyond the context of Roman Catholic ethics in the western world. It is meant to stimulate global discussions. As such, I will make my observations, analysis, criticisms, and reconstructions as a Korean Roman Catholic man with examples coming from history, social and natural sciences,
scholarship by men and women, and from the Korean tradition as well as the Korean Roman Catholic heritage, since similar problems exist in Korea. This is not to claim that such an approach will automatically qualify my dissertation as a work that is globally true. However, I will be able to make the case that traditional Roman Catholic accounts of masculinity are problematic for both men in the West and in one other, non-western country, namely Korea—enabling later works to add to this project.

In the end, my hope is that the final product of this dissertation will be helpful for anyone, but especially men, who struggles with the religious and societal conceptions of male roles. It is meant to help anyone struggling with traditional notion of gender and hence the contribution will be universal—or “catholic,” in the true meaning of the word.

**Historical Consideration**

To do so, I must first make at least a very brief mention about the earlier stages of the problem.¹ Thinkers of Greek and Roman antiquity, such as Aristotle, operated with dualistic ideologies, which associated women with the characteristics of body, cold, wet, and impurity while men were associated with the higher characteristics of soul, hot, dry, and pure. However, their views were diverse and even in the earliest forms of Christianity we do not find a monolithic view of gender. Furthermore, it is important to keep in mind that Christian views did not come into existence out of a vacuum. Certainly, the Jesus movement had its own color and uniqueness but, however unique and however different, it was nevertheless profoundly influenced by dualism in Greek thought, Stoicism and Gnosticism, and Jewish thought and customs. Based on the available biology of the time,

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¹ I intend to write this part as a quick summary. While an extensive look into the historical development may be very important, my focus will be to critique complementary model for gender roles and to develop a more adequate understanding of masculinity. As such, I will keep this section only as a brief historical overview.
males and females were not simply different, but often males (and their seed) were seem to be better, or even perfect, and females were imperfect, failed males, or “mistakes” of biology. One possible theological consequence of these understandings of biology was the creation of the view that males were better equipped for salvation and that women had to become de facto males in order to enter the Kingdom.²

Even without a direct linkage to Greek dualism, one finds the superior status of men over women in traditional interpretations of some references to the image of God of the Old Testament (Hebrew Bible). The ruling metaphor in describing such a status is that of bridegroom and bride. As noted in the Letter to the Bishops of the Catholic Church on the Collaboration of Men and Women in the Church and in the World (2004) by the Congregation of the Doctrine of the Faith (henceforth CDF), the well-known Old Testament image stresses that “God makes himself known as the bridegroom who loves Israel, his bride.”³ Such imagery lives on in the New Testament and in our current Roman Catholic teachings. While the image of bridegroom/bride encompasses positive images such as the intimacy of marriage, the physical desires and delights of marriage, and God’s tender love, care, closeness, and delight for God’s people, what has traditionally been subtly stressed are other aspects of this metaphor. That is, what has been quietly handed down is its linkage of only men with God and Jesus.

Many scholars find this linkage problematic for a variety of reasons. Such a method understands the divine essence fundamentally and essentially as male, inevitably


³CDF, Letter to the Bishops of the Catholic Church on the Collaboration of Men and Women in the Church and in the World (2004), paragraph #9
placing maleness closer to the divine than femaleness. Furthermore, this method suggests that the bride “responds” to the bridegroom’s invitation, putting women in a receptive, not initiatory, role as later exemplified by Mary who listens and receives.4

Influenced by their *Sitz im Leben*, the canon of the New Testament (the “Second Testament”)—along with the writings of early and medieval Christian thinkers—upheld the gender *status quo* of the ancient times (i.e. *Haustafeln*, *paterfamilias*, and lower status for and blameworthiness of women for sin). Furthermore, with a few very important but aberrant exceptions, such views of women, and consequently of men, held sway in Roman Catholic documents for centuries up to the modern times. I believe that the first significant glimpse of modification came with Pope John Paul II (JPII hereafter) in 1981. In *Familiaris consortio*, the language of submission and inferiority disappeared. Unlike many5 of the preceding official documents, it did not include the same kind of emphasis on subjection and obedience. In fact, JPII opened up many more possibilities for women not seen up to that point. Following St. Ambrose, he maintained that a man is “not her master but her husband” and a woman is “not your slave but your wife.” The instruction to the man is to “reciprocate her attentiveness to you and be grateful to her for her love.” JPII urged men to pay “due respect for the different vocation of men and women,” and

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5 Many but certainly not all. JPII was not the first to rid of the language of submission and inferiority. For example, the Second Vatican Council made great strides by making many affirmations for women and their roles in *Gaudium et spes Part2. Chap. 1*
said that the church must promote as far as possible their equality of rights and dignity.\textsuperscript{6}

Further still, he did not limit women’s role to the domestic sphere and gave some acknowledgment for the possibilities of women working, at least in some contexts, outside their homes. In relation to the view previously held in the Church, this certainly is a much needed step in the right direction.

Having said all that and certainly not taking anything away from the brave movements that JPII made especially in the context of the documents from less than a century before him, there are yet more possibilities for improvement. While JPII certainly made progress in giving women some possibilities for advancement in society and in their families, progress is allowed only insofar as it is contained in certain complementary expectations. That is, JPII cautioned that women should not lose their “femininity” and that they should put their family and maternal obligation over any other obligations (and/or perhaps over their dreams).\textsuperscript{7} While I do not have much problem with JPII’s insistence on a “family first” attitude,\textsuperscript{8} it becomes problematic when the obligation is only stressed for women. One can only imagine how much better an encyclical it would have been if he also urged men to make sure to put paternal and family obligations over any other obligations.\textsuperscript{9} With this missing from the document, one can only come up with

\textsuperscript{6} \textit{Familiaris consortio}, (On the family), No. 23-25.

\textsuperscript{7} Ibid. 23. “On the other hand the true advancement of women requires that clear recognition be given to the value of their maternal and family role, by comparison with all other public roles and all other professions.”

\textsuperscript{8} I do find it problematic that such an attitude presumes and expects only “married life.” Ones who choose to or are called to live a single life or ones who live in homosexual relationships are not considered. While I find this fact problematic as such, it becomes a greater problem when we are talking about a considerable amount of people.

\textsuperscript{9} It is of great importance to note here that JPII did acknowledge that “the absence of a father causes psychological and moral imbalance and notable difficulties in family relationships.” Ibid 25. While he
a definition of masculinity for Catholic men that puts work obligation over family and material support for the family before its emotional and interpersonal support as well as what else men might be called by God to do.

One should not mistakenly assume that I am dismissing such attitudes completely. There are noble efforts made by many parents who put their own interests second and family interests first. However, it becomes a problem when this concept is pushed so far as to the point where women are limited to (sometimes *less socially valued*) domestic roles or men are *de facto* reduced to a breadwinner and/or a disciplinarian of the family. It is my contestation in this project that such documents have brought Roman Catholic men and women to the point not only of injustice but also unhealthy relationships for all the members of the family.

This brief survey of history demonstrates the fact that the dualistic ideology of the ancient times and its biology, along with the biblical influences and theological writings over the years, are the original sources of the problem and they have profoundly contributed to essentialism and to the modern Roman Catholic notion of gender complementarity. Further investigation shows that the presumption of gender complementarity often results in harmful, unjust relationships. Moreover, such an approach yields few resources for a model of Christian masculinity; men are continually seen as the norm and have a little chance at self-criticism and improvements.

called for fathers to be *more* involved, he never went as far as to say that such family obligation should take precedence over all the other obligations; he did make that claim for mothers. It is also noteworthy again that this model only considers femininity and masculinity in a married family life.
Theological Scholarship

Women Writers (Roman Catholic)

Thus far, many helpful Catholic thinkers, most of them women, contributed in bringing forth such problems into the realm of discussion. Starting with the December 1975 issue of *Theological Studies*, many voices followed including, and certainly not exclusively, Lisa Sowle Cahill, Barbara Hilkert Andolsen, Christine Gudorf, Anne E. Patrick, Rosemary R. Ruether, Jean Porter, Susan A. Ross, Christina Traina, Patricia Beattie Jung, Ada Maria Isasi-Diaz, and Julie Hanlon Rubio, to name a few. I emphasize again that there are many more important writers beyond this list, but since femininity is not my main focus for this project *per se*, this list of authors will suffice for the moment. The only point to be made at this juncture is that I stand on the shoulders of these seminal thinkers without whom I would not have been informed enough for my conviction for the project at hand.

Men Writers

While these thinkers helped me to understand that the road to justice is still under construction, there have not been many Catholic men who have spoken out for and about men. Even in the writings that find the current official Catholic paradigm of “complementarity” to be problematic, the criticism is only in terms of how it has been harmful for women or what men owe women as a result (with James B. Nelson, Christine E. Gudorf, and perhaps Daniel Maguire as notable exceptions). Certainly, men may owe much since much has been given to them. But what many thinkers have missed thus far has been the fact that in order to “pay back” what is owed, in order to enhance the life of
women or any other, one must make sure that one is in the condition to do so. The modern (popular) trend, albeit not completely unfounded, is to blame men for much of the ills—related to gender—of the world.\textsuperscript{10} However, according to Connell Cowan and Melvyn Kinder,\textsuperscript{11} this is neither therapeutic nor effective, at least not for heterosexual women who may be seeking a suitable life-partner.

Some male writers from other Christian traditions have written on the subject. We may be able to build on their findings and arguments and develop a model appropriate for Catholic men. Of the works available, the best work has been done by James B. Nelson. He calls for embracing masculinity. What is remarkable about that is the fact that he does not simply embrace one or another aspect typically assigned to “maleness.” His approach calls for the embracing of all facets of masculinity. What makes such a methodology and anthropology so remarkable is that we do not have to dismiss the traditional notions of maleness completely. We can embrace these notions \textit{along with} other aspects of masculinity that have been hidden behind gender stereotypes.

Nelson is not alone in his quest. Daniel Maguire is a Catholic male writer who has written extensively on the injustice that many groups have suffered because of strict gender role assignments. Clearly, there is no doubt that it is important that he claimed so as a Catholic man. Furthermore, he has not only rightly identified the consequences from the mistreatment of women, but also recognized the negative implications that came with macho-masculinity—a problem that extends not only to the social but also to the

\textsuperscript{10} Ex-CBS reporter Bernard Goldberg, for example, criticizes the media and the kinds of “male bashing” comments that the media get away with in popular news shows in the New York Times Bestseller, \textit{Bias: A CBS Insider Exposes How the Media Distorts the News} (New York: HarperCollins, 2003).

theological sphere. Nevertheless, most of his work hinges on rightly analyzing the cause or identifying the oppressors but with no mention of bettering situations for men. One may argue that in fact by finding what is just for the oppressed is finding the solution for men in the long run. That may be true but it is my argument throughout this project that it cannot be done by harming or unjustly treating men. That is, a far better solution will develop with a model that not only includes justice for women but also considers the overall well-being of men. The first step in the right direction, then, is identifying to what extent traditional gender role assigning has been harmful for men, a process that Maguire has already started. It is only then that we can move to constructing a model for Catholic masculinity and its appropriate gender role paradigm.

Christine E. Gudorf

A Catholic feminist theologian, Christine Gudorf has already initiated, and was indeed the impetus for, this project. While investigating the effects of the traditional Judeo-Christian model of family, she also examined the effects of such a model on men. Women were not the only victims of the effects stemming from the fact that men had traditionally conformed to the headship/breadwinner role within the family. Men had also suffered from such a system—perhaps in a different form and degree—but suffered nonetheless. Not only did men carry the burden of responsibility of providing material support for the family, but also many of them had to forego their dreams, or at least the kind of a job they wanted, as a consequence of the assignment of certain kinds of work to men. Often a job is understood as involving sacrifice for their family and many do not feel the freedom to choose work through which they can be satisfied. Furthermore, there exists a further effect on men in that the society, often via the media, that tells them to be
emotionally detached and isolated, and to relate to others primarily in terms of power, provision, and pay check. Hence, men too are victims of carrying the burden of sole responsibility for material support, of missing out on many important human experiences within the family, and being allowed to find identity only in power and responsibility without due consideration for their emotions which in turn have possible grave effects of violence in them and against their own families.

Scientific Scholarship

While this project is not socio-biological or psychological in nature, the findings of these disciplines must be mentioned since ignoring the data may have detrimental results for this project. (One can imagine, for example, how grave consequences can result from developing a model for gender roles based on outdated Aristotelian biology by ignoring what we now know about men and women.) In recent years, as the dimorphic sexual model has been challenged more than ever before, socio-biological findings are beginning to acknowledge that a traditional model for gender may be harmful even for men. The reason is twofold. Many men simply do not find the traditional model for men something with which they can identify. Also, a great number of them do not have a model from which they can work because certain models—like the Catholic model—do not spell out explicitly what masculinity means. When masculinity is not acknowledged in name, one cannot really deal with it. When men find themselves in such a state, they feel anxious about their masculine identity which leads to being less prepared for being strong and capable men and/or fathers. Not being able to show a loving and gentle side to their sons or daughters, men often end up handing down just one instruction, namely to be aggressive. The sons, like their fathers, often develop depression and anxiety because
they see themselves as failures when they do not meet the demand of that masculine image.\textsuperscript{12} Such a vicious cycle can lead to a number of social problems.

The somewhat dated works of Joe Dubbert, Don Welch, Clyde W. Franklin, and Joseph Pleck, along with Michael Lamb, Margaret Mead, Carol Gilligan, Nancy Chodorow, Lillian Rubin, Marie Augusta Neal, Myriam Miedzian, and the more recent works of Anne Fausto-Sterling, Michael S. Kimmel and Joan Roughgarden as well as some works from \textit{The Journal of Men’s Studies} foster discussions about whether men are naturally hardwired in certain ways or not—or at least not to the extent that we have hitherto thought. That is, more data are available now that beg discussion on just how much receptive \textit{and} active qualities—along with other characteristics assigned to each gender—are \textit{all} part of who we are as sexual beings. If it turns out that we have been wrong about what is “natural” for being a man simply because we decided to focus on one aspect of men, then, we need to modify—with some help from socio-theological works of Christine Gudorf and Karen Lebacqz—any prescriptions that resulted from it accordingly.

\textsuperscript{12} Because of repressed emotions to fit the masculine norm or of not living up to the masculine expectations, many men deal with the depression with alcohol and/or violence. See Korean Woman Institute ed., \textit{New Lecture in Feminist Studies [Sae Yŏsonghakkangŭi]} (DongNyuk: Seoul, Korea, 1999), [The National Library of Korea ISBN: 89-7297-405-603300] especially 121-312. Also, when the economic crisis hit Korea (known as the “IMF crisis” because the Korean government sought an IMF bailout), in 1997, many lost their jobs. Many men could not face up to the fact that they could not meet the demand of the masculine image—of being the breadwinner, and economically able/responsible—and many chose to live in the streets (or even commit suicide), rather than going back to his family and live as “powerless men.” See Masanori Sasaki et al, \textit{Men Studies and Men Movement about Feminism} (in Korean), (WonMiSa: Seoul, Korea, 2007), especially 293-298.
Global Consideration- Korea

An important point must also be made in conjunction with these findings. That is, such gender role assignments are not only harmful for men of the West, and Catholic men in particular, but this fact may also be true globally. To demonstrate, I will look to Korean men and Korean Catholics in particular, as a test case. I could have chosen many other examples from many other traditions/countries but as a Korean-born man, I have many direct and personal experiences—including the two years spent in the Korean military—that enabled me to formulate strong convictions and to draw upon resources in Korean for the subject-matter at hand.

By drawing upon the similarities among the foundations for traditional Korean Neo-Confucian notions of masculinity, for compulsory military service for Korean men only, and the traditional Roman Catholic model for men, one is able to see that such definitions of masculinity and gender roles do much harm to Korean society and subsequently to the flourishing of the Korean Roman Catholic Church. It is unclear what or who exactly is culpable. Some may put the accountability on the Neo-Confucian mores as such or perhaps on men who because they also might profit from this model perpetuate and prolong this harmful notion of masculinity. However, it will be my continual argument in this project that a simple indictment of pre-Christian tradition or of men is not only unfair but impractical. A far more effective and fair indictment must target all those power institutions—governmental and ecclesial—that propagate and bless such notions of masculinity. There are alarming similarities between the conception of masculinity within the Korean military and the Korean Catholic culture. Therefore, both the Korean state and the Roman Catholic Church should be held responsible for the
continuation of such destructive gender requirements. The victims of such requirements are women and men; there is a dire need for a new paradigm for masculinity that does not impinge upon their male dignity. That model of masculinity, then, must be something beyond a gradation or complementarity and that fosters the flourishing of both sexes.

**Reconstruction**

The reconstruction of masculinity for Catholics must, then, involve discovering a model that works not only for the U.S. and Korea but also has wider implications for finding ideas that are adequate for the time/place and the tradition. Since the project is focused on Catholic conceptions of masculinity, it must be—without jettisoning the great tradition altogether—a model that is truly universal to be truly Catholic. Hence, taking cues from Dawn M. Nothwehr, one is able to discover different ideas of gender that are much more mutual, rather than hierarchal or complementary, *within* the Catholic tradition itself and indeed from none other than Jesus of Nazareth. The current Roman Catholic complementary model highlights only certain aspects of God. They are the active/primary (also associated only with men) characteristics and the model ignores the passive, vulnerable, soft, and gentle characteristics. However, Jesus of Nazareth not only embodied *both* of these components *but also* personified qualities *beyond* these, including mutual components. Hence, a Christian notion of God, in order to be comprehensive, must include both male and female characteristics. Thus, one must come up with a solution not within the complementary model but in a refined notion of masculinity and femininity.

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While post-modernity was successful in deconstructionism (albeit not for models of masculinity), a reconstruction must follow because deconstructionism tried to do away with sexed models altogether. However, doing away with all models leaves behind an incoherent multiplicity, almost to point of relativism or nihilism. Thus for this section, I will be critical of a polar opposite dimorphic (either-or) view of men and women, yet hold on to the two-sex model, so long as we admit the abundance of difference and diversity within the two categories (both-and). When such a task is done, I will see which of the two models can survive Christian category of love and justice.

**Review of Literature**

Working primarily from a book by Margaret A. Farley at the initial stage, I will do a brief overview of the shaping and legitimating of certain gender ideologies and anthropologies from the Greek, Jewish, and early Christian tradition. In her *Just Love: A Framework for Christian Sexual Ethics*, Farley refers to various seminal articles to take us from ancient to modern thinkers and outlines how we came to a dualistic understanding of gender. For sections on Greco-Roman, Jewish, and early Christian/biblical influences, I will also rely on works such as Thomas Laqueur’s *Making Sex: Body and Gender from the Greeks to Freud*, John T. Noonan’s *Contraception*, Rosemary Radford Reuther’s *Religion and Sexism and Sexism and the God-Talk*, Peter Brown’s *The Body and Society: Men, Women, and Sexual Renunciation in Early*

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14 Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*. (New York: Routledge, 1990). According to Butler, not only is gender socially constructed but also sex. This is a strong but very complicated point which I cannot take up for this dissertation. Suffice it to acknowledge at this point that such a reasonable argument exists.

15 I am very aware of those who do not fit even the most fluid of the two-sex model, i.e. intersexuels. Perhaps a whole separate category of third sex should be made to accommodate the diversity. However, to pay an adequate amount of attention for the criticism and the reconstruction of the two-sex model, I must and will limit my undertaking to dimorphic examples.

Farley continues to be helpful in the discussion about the prolongation of certain gender ideologies in medieval Catholic thinkers. Along with her work, *An Anthology of Sacred texts by and about Women* edited by Serinity Young, *Subordination and Equivalence: The Nature and Role of Women in Augustine and Thomas Aquinas* by Kari Elizabeth Børrensen, and “Whose Sexuality? Whose Tradition? Women, Experience, and Roman Catholic Sexual Ethics,” by Barbara Hilkert Andolsen, will also elucidate medieval attitudes toward gender, albeit only for women. Parsing through these texts leads to the emergence of the attitudes toward men at that time.

The ideology of gender dualism lives on in 20th century papal teachings. *Readings in Moral Theology No. 9: Feminist Ethics and the Catholic Moral Tradition* edited by
Charles E. Curran, Margaret A. Farley and Richard A. McCormick, S.J. gives a wonderful overview of the conversation stemming from papal teachings in the 20th century. An especially helpful overview and critique is Christine E. Gudorf’s “Encountering the Other: the Modern Papacy on Women.” Further discussion of magisterial documents can be found in Lisa Sowle Cahill’s *Family: a Christian Social Perspective*. It carefully runs through the developments up to the time of JP II on the Church’s expectation on fathers and mothers. A slight, but monumentally important, shift in language—namely jettisoning the words subjection, inferior, and obedience—becomes very clear after such a survey of the Church’s position over a century.

Despite different wording, changes, modifications, and improvements from the old Roman Catholic positions on the issue, they clearly did not satisfy many scholars of moral theology. Many scholars claimed the following: complementary models is never equal; dualism or physicalism in seeing the gendered persons is harmful; liberalism that fails to see the importance of “body” and “differences” is unjust; and essentialists’ understanding of the body is inadequate—i.e. essentially or naturally different between the sexes therefore in need of different role assignment including agapic self-sacrifice for women—is inadequate and dangerous. Many scholars found these problems including, but not exclusively, Gudorf and Cahill in their aforementioned articles and Cahill in *Sex, Gender, and Christian Ethics*, Rosemary Ruether in *Christianity and the Making of the Modern Family*, Barbara Hilkert Andolsen in “Agape in Feminist Ethics,” Anne E. Patrick in “Women and Religion,” Patricia Beattie Jung in *Heterosexism*, and Susan A. Ross in *Extravagant Affections: a Feminist Sacramental Theology*. 
As far as the project is concerned, the logical next step, then, is to articulate how unsatisfactory and harmful it also is for men and to explain what the problem is. In one of the most important works for this project, James B. Nelson, in “Embracing Masculinity,” claims that men need to develop and appropriate what has been neglected and that men need to be more fully men, not less so. That is, he does not think that men are defined solely by strong and rough characteristics but also by a tender and soft side. Hence, his definition of manliness may not be considered too “manly” by social standards. In fact, this way of thinking pushes us beyond the dominating image of the divine to the soft vulnerable humanity of the divine in the person of Jesus as well. I find Nelson’s method to be a helpful step in the right direction. Adding on to this helpful insight from a Protestant theologian, the Catholic scholar Daniel C. Maguire sees a grave danger in a clear-cut understanding of gender binary as essential or natural. In “the Feminization of God and Ethics,” he maintains that the experience of what he calls the “macho-masculine culture,” seriously hinders not only men’s ability to show and practice sensitivity, but also blinds men from truer ethical inquiry and study of God because it either misses or dismisses anything that is not “macho.”

Using scientific data, one must see how it can inform us about the stance that we ought to have about men and women. For this largely social scientific section, I will draw from Joseph Pleck’s *The Myth of Masculinity*, Clyde W. Franklin II’s *Men and Society*, Kenneth Clatterbaugh’s *Contemporary Perspectives on Masculinity: Men, Women and Politics in Modern Society*, Michael S. Kimmel’s *The Gendered Society*, Anne Fausto-Sterling’s “The Five Sexes: Why Male and Female are Not Enough,” and *Sexing the Body: Gender Politics and the Construction of Sexuality*, Joan Roughgarden’s
Evolution’s Rainbow: Diversity, Gender, and Sexuality in Nature and People, David James’ “The Integration of Masculine Spirituality,” and other articles from The Journal of Men’s Studies. Christine Gudorf’s “The Erosion of Sexual Dimorphism: Challenges to Religion and Religious Ethics” will especially be helpful for her insights and for the method of combining the sciences and theology together.

Korean history and reality will serve as a test case—to see whether dimorphic gender norms and expectations are also harmful outside of the western context—because of my experience of the Korean society, including that of Korean military. Owing to my experience in Korea, I am more informed and have stronger data on Korea than any other non-western country to make an adequate comparison. As I found out, Korean history is not immune from the inculcation and continuation of a static and harmful gender dichotomy. In order to understand that tradition more clearly, one must recognize the neo-Confucian tradition from which the modern notions come, the war-ridden history of the people, and the prolongation of those values by military regimes and militaristic ideals. A great place to start is with two books: Dangerous Women: Gender and Korean Nationalism edited by Elaine H. Kim and Chungmoo Choi and Militarized Modernity and Gendered Citizenship in South Korea by Seungsook Moon. These works outline the origin of gender ideology of the Korean people and what is galvanizing and propagating that ideology. As indicated in an unfortunately poorly written set of articles with some helpful data, Social Change in Korea vol 2, edited by Kim Kyong-Dong and the Korea Herald, there is some progress that is being made but the problems still loom large. Women are still held back and unequal opportunities and salaries are still a very clear reality. However, according to many other articles, men also suffer greatly because of the
current dichotomous gender ideology. Of the many works available, two exemplary books in Korean are *Man and Korean Society* [Namsŏngkwa Hankuksahoe] by the Center for the Korean Women Society and *The New Lecture on Feminism* [Sae Yŏsŏnghakkangŭi] by Center for Korean Women Research, especially Chapter 5 entitled “Men and the Male Culture.”

Korean Roman Catholic attitudes toward women and men, as also current Roman Catholic attitudes in general, are congruent with the problematic dimorphic model for gender. A dissertation by Jong-rye Gratia Song, S.P.C. entitled *Listening with the Heart to the Echo of Silenced Voices* suggests that the traditional social roles and customs hold back Korean Catholic women immensely. She presents how, despite this limitation, many women deny and rebel against this injustice, sometimes to the point of sacrificing their lives during governmental persecutions! Indicative of where the values are placed in Korean culture and among Korean Roman Catholics, such stories are neither on the forefront of the history of Korea nor Korean Roman Catholic history. Following the lines of reasoning and data thus far, and after revealing the disturbing similarities drawn between the Korean military culture and the gender related attitudes by the (Korean) Roman Catholic Church, one can easily see the negative effects on Korean Roman Catholic men.

In Dawn M. Nothwehr’s, *Mutuality: A Formal Norm for Christian Ethics*, one can began to formulate a model of masculinity that is more loving, more mutual, and more Catholic. Even with the culturally shaped problems that Roman Catholic thinking has faced, there are enough materials within the tradition that will guide one in crystallizing a definition of masculinity for Catholic families. In fact, the biggest aid comes from Jesus
of Nazareth. In “The Power to Create: Sacraments and Men’s Need to Birth,” Gudorf
draws a picture of how the life and works of Jesus would fare against the modern
definition of masculinity. When it is found that Jesus would have had a problem
measuring up to these standards, I can only conclude that either the model has a problem
or Jesus does. Unless one is prepared to say that Jesus is the problem, it is wise to
generate a model with which Jesus would be happier. Gudorf suggests that men must be
more than peripherally involved in basic nurturing activities of human life. Her model of
masculinity would not work if the model advocates an essentialist conception of gender.
To curb ourselves from tendencies of such a danger, principles of medical ethics can shed
some light alongside mutuality, outlined in Tom L. Beauchamp and James F. Childress’
Principles of Biomedical Ethics. The categories used in medical ethics work effectively
as formal criteria in developing a new model for masculinity. For a more encompassing
definition, one may also turn to additional norms outlined in Margaret A. Farley’s Just
Love: A Framework for Christian Sexual Ethics since she uses and goes beyond the
norms for medical ethics for her treatment of sexual ethics.

Contribution of Dissertation

This dissertation will make original contributions to the study of Roman Catholic
ethics and theology in several ways. First, there has not been, to my knowledge, a
dissertation dedicated to the investigation of what masculinity means by a Roman
Catholic man. I am aware of and will make reference to some material that is already
available on the topic of masculinity in the Protestant context. I will make allusions to
references about masculinity in the Roman Catholic context. However, none of these
materials are works for masculinity in the Roman Catholic context as such. Hence, my
work will be the first of the kind and will be an original contribution to academia and society.

Moreover, I will make observations, analysis, and constructions as a Korean Roman Catholic man. This is a significant contribution, for it puts the work in the broader/more global context outside the English speaking world — an approach that is increasingly important in the field of ethics. I will not be able to make the case that my suggestions and theories are true always and everywhere. However, I will be able to make the case that it is true in at least one other non-western country. By doing so it will enable others, or myself, to add on to it later. Hence, making an effort to analyze masculinity in the Korean context and connecting it to the Korean/Roman Catholic context will be a very original contribution of this dissertation.

Research Methods

The basic method to be employed in this dissertation will be twofold: criticism and reconstruction. Firstly, I will briefly analyze some of the sources from which our ideal of masculinity and gender roles came. I will show that the ancient thought tended to polarize the notion of gender and that gave way to the later notion of dualism and essentialism. Also, by examining revealed tradition, I plan to show how the Old Testament imagery and the New Testament ideals contributed to the current Roman Catholic thinking on gender. Furthermore, I will show how all of these ideals galvanized current Roman Catholic attitudes toward gender. Since the Roman Catholic paradigm of complementarity did not create itself, I will be able to show how the gender polarity and scriptural imagery gave birth, at least in part, to a complementary model for gender. This
assessment is a necessary step before doing what I set out to do for this first section, which is to show the dire need for developing a model for Christian/Catholic masculinity.

With the help from mostly feminist scholars, I will then address the problems of some uncritical acceptance of what we have inherited and make some criticisms. However, I will keep in mind that we have inherited some positive liturgical, spiritual, and ritual traditions and thus this project will critique the division that deals with gender and the unspoken and consequent definition of masculinity. This is a big task since it will involve criticizing “spousal imagery” and I will inevitably deal with much larger issues concerning ideas of God, Christ, and Church. Moreover, secular scholarship and cross-cultural presentation will validate further my position that it has and will be harmful for many relationships if we were to continue using the current Roman Catholic model for gender. The rationale behind these criticisms is to show the need for the next part of the dissertation, namely (re)construction.

If indeed the model that Catholics have for masculinity and its related gender role is problematic, then there is a need for reconstruction of that model. The next part, then, will make an attempt to construct as refined a definition as possible of Roman Catholic masculinity so that it can be employed in determining what a Catholic man’s role should be. I will address one possible critical question of such a definition, namely, “How is it Catholic?” That is, I will argue that the definition can be applied as a normative definition of masculinity for Christians as a whole, not just for Roman Catholic men. What makes my definition “Catholic” will be its positive attitude towards the nature of human beings and the sacramental vision.
In the end, I will comment about why and how this refined definition of masculinity offers a more adequate understanding than the current official teachings of the Roman Catholic Church on gender and masculinity and what needs to be done to reconcile these differences.

Chapter Outlines

Chapter One: Historical Consideration

This chapter will be an introduction to the subject-matter of the dissertation. As such, I will only write a brief overview of the historical development of dualistic ideology of gender, since my initial focus is to assess the Catholic understanding, or lack thereof, of masculinity. Keeping this historical development short, I will be able to accomplish my ultimate task for this project: explicitly naming and reconstructing what has only been implicitly suggested; namely Catholic masculinity.

By way of a prologue, then, the chapter will assess the sources of traditional notions of gender understanding. While a full examination into ancient times is probably necessary, for the purpose of this project, it will suffice to recognize the most crucial moments appropriate for the issue at hand. Hence, I will initially study the time when the milieu of dualistic thinking was at its infancy, namely the Greco-Roman period, along with when such a way of thinking was at large, namely the Judeo-Christian period.

Dissemination is just as important as the instigation of a trend. Hence, it is necessary to study both how Roman Catholics were influenced by the past—i.e. Greco-Roman, dualistic, and biblical influences—and how they influenced the future, by studying the early Roman Catholic Church fathers and/or medieval thinkers. Also,
studying the encyclicals and other church sponsored and/or related documents, one will see how this ancient ideology remained to this day.

Chapter Two: Feminist Criticisms

Among a number of criticisms made of traditional notions of gender and gender roles, there are some common threads. These commonalities are not exclusive but interrelated themes which include dualism, physicalism/essentialism/naturalism, liberalism, and complementarity. This chapter will define and expand on these terms to diagnose some possible problems in what we have inherited thus far. Most of the analysis will come from ideas suggested by feminist scholars, not as a preference but because they have taken the lead. That is, most of the criticism of the Church’s position on the issue of gender has come from those who have suffered the most, and will suffer most directly, namely women. However, this chapter will find such a fact in itself problematic. If in fact they were correct, that is, if indeed the issue at hand is injustice, it should be of concern not only for a certain group of people—albeit very justifiably and appropriately so—but for anyone who cares about justice and fairness. Hence, this chapter will make a claim that if feminist criticism is correct, then even without taking into consideration the injustice it may cause men also, the gender ideology as Catholics have it today should be a big problem for men too.

Chapter Three: Theological Criticisms by men… and Beyond

If current official Roman Catholic attitudes and positions on gender issues are already problematic, the problem becomes even more serious if they have unjust components for men (and consequently for women and children as well). This chapter, then, will outline what some theologians, Catholic and non-Catholic Christian, and
mostly male, have written concerning the negative effects that the current gender ideologies have on men. This chapter will also explain how these negative effects expand the theological meanings and values. The theological end result of such insistence on the nature of men and women, then, is the concentration and focus on one, or part, of the aspects of Jesus of Nazareth, namely the traditional “maleness” of Jesus. While admitting that we are never able to see completely and perfectly the comprehensive fullness of God in the form of Jesus, failing to see as best as possible both aspects of the humanity of Jesus, is devastating for a faithful person.

Chapter Four: Scientific Criticisms

Since I cannot do justice to all sciences and theories, I will concentrate and rely mostly on social sciences, with some natural scientific references; and work with a two-sex model in spite of the existence of many other models. If scientific data conversely support the traditional views of gender, then one must acknowledge their validity. This chapter will demonstrate that in fact the data not only do not support the old models but confirm that gender is much more diverse than Aristotle and all thinkers who were influenced by him thought to this very day. The end result from the previous chapter to this is that part of the current Roman Catholic model for masculinity is harmful theologically, psychologically, scientifically, academically, and socially. For the purpose of this project, theological damage from the old model of masculinity will be the focus, yet other harmful aspects from the old model 1) will show the significance of the problem and 2) that there are data better than that of Aristotelian biology available for modern

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16 Although even in such a case, one must evaluate and continue to question what is the just and loving model for Christians. For example, just because data show that murder has always been a reality and is part of human nature, it still does not make it right, just, or loving. In such an instance, we must be able to go beyond the history of “scientific data.”
Catholics from which a new definition of masculinity and its appropriate gender role can arise. That definition will be discussed in chapter six.

Chapter Five: Global Consideration

I will not be able to do a complete global analysis of the problems discussed previously. However, it is necessary to investigate at the very least one other culture/country to see whether such a problem is true in a non-Western, non-English speaking country to begin to suggest that the problem may in fact be global and that the solution accordingly may have to be universal. Hence, for no other reason than the fact that I am more familiar, comfortable, and in tune with the Korean culture, I will ask whether Western findings hold true in Korea, and in Korean Roman Catholic men specifically in this chapter. I will argue that not only does it hold true in Korean cases, but also suggest that part of the problem may be due to the militaristic nature of Korea and of Roman Catholicism in general. My experience as a Korean Roman Catholic man and as a soldier having completed compulsory service in the Korean military will come into play in this chapter. While I understand that experience is not absolute and has the danger of subjectivism/relativism because of the diversity of experiences of people, I believe that there will be enough commonality of experience among Korean soldiers and objective facts about it so that experience certainly can and must have a place in this dissertation.

Chapter Six: Constructing a More Just Model for Masculinities

This chapter will take into consideration all the criticisms outlined above and make an initial attempt to come up with a new masculinity model for Roman Catholics. Of course, there is not a perfect model and no one will be able to live out a just model
perfectly. However, a model is just that: a model, to which one could strive and towards which one should always work. Hence, this chapter will propose a model for masculinity, a model that will never be able to justify an unchecked unjustifiable power, direct or indirect, of one gender over the other on the basis of “nature” or complementarity (even though the complementary model does not claim that it is putting one power over another). It will discuss the norms to which an adequate definition of masculinity must adhere. The components of the model will include the respect for autonomy, prohibition of maleficence, valuing beneficence, mutuality, fruitfulness and social justice. This list of norms will not be exhaustive in nature. Rather, it is an initiative, with the goal of eventually reaching a comprehensive definition for Roman Catholic masculinity.

Conclusion and Epilogue

I will show in the dissertation that being male or female consists of much diversity. One can accommodate such diversity by claiming that there is no gender or sex at all. Or, one can do so by claiming that while two sex model works, it must be accompanied by the fact that there is much diversity within each category. I choose the latter to simultaneously solve the problems of polar opposite attitude of dimorphisms and of the relative nihilism of post-modern thoughts.

I will make a collateral claim, then, that within the framework of “two sexes”—using the methods employed in the “secondary principles” of St. Thomas—the spectrum of the two is much more vast and diverse within these two than what Roman Catholic documents assume. There is not a static woman or a monolithic man. There are all kinds of men. There are all sorts of women. Within the framework of men and women that there is such diversity that in the end, one cannot help but to feel somewhat agreeable
with the post-modern thinkers. The only difference is that one claims against categories and the other claims diversity within the two categories.

Moreover, body is two-directional: 1) that is constitutive of personhood which is “given” and 2) that is produced by social discourse. All, men and women alike, are born with certain givens but everything else cannot be based on these givens. While taking into account certain biological givens about men and women, a huge chunk is not only socially constructed but also biologically quite diverse. If one of the two parts—diversity of the biologically based and socially constructed—is missing in the discussion of body, gender, family, or marriage, then it can never be considered legitimate.

Therefore, to see the fullness of a human being is to see him or her as diverse, dynamic, and dignified. A corollary to it is to see God and all of creation in all aspects of being, not just culturally defined facets. Hence, for the model of masculinity to be used by Roman Catholics, one must recognize the diversity of human nature. I will therefore conclude by proposing some general roles for today’s men—which, by the way, may vary from period to period in human history—but not according to the generalized notion and expectation of men but to one’s ability, capability, and for which one is naturally gifted. In the end, a gender role assignment may be helpful but only if it does no harm to oneself and the other. What I will suggest in this chapter may point to the more just and more loving paths.
CHAPTER ONE
HISTORICAL CONSIDERATION

Origin of Dualism

A necessary precursor to discourse about Catholic masculinity is a discussion about gender as such. The prevailing view of gender in the West is a result, in part, of a dualistic anthropology developed in ancient Greece and Rome. It is fitting, then, that I start this project by searching for clues about where the current Roman Catholic model of gender has its origin. However, let me first be clear about what I mean by the “current Roman Catholic model of gender.” It is, as Elizabeth A. Johnson rightly describes, a dualistic model for gender is:

…[a] model that casts women and men as polar opposites, each bearing unique characteristics from which the other sex is excluded. In this view male and female are related by the notion of complementarity, which rigidly predetermines the qualities each should cultivate and the roles each can play. Apart from naiveté about its own social conditioning, its reliance on stereotypes, and the denial of the wholeness of human experience that it mandates, this position functions as a smokescreen for the subordination of women since by its definition women are always relegated to the private, passive realm.¹

This complementary notion of gender has its roots in ancient thinkers and their milieu.

While the tendencies of dualism predated them, dualism started to solidify itself in Greek and Roman traditions. Generally speaking, dualistic thinking was common and

¹ Elizabeth A. Johnson, She Who Is: The Mystery of God in Feminist Theological Discourse (New York: Crossroad, 1992), 154. This quotation is from the context of describing two different models for a theological anthropology: the prevailing dualistic model and the single-nature anthropology. For a further discussion on the latter (and the former), and the problems of both, see Anne E. Carr, Transforming Grace: Women's Experience and Christian Tradition (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1988), 117-33.
applied notably in explaining how body is different from soul. Plato, for example, valued anything that had to do with the rational faculty over other faculties. He esteemed wisdom over other virtues, and a state ruled by a philosopher king over other forms of the state for this same reason. Contrarily, then, he underrated the appetitive faculty and the state governed by artisans and claimed that they were always in need of moderation. The appetitive faculty and the artisans were associated with things that are the opposite of rational or wise, i.e. physical/material. In such a bifurcation, the body was seen as an obstacle to the perfect, or at least truly, human. However, Plato did not make clear associations of male and female to higher and lower traits, respectively. In fact, Plato, albeit inconsistently, seemed to advocate at times a kind of equal-opportunity role assignment not according to gender particularities but according to individual talent, regardless of gender.

But if it appears that they differ only in this respect that the female bears and the male begets, we shall say that no proof had yet been produced that the woman differ from the man for our purposes, but we shall continue to think that our guardians and their wives ought to follow the same pursuits.

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2 Sometimes this distinction was of body and spirit or body and mind. Authors meant something distinguishable when using mind, soul, or spirit. For my purpose, these differences are noted and admitted but without great relevance for this project. For the purpose of the discussion at hand, it is enough to notice that body is differentiated from “immaterial” part of the human body. See Margaret A. Farley, *Just Love: a Framework for Christian Sexual Ethics* (New York: Continuum, 2006-8), 111.

3 Ibid., 112; Plato, *Republic; Laws* 896 a 1-2; *Phaedo* 85 e 3-86 d 4, 93 c 3-95. Note that this bifurcation is also a product of a tripartite division of the soul in Plato: rational, spirited, and appetitive.

4 Plato, *Republic*, 454e quoted in Thomas Laqueur’s *Making Sex: Body and Gender from the Greeks to Freud* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1990), 54. According to Laqueur, Plato “wished to make a case for the absence of essential public difference between men and women, for equal participation in governance, gymnastic exercises, and even war…” However, I am not making a claim that Plato advocated gender equality since he said in *Timaeus* 42 that “when the incarnate soul loses its struggle against the passions and appetites, it is incarnated into a woman and then into “some brute which resembled him in the evil nature which he had acquired”” quoted in Rosemary Radford Ruether, *Sexism and God-Talk* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1983), 79. See footnote #86 in Laqueur, 260 for a discussion on this issue along with Monique Canto, “The Politics of Women’s Bodies: Reflections on Plato,” in Susan Rubin Suleiman,
It was left to his student, Aristotle, to make the binary division of body and soul more unequivocal.

In his biological works, Aristotle asserted that the female, and her organs, was somehow lesser, or lesser in being, than that of man. He came to this conclusion because of his fundamental belief about the nature of female and male.

the female always provides the material, the male that which fashions it, for this is the power we say they each possess, and this is what it is for them to be male and female… While the body is from the female, it is the soul that is from the male. 

\( (GA\ 2.4.738b20-23) \)

…the male and female principles may be put down first and foremost as the origins of generation, the former as containing the efficient cause of generation, the latter the material of it. \( (GA\ 2.716a5-7) \)

Aristotle clearly applied the distinction of body and soul that Plato initiated, and extended it to woman and man, along with all the associations that accompanied it. That the soul was from the male and that the male contained the “efficient cause of generation” meant for Aristotle that the male was clearly associated with the more important, especially when it came to generative matters; thus, male produced \textit{sperma} and female provided \textit{catamenia} [menstrual materials]. Furthermore, Aristotle upheld the male as the natural archetype of mind or reason, explaining how the ruling class was a domain exclusively for men. In turn, he insisted that certain type of people, who included women, slaves, and

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5 Laqueur, 149, 151.

6 Ibid., 30; GA refers to Aristotle’s \textit{On the Generation of Animals}; italic Laqueur’s.

7 Ibid., 41.
barbarians, were naturally servile—represented by body and passions—and they had to be ruled by the “head” or men. The stage was set, then, for later thinkers to make use of this Aristotelian biology which androcentrically claimed that if the male “stands for the effective and active” and female “for the passive,” then the female serves as a vehicle [material] upon which male, or more accurately his sperm, can work.

Judaism: Procreation, Patriarchy, and Nuptial Metaphor

Much like the duality that Aristotle presented, the Jewish tradition also put women in a lower status. However, very differently from the Hellenistic tradition, Judaism did so by emphasizing not reason, but the creatures’ duty to be fruitful and multiply: a mandate from God. The outcome of this theology for the Jewish community is the religious command to procreate and be in a [patriarchal] marriage. One should be mindful, however, that this is a highly generalized claim. It is true that the duty to procreate and its patriarchal context account for many other obligations regarding sex-related practices. However, how those two elements in the tradition manifest themselves is not as straightforward. At times, being procreative and part of the patriarchal context meant channeling sexual desires, at other times companionship and mutual fulfillment. At one point they meant the acceptance of polygyny, concubinage,

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9 Aristotle, Politics 1:5; Ruether, Sexism and God-Talk, 79; However, while Aristotle maintained that women and men are dualistic contraries, he did not go so far to say that they were separate species. That is, they differ “not a circle does from a triangle but as a circle or a triangle of one material does from a circle or triangle of another.” See Metaphysics 10.1058a29ff and HA 5.11.538a13; HA refers to Aristotle’s On the History of Animals; Laqueur, 254.


11 Farley, 35.
divorce, and remarriage, and at another a ban against those practices.\textsuperscript{12} The Jewish
tradition, as is true of Christian and most other religious traditions, is marked by tensions
on this matter. In the Hebrew Bible, the story of Ruth, the book Song of Songs, and the
purity laws coexist with strict legal codes, acceptance of some adultery as part of God’s
plan (as in David’s sexual transgression), subordinating erotic desires, and indifference to
women’s perspectives on rape.\textsuperscript{13} As the laws of onah affirmed many attitudes toward
sexuality and made sex a nurturant of love, the law of niddah associated women with
defilement.\textsuperscript{14}

Amongst these tensions in the Jewish tradition, what became the ruling metaphor
for the status of men and women over the years was that of bridegroom and bride. As
noted in the \textit{Letter to the Bishops of the Catholic Church on the Collaboration of Men
and Women in the Church and in the World} (2004) and in the United States Conference
of Catholic Bishops’ (USCCB henceforth) \textit{Marriage: Love and Life in the Divine Plan

\textsuperscript{12} David Novak, \textit{Jewish Social Ethics}. (New York: Oxford University press, 1992), 93

\textsuperscript{13} David Biale, \textit{Eros and the Jews: From Biblical Israel to Contemporary America} (New York, Basic
Books, 1992), Chap. 1, 11-32; Judith Plaskow, \textit{Standing Again at Sinai: Judaism from a Feminist
perspective} (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1990), 178-185; Farley, 34.

\textsuperscript{14} The \textit{mitzvah} of onah refers to the biblical and rabbinic commandment upon the married man to provide
his wife with her rights to sexual intercourse. Within the context of marriage, women are to “expect, enjoy,
and \textit{demand} an active and vital sexual relationship with their spouse.” Tova Hartman, \textit{Feminism
Encounters Traditional Judaism: Resistance and Accommodation} (Waltham, Mass: Brandeis University
\textit{Standing Again at Sinai}, 184-185; The law of niddah refers to separation of husband and wife during the
woman’s menstrual period (menstrual ritual impurity). Many scholars find this law problematic. “[The]
restrictions imply that women are a ‘potential source of pollution and disorder whose life and impact on
men must be regulated’” and that according to these laws, “it is difficult to conclude anything other than
that women are a source of moral danger and an incitement to depravity and lust.” See in the same text by
Harman, 82-84, 136; see Judith Baskin, “The Separation of Women in Rabbinic Judaism,” in Yvonne
University of New York Press, 1985), 3-18; It is important to note that it is possible to take niddah as a
more positive concept. See Blu Greenberg, “Marriage in the Jewish Tradition,” \textit{Journal of Ecumenical
enforce a notion which claims that “God makes himself known as the bridegroom who loves Israel, his bride.” This kind of gender thinking is inextricably linked to the images found in the New Testament and in Roman Catholic writings. As a result, one is able to draw some positive concepts related to this nuptial image. That is, like any other healthy relationship, it is quite natural to draw beautiful imagery that comes from a wonderful relationship between two persons in marriage. These interrelated imageries include, although not exhaustively, intimacy, embodiment, interdependence, physical desire and delight, tender love, care, and closeness that exist between God and Israelites, priests and their followers, and husbands and wives.

Notwithstanding these potentially helpful images, this nuptial image can also be limiting and harmful. When, for example, the purpose of the nuptial representation is not intimacy, or any of the images already mentioned, but sexual differentiation, it quickly becomes problematic. That is, if the focus is on the strict differences of the sexes, then it can result in a kind of gender thinking that claims men are essentially different from women. Putting that viewpoint alongside the Hebrew Bible / Old Testament discussion at hand, one can begin to see why such an essentialist thinking can be problematic. Since the Old Testament images of bride and bridegroom denote a position of the divine

15 “For as a young man marries a virgin so shall your creator marry you, and as the bridegroom rejoices over the bride, so shall your God rejoice over you.”

16 CDF, Letter to the Bishops of the Catholic Church on the Collaboration of Men and Women in the Church and in the World (2004), paragraph #9

fundamentally and essentially as male, “maleness” is closer to divine than femaleness and since men and women are essentially different in this schema, no woman can ever be as close to the divine in a way that all man can.\textsuperscript{18} Certainly, I am aware of the fact that I seem to unfairly judge the texts out of their context. What I am criticizing here, however, is not the original texts but the modern usage of these ancient texts out their context.

Even worse yet is that this model portrays men and women in an asymmetrical way, which is characterized by the asymmetry of power in some\textsuperscript{19} of the nuptial relationship of the Old Testament. This asymmetry of power—where wives have little choices of marriage partners (e.g. Rachel) and where they are valued for their reproductive abilities (e.g. Sarah)\textsuperscript{20}—resulted from the idea that women (brides) are essentially receptive / responsive and hence their role is limited to those characteristics. The outcome is the (subtle) reinforcement of the notion that women cannot really image God and, since they also cannot be the initiator, they cannot improve their status in this model.\textsuperscript{21} Given that women cannot fully image God, what some Christian women can image is Mary (and a particular perception of Mary at that). There is no room in the model for recognizing Mary as an active, decisive, or initiating woman. Rather, the only


\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{19} There are some spousal relationships in the Old Testament that are closer to equality than others; for example, Song of Songs and certain interpretations of Genesis 2-3. See Phyllis Trible, “Eve and Adam: Genesis 2-3 Reread,” in Carol Christ and Judith Plaskow, eds., Womanspirit Rising: A Feminist Reader in Religion (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1979), 74-83; Ross, “The Bridegroom and the Bride: The theological anthropology of John Paul II and its relation to the Bible and Homosexuality,” in Patricia Beattie Jung ed. with Joseph A. Coray, Sexual Diversity and Catholicism: toward the Development of Moral Theology (Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 2001), 58.}

\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{20} Ross, Ibid., 48.}

\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{21} Ross, Extravagant Affections, 110; Margaret A. Farley, “New Patterns of Relationship: Beginnings of a Moral Revolution,” Theological Studies 36 (December 1975).}
room allowed in such theological anthropology is of imitating Mary as passive, uncertain, and receptive. While Mary often represents humanity as a whole, “the relationship of men and women is analogous to the relationship between God and Mary.”  

Perhaps, then, one can even make a case that the Old Testament nuptial metaphor, as the Roman Catholic Church chooses to see it at the moment, holds men in a special relation before God and women as close to God as a particular interpretation of Mary. Hence, the only way that the positive imageries of the nuptial metaphors will work is if the bride and bridegroom are not directly proportional to the relationship with male and female / God and humanity (Mary). To claim God in terms of male imagery (bridegroom) may not be problematic, as a metaphor, if God is also referred to in terms of female images (bride) as a metaphor. Also, to use the nuptial image for God and humanity, it must always accompany a caveat, explaining and enabling the audience to evade the dangers of misinterpretation, or strictly allegorical usages of the nuptial image.

These kinds of tensions and the notion of asymmetrical nuptial metaphors intensified when Jewish thinkers in the first and second century C.E. were influenced by Hellenistic philosophy. As a result, this ancient Jewish view of sex—and correspondingly of women—became increasingly negative. It is necessary then to study what ideologies of sex and gender were in the first and second centuries of the Common Era (CE).

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22 Ross, “The Bridegroom and the Bride,” 44; *Mulieris dignitatem* 3-7.

23 The problem becomes even more serious if one were to claim that this is not only a metaphor but it is naturally the case; that men (bridegroom) naturally resemble God and women (bride) do not. I will discuss the problems stemming from such a position later in this dissertation.

24 Farley, 35-37. It is crucial to note, however, that this is not the only view. A number of scholars point to the fact that such a negative view of Judaism is a result of Christian thinkers using Judaism as a background for the New Testament and they often have been guilty of foreshortening and oversimplifying. The wonderful and innumerable positive aspects of Judaism, including the women who were well educated and
Androcentricism and the First Two Centuries CE

Of all the influential Greco-Roman elements in the first and second centuries CE, Stoicism had “the greatest explicit impact on later developments in Western thought about sex.”25 While Stoics were not dualists, they were monists (materialists), characterized by their deep distrust of the body. They sought to eradicate most bodily desires. 26 Musonius Rufus, the influential Stoic philosopher in the 1st century Rome, thought that most improper human behavior (especially that of sexual desire) was a direct result of a lack of self-control of one’s body.27 Moreover, bodily pleasure, even in the context of sex within a marriage—and he did insist that it had always be within the context of marriage—was reprehensible.28 His pupil, Epictetus, also thought “immoderation in bodily activities irrational, for it made a man dependent on his own body.”29 Since the body was associated with the irrational, was disruptive, and liable to excess, it had to be controlled by the mastery of one’s body. This was done by reason and served as leaders in the ancient synagogue, were repeatedly ignored. Bernadette J. Brooten, “Jewish Women’s History in the Roman Period: A Task for Christian Theology,” *Harvard Theological Review*, 79 no 1-3 (Jan-July 1986): 22-30 especially 25-26. Blu Greenberg also sees some necessity to suspend, at least initially, a feminist critique because sexism, patriarchy, inequity, non-inclusive language etc. is not specific to Judaism but a social and psychic mode of the time. In this way, one would be able to see the centrality of marriage in Judaism, the ever important call for marriage to be “a long-term relationship characterized by love and the bonds of nurturing each other and children, and also bounded by traditional parameter of fidelity, mutual respect, and steadfastness” and that the Jewish tradition was “sexist more in theory than in practice.” While it is hard to deny that such a theory was responsible for some sexist practices, his points are duly noted. Blu Greenberg, “Marriage in the Jewish Tradition” especially, 4, 20.

25 Ibid., 33.

26 Including Musonius Rufus, Epictetus, Seneca, and Marcus Aurelius.


29 Ibid., 46.
reason only. Thus the dominant theme of mistrust of the body, its desires, and emotions/passions along with the obsession about greatness of mind, self-control, self-sufficiency, and self-mastery carried through the later traditions. With the extension of this dichotomous thinking, the association with the active mind/soul—man—is trusted even further and anything connected to the passive body—woman—is thought of pejoratively.\(^\text{30}\) However, it should be very strongly noted that what the ancient philosophy meant by body, soul, nature, matter etc. meant something quite diverse and complex and that there were not a monolithic “Greek view” of these concepts. What I am trying to highlight are the ideas that gave impetus to the later, perhaps Cartesian notion of, radical dimorphic separations.

The biology of the second century CE seems to suggest that not only were the attributes of women downplayed, but that women as a sex did not really exist. That is, an examination into the writings of Galen, a second century Roman physician and philosopher of Greek origin, suggests that women were essentially men and, in so many words, proclaimed that there existed really only one sex (man) for human beings. His rationale for this assertion was this: women in fact had the same genitalia as men. Men’s, however, were outside the body and women’s were inside it. In talking about women, he thought that “you could not find a single male part left over that had not simply changed its position.” Hence, he was convinced that women’s sexual organs were simply turned inside from men’s. Interestingly, however, he did not think the opposite was true—that man could be changed from a woman. Simply put, women “are inverted, and hence less

perfect than men.” Moreover, “They have exactly the same organs but in exactly the
wrong places.” They were “essentially men in whom a lack of vital heat—of
perfection—had resulted in the retention, inside, of structures that in the male are visible
without.” Since the “vital heat” had not come to women in sufficient quantities, they
were “more soft, more liquid, more clammy-cold, altogether more formless than were
men.” This was an easy conclusion to draw for men who grew up “looking at the world
from a position of unchallenged dominance.” Of course this fact explained why
women’s body “could not burn up the heavy surplus that coagulated within them” in
periodic menstruation.

Therefore, from the first century CE and thereafter, the literature seems to suggest
that it was a commonplace for thinkers to consider sex dualistically and to see that men
were rational, able to control themselves, and had mastery over their bodies and their
female counterparts. Women, then, were the opposite of all that. In fact, standing against
the backdrop of the Greco-Roman philosophical tradition, men were some kind of perfect
form, whereas women were some what defective. In this sort of a “one-sex” model, men
and women were seen “along an axis whose telos was male.”

Thanks to this outlook, any display of unmanliness by any man was considered
problematic. If a (grown) man demonstrated passivity or effeminacy, for example, it

32 Ibid., 4.
33 Peter Brown, The Body and Society: Men, Women, and Sexual Renunciation in Early Christianity (New
34 Ibid., 10.
35 Martin, The Corinthian Body, 32.
would be seen as problematic in Greco-Roman society. Passivity and effeminacy were not considered as problematic, however, for ones who were considered naturally servile, which included some males, i.e., boys. However, an adult man was expected to display or prove his manliness by his actions—being active (penetrator) not passive (penetrated). The Roman hegemonic masculinity was demonstrated, therefore, militarily, politically, and in his household. Such an attitude would have greater ramifications beyond the Greco-Roman milieu.

In this setting and only after understanding this background, can one finally move to passages of the New Testament and understand the passages in an appropriate context. While being mindful of this *Sitz im Leben*, because passages in the New Testament are foundational for all Christians, and because the 1 Timothy passages are so crucial for this

36 Dale B. Martin, "Arsenokoites and Malakoi: Meanings and Consequences," in *Biblical Ethics and Homosexuality: Listening to Scripture*, ed. Robert L. Brawley (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1996), 117-136. Martin makes a case that μαλακοί refer not specifically to homosexuals or sodomites but effeminacy, which would include a “penetrated male,” but that not all μαλακοί are homosexuals. His point is that in Greek culture, one would be open to charges of μαλακός for being effeminate, not referring to the sexual act itself. This is an example of how unmanliness was seen in Greco-Roman societies. In Christian context of Paul, it meant not inheriting the Kingdom of God (1 Cor 6:9-10).


38 Interestingly, with the decline of military and political power as well as the decline in the power of the *paterfamilias* model between the third and fourth century, a new model for (Christian) masculinity would appear. Matthew Kuefler, *The Manly Eunuch: Masculinity, Gender Ambiguity, and Christian Ideology in Late Antiquity* (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 2001), Part I 19-102. The new (Christian) masculinity internalizes, or spiritualizes, the former manly virtues and claimed that now the success of masculinity depended on pudicitia (sexual modesty) exemplified by male martyrs, monks, and bishops: the manly eunuchs. See in the same book 81-102 and Part II 105-282. This phenomenon of historical situation shaking the foundations of the traditional definition of masculinity, and thereby men themselves, is not unlike what happened in Korea during the IMF crisis. I will discuss this in chapter five.
project, I will investigate extensively what those passages mean for Christians and for this project.

**Ethics of the Pastoral Epistle**

[8] I desire, then, that in every place the men should pray, lifting up holy hands without anger or argument; [9] also that the women should dress themselves modestly and decently in suitable clothing, not with their hair braided, or with gold, pearls, or expensive clothes, [10] but with good works, as is proper for women who profess reverence for God. [11] Let a woman learn in silence with full submission. [12] I permit no woman to teach or to have authority over a man; she is to keep silent. [13] For Adam was formed first, then Eve; [14] and Adam was not deceived, but the woman was deceived and became transgressor. [15] Yet she will be saved through childbearing, provided they continue in faith and love and holiness, with modesty.

1Tim 2:8-15 NRSV

Being a part of the “politically correct” culture in the United States, I had been hitherto convinced, along with many Christians, of the egalitarian interpretation\(^{39}\) of certain “problematic”\(^{40}\) passages in Scripture. It was only recently that I started to take many of the “hierarchical interpretations” seriously. 1 Timothy 2:8-15 is one of the most hotly debated passages in the Bible. Scholars basically fall into two camps with regard to its interpretation: (1) that this passage unequivocally limits women’s roles in churches or (2) that this is a commentary on Paul’s teaching that had been distorted by Christians at the turn of the second century, moving farther away from the egalitarian model of Paul’s teaching in Galatians 3:28 and therefore not necessarily applicable for Christians. I find neither of these positions to be sufficient.

In this section, I will describe why so many have selected 1 Timothy 2:8-15 as “problematic” and identify some verses that are crucial to this discussion. In discussing

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\(^{39}\) Examples of these will be discussed later in this section.

\(^{40}\) I put the word in quotations since the passages are not universally seen problematically.
these verses, I will make use of two popular hermeneutical options for this passage. In presenting both options, I will offer problems that I see with these interpretations. Finally, I will conclude with a new model—a third hermeneutical option—for understanding and applying the Pastoral Epistles, and scripture as a whole, in the gender-conscious post-modern context.

Identifying the “Problem”

Part of the reason why this Timothy passage seems problematic is that it has been used to support the traditional “patriarchal power arrangement,” which suppressed the leadership of women in churches and abused and oppressed women within the society as a whole. Furthermore, justifying slavery on scriptural authority added to the oppression and abuse of African Americans and other people of color. The African American theologian Howard Thurman learned of such oppression through his grandmother who never let him read from the letters of Paul because many of the passages were used to justify slavery. There are two things to note here: (1) there are difficult passages in the Scripture for many marginalized people and (2) these passages are only tricky in certain cultures and might not be so in other cultures. For example, the passages that were used to justify discrimination against women and African Americans in the United States would not be as problematic in South Korea. Although there is a history of slavery in Korea, scriptural passages were never used to justify it. Also, coming from a tradition where women were, and to a degree still are, expected to be quiet and serene, be dressed


cleanly, be proper in appearance, be obedient and dutiful wives, these passages would not have the shock value that they seem to have on many American interpreters.\textsuperscript{43} In fact, passages in Timothy only affirm the traditional values of many Koreans. More troubling passages for Koreans might be Luke 9:59-60 and 14:26 where the cost of discipleship is extended even to the point of leaving one’s family. This command is in direct contrast to the traditional Korean family value system, which especially values filial piety.\textsuperscript{44} In a cross-cultural context, one can see that since the Bible is translatable into many languages and cultures, what might be considered too difficult to accept in one culture, might be perfectly fine in another. Such cultural relativism is also problematic. Human sacrifice, for example, was accepted in one culture, but this did not make it right universally, even for that culture. Hence, we must also deal with these passages with the problems of cultural relativism. The answer, I suggest, does not lie only in what the passages say. It lies more in what we should do with those passages. What should we do with this Timothy passage? To start answering that question, let us go to the text.

Comments on the Background of the Text

The letters of Timothy and Titus have been referred to as “pastoral letters” since the 18\textsuperscript{th} century. This name was given to designate them because there is a clear concern for the pastoral oversight and order for the church and its leaders in these letters.

\textsuperscript{43} This is a very tentative statement. The women/feminist movement is flourishing in Korea at this time and we will have to wait for the consequences of that in Biblical interpretations in Korea. For details on training and indoctrination of women in Confucian Korea, see Naehun, which was compiled in 1475 by mother of King SongJong. SoHye wanghu Han-ssi, Naehun. Reprints Naehun, Kim Chi-yang, ed. (Seoul: Yonse taejakkyo, Inmun kwahak yon’guso, 1969).

\textsuperscript{44} For example, Analects 4:18, “The Master said, ‘In serving your father and mother you ought to dissuade them from doing wrong in the gentlest way. If you see your advice being ignored, you should not become disobedient but remain reverent. You should not complain even if in so doing you wear yourself out.’” D.C. Lau trans. Analects (New York: Penguin Books, 1979), 74. Cf. Luke 14:26, “Whoever comes to me and does not hate father and mother, wife… cannot be my disciple.” NRSV
Concerns for the “godliness, sound teaching, church order, and good works,” as well as distress over “false teachers,” both seem to point to the pastoral apprehension for order in the church. How this background information plays a role will be an interesting issue that will be picked up on later.

Another important issue is that the author of Timothy claims to be Paul. The implication of such a claim is enormously important. However, in the last 200 years, the claim itself has been challenged. There seem to be many points of the letter that contrast with the undisputed Pauline letters. Some of these problems are open to question, and some seem to make very strong cases for pseudepigraphy. The particles, conjunctions and adverbs, and their uses differ notably from Paul’s undisputed usage. Pauline terms appear with slightly different nuances. Also, early documents are missing these Timothy letters.

References to false teachers—1 Tim 1:3-22 and 1 Tim 4:1-3 for example—if criticizing the Gnostic movement, are something that developed later than Paul’s time. The Church structure envisioned by Timothy is more complex than that of Paul’s lifetime. All these observations suggest that the letters are pseudepigraphical. About 80 to 90 percent of modern scholars agree on this and most of them place the letter as written between 80 and 100 CE. Although this evidence seems to push Paul, as author, away from the text, it is important to note that Timothy is still part of the canon and should not be dismissed solely based on the fact that it is pseudepigraphic. In the modern context

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46 For example, the Marcion canon and Beatty Papyrus II (P 46; ca. 200 32); Raymond E. Brown, S.S. An Introduction to the New Testament (New York: Doubleday, 1997), 662-664.

47 See Brown, 662-668.

48 Ibid., 668.
this practice might seem like a deceptive way to make people believe that Paul wrote this, but in the ancient context it was a common practice. Pseudepigraphy served to impress the reader by making the text appear genuine. The Pastorals are not simply forgeries and the audience might well have already known that they were not actually written by Paul himself:

Within the Greco-Roman philosophical tradition, the writing of pseudonymous epistles was a long-standing tradition. In such case the letter sought to extend the thought of his or her intellectual master to the problem of a later day. The writer said in effect, “The master would surely have said this if faced with this set of problems or issues.” It is quite likely that the original readers of the Pastorals knew very well that Paul himself was not the actual author and that the letters represented an effort to extend his heritage to a later generation.49

Then, given that it is in the canon, the important question may not be whether or not this was written by Paul, but, rather, what we should do with this text in the context of today’s society. For the purpose of this dissertation, I will assume that the modern scholarship is correct and that this is a Deutero-Pauline text.

Comments on the Text

Assuming that this is a Deutero-Pauline text, a reader can approach it as one of the first commentaries on Paul and his theology. This approach enables the reader to see how the author of 1 Timothy thought Paul would react and what Paul might say in the current situation that faced the author. This section will show that the dualistic and androcentric interpretation of Paul that the author of 1 Timothy had fed into the ethics of the Pastoral Epistles. Also, this method enables the reader to critique Timothy’s

interpretation of Paul and Paul’s interpretation of Jesus, in comparison with the modern interpretation of Paul and Jesus.

The verses preceding 1 Tim 2:8-15 instruct the community on prayer. Then, the verses following instruct the community about public worship. The passage is divided into two parts: How men should pray and how women should act in public worship. What one immediately notices is that a single verse was used in treating the first part (men), and the rest (v. 9-15) is used to instruct how women should behave in worship. Clearly, the author is much more concerned about instructing women than men. By now, this fact should not be so surprising. Here, the author—possibly facing some new problems dealing with women in the community—wanted to instruct women about how to behave properly. The only instructions that the author had for men was dealing with raised holy hands “without anger and argument.” Such a directive for controlling one’s anger as a man may be the result of the “protocols of masculinity” of the time, which I will discuss later in this section. For now, the only point that I wish to make is that the author spent only one verse in instructing men.

The concern that dominates these verses is women’s behavior. Verse 9 gives the reader a few details. By stating that women should dress modestly, it tells the reader that there must have been some women of wealth who dressed in fancy attire. It is not inconceivable that there were women who dressed in fancy attire, which could be a distraction in praying and worshiping. In this sense, the instruction is consistent with the

50 “Holy hands” in Greek tragedians refer to hands that are ritually pure and “without anger or argument” can refer to thoughts that hinder prayer. See Martin Dibelius and Hans Conzelmann, *The Pastoral Epistles* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1972), 44-45. Hence, the author’s concern could have been men being clean physically and mentally in preparation for prayer and worship.

previous verse. That is, the author is trying to exclude anything that would hinder prayer or worship. Useless thoughts, like thoughts of anger or argument (v.8), could negatively affect the prayer and the worship. Extravagant attire and braided hair (v.9), too, could negatively affect the prayer and the worship of men.\(^52\) Hence, in order to have proper prayer and worship, men must be clean inwardly and outwardly (v.8: holy, or clean, hands, and no thoughts of anger or arguments), and women must not dress in ostentatious attire (v.9) because it could add to the distraction. Furthermore, just as v. 8 could be talking about the physical and the non-physical, v.9 could refer to physical and non-physical appearances of indecency. \(κατάστολή\) (dress or deportment) can refer not only to external appearance, but it can also refer to character and disposition, and sometimes both.\(^53\) Some scholars (Dibelius and Conzelmann) maintain that the stress of vv.8-9 is not on women dressing and adorning (modestly) but on an “internal ornamentation.”\(^54\) However, the possibility of the emphasis being both for internal ornamentation and against external ornamentation is still high. One might argue that the following verse is indicative of the accent being on the “internal,” since good works (\(ἐργανω\ \ ἐγκαθών\)) in v.10 come from a good internal ornamentation. L.T. Johnson, for example, has claimed that,

\(^52\) One of the ethical treaties of Neopythagoreanism thought that women who, “dress themselves sumptuously… are decked out for seduction into all manner of vice.” Victor P. Furnish, “Women in the Church,” The Moral Teachings of Paul: Selected Issues, 2nd ed. (Nashville: Abingdon, 1996), 86. Also, “women were considered to be seductive and sexually rapacious temptresses” and their “voices, hair, and legs were felt to be especially enticing.” Marcus J. Borg, Jesus: A New Vision: Spirit, Culture, and the Life of Discipleship (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1987), 134.

\(^53\) Ibid., 45-46.

\(^54\) Ibid., 46. “The accent in the Pastorals lies not in the idea that women should (modestly!), adorn themselves, but rather that true ornamentation is not external at all.” An internal ornamentation refers to anything that can be considered a non-physical ornamentation of indecency.
“these are the practices that reveal the internal moral disposition of the women.”\textsuperscript{55}

However, it is hard to get away from the external aspect of doing a good work. It might be helpful, then, to ask what constitutes a good work here.

Whatever “good works” entail, it is about women’s good works. It is the good works of women who “profess reverence for God.” Certainly that demands the internal moral disposition of women. I do not deny that. However, I suggest that overlooking the physical aspect of this verse would be detrimental to understanding properly the author’s intention. The usage of the words “good works,” elsewhere in the letter, whether “through good works (δι’ ἔργων ἐγαθῶν)” or “good works (καλα’ ἔργα),” expect women who are to be supported as widows (5:10), elder (5:25), and wealthy (6:18) to do good work. These usages are indicative of good works not being “trivializing phrases, but point to a life of productive virtue.”\textsuperscript{56} This opens the possibility of a physical interpretation of the passage. Since this verse is speaking specifically of women’s good works, such works must include bearing children (hence v.15). Again, there is a coexistence of external and internal in the verse. Unfortunately, that opens up the possibility for an interpretation which extends inferiority of women not only externally but also internally.

The next two verses (v.11-12) have possibly been the most problematic and controversial verses in Timothy in the recent past. However, these verses should not shock us so much if we consider the audience and the aforementioned context to and from which the author of Timothy is writing. Readers of this letter have to remember that at the time this was being written, the household model was that of the male at the head

\textsuperscript{55} Johnson, 200.

\textsuperscript{56} Ibid., 200.
of the household (*paterfamilias*). In this context, words that were applied to women, like silence (*h`suci,a*) and submission (*u`potagh/|*), are understandable.\(^{57}\) A proper relationship, in this context, is for wives to be submissive to husbands and keep quiet. The only extension that this passage is making, from this norm of the ancient world, is that now it is applied to the code of conduct of the church. This seems like a very easy, and almost inevitable, transition. In early “Christianity,” the church was also a household. We know that the first churches all met in private homes.\(^{58}\) In fact, this was not much of an intensification of the ancient world custom, but a mere extension. In the context of this *paterfamilias* model, we can now revisit v.11 and v.12.

One can identify three parts in v 11: One, a woman should learn (*μανθανετω*), two, when she learns, she should learn in silence or “quietly” (*h`suci,a*), and three, that she should do both in full or complete submission (*ἐν πᾶσῃ ὑποταγῇ*). The latter two parts seem to shock many modern Westerners. Although *h`suci,a* could be softened to mean “quietly,” as L. T. Johnson translates and prefers it,\(^{59}\) it is more consistent to translate with a harsher tone of “silence.” That fits better with the harshness and directness of the tone in Timothy to women (subordination, forbidding to teach, fall of Eve as a stereotypical women, etc.) The authors demand for the “chiastic” pattern (*abcb’a’*) further supports the harsh translation.

\((a)\) learn in silence

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\(^{57}\) Only after I was accustomed to American culture did these words seem uncomfortable for me. Hearing these verses earlier in my life, within a Korean context, I do not remember reacting to them and my reaction was that of indifference. In the context of 1 Timothy, then, these expressions would not have been alarming since the general view was that women were so inferior that one gained no benefit in talking to them because they were “not very bright and… preoccupied with trivia.” Borg, 134.


\(^{59}\) Johnson, 200.
Such translation might seem harsh, but in the context of *paterfamilias* model it is at least understandable. The “silence” for women in the ancient context, in fact, only has a normative force and no shocking force. Women’s voices must have been just as problematic (v.11) for the Pastorals as women’s appearance (v.9). The idea of voice being problematic and distracting is also present in Plutarch’s “Advice to Bride and Groom.”

…her speech as well, ought to be not for the public. (142B)
A woman ought to do her talking either to her husband or through her husband. (142D, 32)

Paul seems to share the same viewpoints about women’s silence in 1Cor 14:33b-35:

As in all the churches of the saints, women should be silent in the churches. For they are not permitted to speak, but should be subordinate, as the law also says. If there is anything they desire to know, let them ask their husbands at home. For it is shameful for a woman to speak in church. (NRSV)

Some scholars did suggest that this is an interpolation. However, even the most prominent scholar cannot provide direct manuscript evidences for this thesis. Also, if one were to claim that this is not an interpolation and that it is in fact Pauline (Deutero or not), we must deal with what, at first glance, seems to be an egalitarian claim by Paul in

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61 Quoted and further discussion in Furnish, 87. Cf. aforementioned Borg, 134.

62 “[Interpolation] is an attractive solution, although the interpolation would have had to occur before wide circulation of the Pauline Letters, for there is no direct manuscript evidence.” quoting from Wayne A. Meeks, *The First Urban Christians: the Social World of the Apostle Paul* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1983), 220.
Gal 3:28. I will come back to this issue later in this section. But for now, in 1 Cor 14, Paul agrees with the fundamental value of Roman society and the *paterfamilias* model.

Just like “silence,” the same goes with “full submission (ἐν πάσῃ ὑποταγῇ)” in the context of *paterfamilias* model. As one can imagine, there had been many who tried to alleviate the ruthlessness of this word in a number of ways. For example, N. J. Hommes tried to argue that this submission would only apply to married women (as if that is so much better). However, her reason for such application seems weak and, as I will show, the understanding of women at that time makes this passage much more plausible to maintain the total submission of women to men in, not only marriage, but anytime.\(^6^3\)

It is important to remember that the notion of gender equality did not exist in ancient times. The first century C.E. Jewish philosopher, Philo, had this to say about the relationship between women and men in terms of Adam and Eve:

> And woman is more accustomed to be deceived than man. For his judgment, like his body, is masculine and is capable of dissolving or destroying the designs of deception; but the judgment of woman is more feminine, and because of softness she easily gives way and is taken in by plausible falsehoods which resemble the truth. (*Questions and Answers on Genesis* I, 33)\(^6^4\)

Well before Philo, however, such a view of female weakness is also present. In the second century B.C.E. Jewish writing, *Letter of Aristeas*, a man was able to get along with his wife because he thought:

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\(^6^3\) Hommes argues that vv. 8-10 used the plural form of men and women where as v. 12 used the singular form of a man and a woman, hence it implies husband and wife. N. J. Hommes “Let Women be Silent in Church,” *Calvin Theological Journal* 4, 1969 5-22. However, that does not seem to take up the issue of why, then, there are not possessive pronouns like her husband.

\(^6^4\) Quoted in Furnish, 88.
…that womankind are by nature headstrong and energetic in the pursuit of their own desires, and subject to sudden changes of opinion through fallacious reasoning, and their nature is essentially weak. (250)\(^{65}\)

If this were how women were seen, it is not difficult to imagine the existence of the instructions for the full submission of women to men in first Timothy. A fragment from Philemon, (4\(^{th}\) century BCE) a writer of comedies understandably stated:

It is a good wife’s duty, O Nikostrate, to be devoted to her husband, but in subordination; a wife who prevails is a great evil.\(^{66}\)

A Necessary Digression

Incidentally, there is a silent yet widely held assumption about men in all this—that is to say that the construction of women is also in a way the construction of men.

What is the reason for the silence? When something is a given, it need not be explained. Similarly, when men are the norm, explaining is hardly necessary. If one requires elucidation, it probably means that one is not the norm, or in the position of power.\(^{67}\)

Hence, descriptions often dealt with women in the ancient milieu, but since they tell us something about men, we can hypothesize on the basis of them some attitudes attributed to men. From the three examples above—that women are more likely to be deceived, that women are impulsive, and that a wife must submit and not prevail—one can infer that men are essentially strong and less gullible and likely to overcome deception, men are reasonable and not impulsive, and a husband is superior and prevails over his wife.

\(^{65}\) Ibid., 88.

\(^{66}\) Philemon No. 132 (vol. 2, p.519, Kock), quoted in Dibelius and Conzelmann, 47.

\(^{67}\) Note, for example, how most of the world has to use a “country code” for their email addresses (“kr” for Korea, “jp” for Japan, “de” for Germany etc.) but the United States does not have a country code. According to Michael S. Kimmel, “When you are ‘in power,’ you needn’t draw attention to yourself as a specific entity, but rather you can pretend to be the generic, the universal, the generalizable.” See his The Gendered Society 2\(^{nd}\) ed. (Oxford University Press: Oxford, 2004), 7.
Moreover, one can also get an idea about a notion of masculinity by looking at Timothy (and the rest of the Pastoral Epistles). According to Jennifer A. Glancy,

In the Pastoral Epistles, we find such a specification of what constitutes legitimate masculinity, ranging from a valorization of self-control as the epitome of virtue to an insistence that Christian men should exert a controlling influence over their wives and offspring.\(^{68}\)

In fact, many of the qualities for the behavior of mature Christian men are associated with properly self-controlled masculinity, a common theme of the time.\(^{69}\) It seems as though control, whether of self, of one’s household, and/or of other subordinates (Cf. 1 Timothy 2:8, 3:4-5, 5:1-2), played a crucial role in defining masculinity.\(^{70}\) Perhaps the prescriptions for women in the section at hand are a method through which men can practice such a control, including sexual practices.\(^{71}\)

Beyond and related to the requirements of self-control, control over his household and his subordinates (including required marriage and child-rearing\(^ {72}\)), men are also warned, in 1 Tim 3:3 for example, about avarice.\(^ {73}\) The reason behind this caution, according to Glancy, is that something like having avarice would “incline a man to surrender to desire”\(^ {74}\) and that “display of temper and avariciousness were interpreted as


\(^{70}\) See also 2 Tim 1:22. The notion is that the “hot-blooded youth” must evolve to become “properly self-controlled men.” Ibid., 244.


\(^{72}\) Ibid., 238.

\(^{73}\) Ibid., 247; Cf. 1 Tim 6:17-19 which comes naturally as a result from not desiring wealth.

\(^{74}\) Ibid., 247.
symptoms of effeminacy.”\textsuperscript{75} Thus, office holders, whether bishops, deacons, or elders (the exemplars who set the “standards of behavior for other men to emulate”), are expected to behave like men. That is.

…be above reproach, married one time and able to control their children and their households; temperate, sensible, respectable, not arrogant, not quick-tempered, not prone to brawling, not quarrelsome; not addicted to wine, not avaricious; and able to teach sound doctrine in a straightforward manner.\textsuperscript{76}

In fact, she argues that the Pastoral Epistles separated themselves from unmanly images, even to the point of distancing from the unmanly images of Jesus at the crucifixion, an event virtually ignored by the Pastoral Epistles.\textsuperscript{77} My opinion, and I continue the theme later, is that ignoring Jesus’ vulnerability to corporal abuse, despite the fact that the inability to protect one’s body was seen as “less than manly” in the Roman code, is detrimental in correctly conceiving Jesus of Nazareth and understanding masculinity as a whole.\textsuperscript{78}

\textsuperscript{75} Ibid., 238; For a different view biblical view of “unman” status, see Janice Capel Anderson and Stephen D. Moore’s discussion on eunuchs in “Matthew and Masculinity” in Ibid 97-91. Also, for a discussion on how unmanliness was seen in Greco-Roman societies and in Christian context, see Dale B. Martin, “Arsenokoites and Malakos: Meanings and Consequences,” 117-136 and the earlier discussion of it in this section.

\textsuperscript{76} Ibid., 238; see Davies, \textit{The Pastoral Epistles}, 81.

\textsuperscript{77} Ibid., 262-264; The significance of the “death” of Jesus is acknowledged but not crucifixion. Cf. Margaret Davies, \textit{The Pastoral Epistles}, 52; While the author claims to be Paul, the author is contrary to Paul’s stands in this issue. See Ibid., 264; Glancy’s assessment is by no means conclusive. My point is not to claim whether she is right or wrong. Rather, I simply want to call attention to the danger of any (Christian), texts that ignore the fullness of Jesus of Nazareth.

\textsuperscript{78} Ibid., 262-264; See also Jonathan Walters, “No More than a Boy”: The Shifting Construction of Masculinity from Ancient Greece to the Middle Ages. \textit{Gender and History} 5:20-33, 1991.
Furnish claims that these kinds of views are very different from that of the Apostle Paul, at least in the undisputed letters of Paul.\(^79\) However, Paul’s view (even if Furnish discredits 1 Cor 14:34) is in harmony with such collective consciousness about women in 1 Cor 11:3, and correspondingly about men. Although some tried to make this passage an interpolation too, even Furnish admits that, “there is no evidence of any textual disturbance in chapter 11.”\(^80\) Slowly, Paul begins to appear differently from the Paul of Galatians 3:28. The door of possibility that many of us may have misinterpreted in Galatians 3:28 is beginning to open. Perhaps the view of the problematic passages in Paul as interpolations is due to the interpreter’s particular view of Paul. If one considers the possibility that Paul, in fact, was human and that he too can be conditioned by the social context and culture, she or he will start to see that there may have been a mistake in interpreting Gal 3:28 and in interpreting Paul as having an all-inclusive, gender neutral attitude.

Just as controversial as the previous two verses is the next verse (v.12). This verse has justified the unequal status of men and women in the church’s ministry for centuries. Now, with the above examples of Pauline claims, as well as Plato, Aristotle, Musonius Rufus, Epictetus, Galen, Philo, the *Letter of Aristeas*, and Philemon, it is easy to see how plausible this claim was *at the time*. Once again, many tried to soften this passage by claiming that elsewhere in the Bible (1 Cor 11:5 and Titus 2:3) there are implications that women can teach, or that the authority of which this passage is speaking is that of church and not in the general sense. Here, the question is whether Paul means ‘any man,’ or ‘a

\(^{79}\) Furnish 88.

\(^{80}\) Ibid., 95.
husband,’ or a ‘man of the church’ by the usage of the word ἄνδρος or ἄνηρ. L.T. Johnson claims that Paul means ‘any man in the assembly.’\(^8\) This seems a reasonable enough claim in the light of the overall agenda of the author of Timothy. However, even if this is so, against the background I presented regarding the view of women in the ancient world, one also must realize that such claim of men’s authority in an assembly came about because of an underlying subordinate view of women in general at the time. A claim that this disallowance of the authority is a temporary way to resolve problems with particular women (i.e. wealthy women) to church authority is quite possible.\(^9\) However, it does not touch the core of the issue and is just trying to soften the text from its original harshness.

The next two verses are the author’s effort to justify theologically his position on the inferiority of women. The core of the author’s concern is not whether women should be able to teach in the church (while that could have been one of the author’s agendas). It is not that women could not teach or have authority in church, and therefore are inferior. It is that women are inferior and therefore could not teach or have authority over men.

The issue for the author was men’s superiority and women’s inferiority. And this is what the author set out to defend theologically.

To that end, the author makes arguments from the order of creation. That is, since a male was created before female, he is dominant or superior over what was created later.\(^10\) Of course, following this logic can be problematic because humankind is last in the order of creation and, thus, can be considered the most inferior. But God commended

\(^8\) Johnson 201.


\(^10\) See the following three footnotes.
humankind, in Gen 1:28, to have dominion over all things on earth. Hence, it seems as though the author of Timothy thought that this idea applies only in the order, not of all creation, but of created human beings.

Scholars think that it is likely that the author of Timothy is referring back to the second account of creation (Gen 2) where male was explicitly made before female. What is unclear is where the idea of ‘first created, hence better’ came from. It is true that first born is recognized as the one with authority over the later born. However, as Bassler points out, this verse is not talking about the ‘first-born’ but ‘first-formed.’ It is unclear why the author of Timothy thought this logic worked. It is just as logical to think that God had created Adam first as an experiment and seeing all the flaws decided to make a better being, namely Eve. Perhaps the author is picking up the theme of 1 Cor 11: 7b-9, where the emphasis is not on the second created human being, but on the fact that the woman was made out of man and is created for man. This theme on 1 Cor 11:7b-9 is the more consistent and the more probable meaning of the text than the argument that claims superiority of the first-created. The theological flaw of the latter, I think, seems too obvious for the author to have missed it. Also, 1 Cor 11:8 does hint at the earlier creation of Adam and perhaps that was what carried more weight by the time of the writing of 1 Timothy. What is certain is that at the time of the composition of the Pastoral Epistles, the effect of Paul on 1 Timothy fed into the already existing dualism of that time.

84 For example, Johnson 201 and Bassler, 448.
86 Bassler, 448.
87 Phyllis Trible thought that God created Eve last because God had saved the best for last. Kvam, 377.
The next verse generates a bit more serious discussion (v.14). Eve, like anybody, is susceptible to deceit and did get tricked by the snake (Cf. 2 Cor 11:3). What is interesting is that the author claims that Adam was not deceived. Even if one claims that Eve is at fault for initiating the evil act, Adam never put up a fight for the “right thing to do” before God. Adam, in fact, did get tricked, at least by Eve. However, this text wants to put the blame solely on the woman. Even “authentic” Paul saw it differently. Paul implied that “Adam was deceived (Rom 7:11), and it is Adam (not Eve) whom Paul identifies as the first transgressor (Rom 5:12-21; 1 Cor 15:21-22).”88 Perhaps the idea of “first” plays an important role here again. That is, Eve was deceived first and therefore is guiltier. The author of Timothy does not say this, however. It is clear that the author, despite apparent problems with it, puts the blame on Eve alone.

Even with the seemingly weak positions that the author of Timothy takes, what is clear is that the author is convinced of women’s inferiority. For some, this inferiority is convincing enough to claim that it is inappropriate for a woman, who is inferior to man, to teach and exercise authority over men in the church.89 As shown in the previous paragraph, however, certain theological problems exist with such stands. Not only is the inferiority of women theologically suspect, but so is the interpretation of Paul by the author of Timothy.

The author gives a “way out” for the woman, who is inferior, susceptible to deception, and guilty of sin, on two conditions: that she bears children and that she

88 Furnish, 88.

“continue in faith and love and holiness, with modesty.” There are two interesting issues here. First, there is something grammatically puzzling and, second, there is something theologically puzzling. Grammatically it is said that “she” will be saved if “they” remain faithful and loving. Why did the author use third person singular οὐδεὶς, while changing in the next clause to a third person plural form μετ' ὑμών? There are several possibilities for interpretation. It could be that the second instance makes explicit the general usage of “woman” in the first so that, women (in general) is saved through childbearing if women (in general) stay in faith. Or, the first subject remains singular (the woman) and the second clause refers to children so that the woman is saved through childbearing if the children stay in faith. Or, “saved” here does not mean salvation but a literal meaning of survival in the dangerous process of childbearing. It seems that the previous verse must be a continuation into this verse or there is a sudden break of continuity. In that sense, we are still talking about Adam and Eve and Genesis. Hence, despite the inferiority of women, Eve, as a model of all women, is saved through childbearing (Gen 3:16) if the children of Eve continue in faith. Here, the “children” could refer to all of us, since biblically we are all children of Eve. However, in the context of this passage and not to break the consistency of the author, the children of Eve here must refer to all women since Eve.


91 For a further conversation on whether or not the Genesis accounts of creation is a valid argument for women’s inferiority, read Phyllis Trible, God and the Rhetoric of Sexuality (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1978), especially 99-105 for the discussion of five ways in which women are seen as inferior in those accounts.
What is theologically puzzling is that the author of Timothy puts himself in opposition to Paul. Since the author is using Paul’s name, he is obviously not out to challenge Paul. Rather, it is the lack of understanding of Paul by the author. Salvation for women in Timothy is based on childbearing and holy actions. However, Paul insisted that salvation did not come from what we do, not based on our actions but by our faith and the grace of God (Rom 3:21-28; 5:6-8). Although L. T. Johnson is wrong to identify Paul as radically different from the author of Timothy, he is correct in interpreting that, in vv.14-15, Paul and Timothy are different. Galatians 3:28

Aside from the author’s misunderstanding of Paul in vv. 14-15, I maintain that the author of Timothy is quite consistent with Paul. The biggest weapon to combat such a stand has been the apparent equality of male and female in Galatians 3:28. The work of Krister Stendahl, along with Mary Hayter and Stanley Porter, and especially the

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92 “…a person is justified by faith apart from works prescribed by the law.” However, it is difficult to make a definitive claims about Paul’s notion of justification by faith alone since Paul, at times, seems to give some merit to how one acts and lives. Cf. Romans 8:13.

93 Both authors of Timothy and Paul are similarly conditioned by the social context and culture of the time. They are different, however, insofar as the author of 1Timothy, unlike Paul, thinks that Adam was not deceived (vs. deceived) and that salvation for women is based on childbearing and holy actions (vs. given freely by the grace of God).


monumental work *In Memory of Her* by Elizabeth Schüssler Fiorenza, all contribute in working towards a gender-equal interpretation of Galatians 3:28. Despite Paul’s view of the inferiority of women, many argue that phrases such as those found in 1 Cor 14:34-35 are not genuinely Pauline and that they are interpolations. They also argue that Paul could not have said anything degrading about women because women like Chloe, Euodian and Syntyche, Prisca (Priscilla), Phoebe, Junia, Mary of Rom 16:6, Tryphaena and Tryphosa, the beloved Persis, the unnamed mother of Rufus, Apphia, and Thekla in the *Acts of Paul*, all worked either alongside Paul or as some kind of ministers in house churches associated with him.

In recent years, however, the proof-text of gender equality has been under scrutiny. In 1998, Dale Martin, then a Professor of Duke University (now with Yale University), presented a paper at the Society of Biblical Literature entitled “Galatians 3:28: ‘No Male and Female.’” In it, he tried to present the most historical reading of Galatians 3:28 to claim that it is not about “equality” at all. Historically speaking, it would not make sense to read the passage in terms of equality because the way people thought about men and women is radically different from the way we think now.

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99 It is important to note here that Jew/Greek, slave/free combinations use “nor” (οὐδὲ), to juxtapose the two, while only in male/female combination does the text use “and” (καὶ), to adhere the two.
His starting point is from Wayne Meeks’s seminal article, “The Image of the Androgyny.” From there, Martin pursues what “androgyny” meant in the ancient world. An androgynous person, according to Martin, “possesses both male and female traits or characteristics, or not enough of one or the other to allow confident categorization.”

This concept reminds one of the speeches of Aristophanes in Plato’s *Symposium*. Aristophanes claimed,

…each human being was a rounded whole, with double back and flanks forming a complete circle; it had four hand and an equal number of legs, and two identically similar faces upon a circular neck, with one head common to both the faces, which were turned in opposite directions. It had four ears and two organs of generation and everything else to correspond.

Aristophanes went on to claim that the reason why human beings were separated into two sexes is that they were too strong and rebellious towards the gods. So Zeus bisected her/him in half to make her/him weaker. This is why each half yearns for the other half and this is why we hug, kiss, and have sex, yearning to become one again.

Martin’s examination of the ancient body also shows a radically different understanding of male and female. The ancient body was a “one-sex” body, that had both male and female aspects to them and these bodies could:

shift upward and downward on the continuum, depending on how much maleness or femaleness their bodies contained at any particular time. In this system, any change that would be considered salvific must be

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103 Ibid., 60-61.
understood as a movement higher on the spectral hierarchy. Thus, women may experience salvation as a movement upward into masculinity…

Martin maintained that most of the ancient Christian authors read Galatians 3:28 in this kind of mindset of male, female, and body. Martin then visits the Acts of Thomas where it reads, “there is neither day and night, nor light and darkness, nor good and evil, nor poor and rich, male and female, no free and slave, no proud that subdues the humble” (129). If male and female were seen “equal” in this sentence, then one must also see good and evil as equal. This is certainly not the case here and, the argument would be that it is not the case in Galatians 3:28. If not equal, then what is the relationship between male and female?

Some feminist scholars also argue against the interpretation of Galatians 3:28 as an “equality” passage. Kari Vogt maintains that it is a “sex changing metaphor.” That is, one must become more like male, the superior being. Lone Fatum also saw that it is not promoting equality between sexual differences. Rather, it gets rid of differences all


105 Mary Rose D’Angelo saw Galatians 3:28 as an interpretation of Gen 1:27b. In that light, she saw four ways to which the phrase “male and female” can be referred. Male and female is (1) a figure of speech referring to “all human beings, (2) understood as “no more disadvantage between men and women,” (3) referring to the rejection of sex and marriage, or (4) a way to return to the original Adam who was both male and female (Androgynous) until the creation of Eve. Mary Rose D’Angelo, “Gender Refusers in the Early Christian Mission: Gal 3:28 as an Interpretation of Gen 1:27b,” in Reading in Christian Communities: Essay on Interpretation of the Early Church (ed. Charles A. Bobertz and David Brakke; Notre Dame University of Notre Dame Press, 2002), 149-173; see also D’Angelo, “Gender in the Origins of Christianity,” in Equal at the Creation: Sexism, Society, and Christian Thought (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1998), 25-48.

together and replaces a hierarchical spread of male-female with an asexual unity of completed male. In this line of thinking, let us read the end of the Gospel of Thomas:

Simon Peter said to them, “Mary should leave us, for females are not worthy of life.”
Jesus said, “Look, I shall guide her to make her male, so that she too may become a living spirit resembling you males. For every female who makes herself male will enter heaven’s kingdom.” (114)

Again, we see that the ancient thinking continues to point to “becoming male” language. In this schema, Paul was not a revolutionary of gender equality, at least not in the context that many Christians desperately want to see him. Furnish recognized that any attempt to soften Paul, or 1 Timothy 2:8-15, is preconditioned by the “sacred cow view of Paul’s ethical teaching.” When it comes to the issue of women, Pauline Christianity was not counter-cultural at all. Rather, it upheld the common understanding of gender of the time.

Martin does not definitively prove that his way of seeing the ancient body is applicable for everybody in the ancient world. The scholars’ claim that Galatians 3:28 is not about equality is not undeniable. However, they are legitimately disputed. What is certain is that 1 Timothy 2:8-15 have often been used without considering these legitimate disputation. One must consider the fact that certain dualistic interpretations of

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109 Furnish 84.
Paul fed into the ethics of the Pastoral Epistles. Only after such a consideration can one come to a reasonable discussion about what to do with passages like 1 Timothy 2:8-15.

The Postmodern View

The egalitarian interpretation of Paul, at least the way we have it, does not work. This model has been guilty of making passages like 1 Timothy 2:8-15 moderate and not being true to the ancient context. Also, the very foundation of this model, namely Galatians 3:28, has been shaken. With the structure now collapsed, there is a need to build a new structure. However, the hierarchical model is not the answer either. This model has been guilty of oppressing women in churches and, perhaps more tragically, in many households. That does not mean, however, that the Bible should be read just like any other literature, as Benjamin Jowett also suggested.110

What, then, might this new model look like? What is the new structure for the new model? First, let us take advice from Francis Young.111 At least initially, we must stay in the ancient world. Recognize that reading was a public activity in the ancient world and these documents are designed and written to persuade the audience. These texts are “audience-oriented.”112 Hence, we have to allow ourselves initially to be identified with the originally intended audiences. What is important in applying this method is to be sympathetic in hearing the words. With 21st century Western ears, 1 Timothy seems outrageous. However, in the context of the original audience, as I suggest,


112 Ibid., 274.
this was quite normal. This does not mean that we adopt such a maxim as an axiom. That is, we have to “hear sympathetically, but perhaps not adopt uncritically.”

What happens, then, when this method is used but comes to conclude that certain maxims do not work in today’s context? I propose a new model for dealing with such situations. If we stay true to the text, it is inevitable that we come across certain ancient maxims that simply do not work in the present Christian context. Instead of trying to work with a unworkable maxim, and instead of trying to alter or soften it, we simply need to reinterpret it altogether, as it is morally mistaken. I do not suggest that we drop these sayings out of the canon (that would be a whole new debate).

However, if a maxim rips away the dignity of human beings, then it is directly contradictory to the love commandment of Christians and must be reinterpreted or dropped, at the very least, from being declared as the objective truth, the word of God, or a set of absolute rules.

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113 Ibid., 276 Cf. the suggestion by the Second Vatican Council, “The interpreter must investigate what meaning the sacred writer intended to express and actually expressed in particular circumstances by using contemporary literary forms in accordance with the situation of his own time and culture.” Dei verbum 12; Cf. Salzman and Michael G. Lawler, The Sexual Person, 12.

114 It is morally mistaken on both intra-canonical and extra-canonical grounds. I will use this dissertation to demonstrate how one can make such a claim, for example, on the traditional, biblical, scientific, and experiential grounds.

115 My personal take on that issue is that they should remain in the canon. Passages such as these may still find their function, for they can be the tools for the faithful for warning against what not to do or at least serve as a reminder of the dangers of misusing the Bible. While I think canonization of the Bible was a historical event and by no means has this process definitely been ended, I believe these passages shed important light, as with many apocryphal books, in revealing inherent problems of using ancient texts.

The Bible conveys the Word of God, but it is not God. I faithfully believe in the Spirit of the Bible, and when interpreted correctly, the Word of God comes alive. However, it is most certainly written by human beings. No matter how inspired the author was, the text was still written by the pen of finite and imperfect beings. Thus, the texts will inevitably reveal some shortcomings. If there are, we simply need to refrain from teaching these texts as if they were objectively true and pursue the love commandment that all Christians are supposed to follow and are called to pursue.

Women most certainly are neither inferior nor should they be seen only in terms of men or “becoming” men. This is true even if one were from a different culture, like that of conservative Korea, where such passages may seem to be more permissible. Even cultural sensitivity and relative values would not make such passages right. Promulgating such a notion would only increase an unhealthy notion about not only women but also men, which results in detrimental outcomes—and that will become more visible as one moves along in this dissertation.

Methodologically, then, I am making a claim that there should be more to a morally normative claims than simply stating that “the Bible says so.” This claim is

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117 It is important to note that this is not a simply ancient ideology. In today’s workplace, western and eastern, if a woman wants to break through the “glass ceiling,” she must embrace masculine structure and “sacrifice her feminine ‘nature’ and espouse a masculine ‘nature.’” Salzman and Michael G. Lawler, The Sexual Person, 118. I will go in a greater depth about the modern social implication in chapter 4-5.

118 The commission that guides Roman Catholics in giving thorough interpretations and suggestions for proper usage of the Bible, known as the Pontifical Biblical Commission within the Roman Curia, agrees on this point, albeit with a caveat. On one hand, according to the Commission, the Bible “does not present itself as a direct revelation of timeless truths but as the written testimony to a series of interventions in which God reveals himself in human history” and hence “the biblical writings cannot be correctly understood without an examination of the historical circumstances that shaped them.” On the other hand, the Commission is just as clear on the dangers of the historical-critical method because it can remain “absorbed solely in the issues of sources and stratification of texts.” For this reason, the historical-critical method, in fact, “cannot lay claim to enjoying a monopoly” in biblical interpretations. It can use the text as a “window” that gives access to one or other period, but it must make usage of other methods.
especially important now that we have seen at least some limits to using the Bible as the source of theological ethics. While Bible may be of utmost importance, other sources for moral wisdom—such as tradition, secular disciplines, and contemporary experience—can serve to aid it, and vice versa.119 Furthermore, if the conviction of one’s biblical claims is strong, then there is no need to shy away from other disciplines. They not only need not be mutually exclusive, but also “what is” ought to have some relationship with “what ought to be” anyway.120

I hold this position very strongly. However, this is not a “bible-specific” claim. I believe that for any claim, whether it is the passages in the Bible or any inherited tradition, if they are hurtful, a responsible citizen (Christian more specifically) should work to ameliorate the situation using the sources of moral wisdom. While the Bible may be of primary importance of these sources for me, it ought not to be the only source.121 These sources for moral insight, each by themselves, may be quite limited but (and because of that limitation) they are all necessary, and hence necessary for this dissertation,

119 For a further discussion, see chapter 5 of Farley, Just Love, especially 182-196; See the methodology employed in Patricia Beattie Jung, and Aana Marie Vigen eds., God, Science, Sex, Gender: An Interdisciplinary Approach to Christian Ethics (Urbana, University of Illinois Press, 2010); See also James Gustafson’s method of using scripture, tradition, philosophy, human experience, and the natural and social sciences employed in Part I from Lisa Sowle Cahill and James F. Childress eds., Christian Ethics: Problems and Prospects (Cleveland: The Pilgrim Press, 1996).

120 Jung, and Vigen eds., God, Science, Sex, Gender, 5-12.

As I have demonstrated in this section, there is a need to move beyond just one of these sources. I shall now see whether we need to do so also for parts of the inherited tradition too.

**Early Christianity**

Tertullian

It is difficult, or better yet incorrect, to claim that there was one clear attitude toward man and woman during the early stages of the Jesus movement. There certainly were Stoic and Gnostic influences. Yet these influences were only partial since unlike the Hellenistic focus for self-mastery, the concern of the early Christians was more than that. They seek the connection to the afterlife and whatever their attitudes, they were inextricably linked to afterlife themes. Similarly, their attitudes toward men and women were profoundly salvific. Whatever the attitude toward gender, it had some kind of salvific connection. These writings tried to teach people what they could do to contribute to the afterlife of the people.

Tertullian had a clear idea of what got in the way of such a path: women. Having men as the norm, Tertullian saw women as an obstacle to men’s road to the pearly gates. However, women were not just an “obstacle,” but a medium through which the devil operated. They were to be blamed for the shortcomings of man in the Garden. This event was not an isolated incident but their guilty verdict was still in force at least up to the time of Tertullian. Women’s cunning was so strong that apparently even the devil was

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122 Farley, *Just Love*, 183; I would argue, based on the statement by the Pontifical Biblical Commission that the historical-critical method “cannot lay claim to enjoying a monopoly” in Biblical interpretations, that no single source of moral wisdom has the monopoly in ethical interpretations. Pontifical Biblical Commission, *The Interpretation of the Bible in the Church* (March 18, 1994), IV and “Conclusion”
not brave enough to attack women, according to Tertullian. Connecting all women to Eve, he claimed,

> And do you not know that you are (each) an Eve? The sentence of God on this sex of yours lives in this age: the guilt must of necessity live too. You are the devil’s gateway: you are the unsealer of that (forbidden) tree; you are the first deserter of the divine law: you are she who persuaded him whom the devil was not valiant enough to attack. You destroyed so easily God’s image, man. On the account of your desert—that is, death—even the Son of God had to die. 

In these remarks, it is much easier for one to fathom why a woman had, in effect, to become a man in order to enter the kingdom of God.

Simultaneously, however, Tertullian spoke very highly of the Virgin Mother, as he wrote,

> The title of the Father expresses veneration and power. At the same time, the Son is invoked in the Father… But mother Church is not forgotten either. In the Father and the Son, one recognizes the Mother, by whom the name of the Father like that of the Son is guaranteed.

In this sense, according to Tina Beattie, the Father and the Son are only recognizable in the context that ‘she’ provides. That is, “the naming of the Father and the Son depends upon the Mother’s guarantee.”


125 Ibid., 258 and also Ibid 349 footnote #49; Interestingly, Beattie notices that until the development of DNA testing, the witness of the mother was always necessary to guarantee the father’s paternity.
existence. Like the Virgin Mother, women need not worry about being an obstacle for someone on the basis of their existence and fortuitous birth. Rather, a woman is dependent upon and on the grand scheme of all relationships exemplified by the Father, the Mother, and the Son. The symbolic possibilities (i.e. intermediary, empowerment, relationality, and interdependence) of this bond among the Father, the Mother, and the Son are endless, even in the midst of a Tertullian’s cultural and historical context that saw women pejoratively.

While it is easy to simply dismiss pejorative attitudes toward women as ancient and outdated—and accept the certain selections of Tertullian, such as the one used by Beattie—one must be careful not to write the negative imageries off without realizing their lasting effect. That is, one must ask the question, “How different were the attitudes in the periods following Tertullian and how different are they now?” If it turns out that the particular wording and blunt nature of expressing has changed but the basic attitudes remained, then there is no doubt that we are in a serious need for a new paradigm. I shall see whether that is the case, starting with Augustine.

Augustine

Like Tertullian, Augustine also blamed women for being the cause of men’s sinful behavior. As a case in point, one can turn to a letter that he had written to an otherwise unknown women named Ecdicia. In it, one can see that Ecdicia had requested Augustine’s advice. While they were still married and living together, she and her unnamed husband lived without sexual intercourse. This lifestyle was something which he had agreed to live. However, her husband found himself not being able to keep his end of the bargain. She wanted to continue the practice of sexual abstinence while her
husband ended up committing adultery. Augustine’s advice, or more like a ruling, was simple. The cause of this mess lay with Ecdicia. While he praised mutual and voluntary sexual abstinence in marriage, and admitted that returning to carnal intercourse after making a vow of chastity to God is a “source of grief,” committing adultery was a greater sin. However, this adultery was not of the husband’s fault but it occurred “in his rage at [her].”\textsuperscript{126} Ecdicia’s intention for writing this letter was to find out whether she should return to intercourse with her husband. The answer she received was, “…the question at issue is not whether you should return to intercourse with your husband.”\textsuperscript{127} The issue for Augustine was the fact that he thought she was the culprit. She should have, according to Augustine, “given way to him all the more humbly and submissively in [her] domestic relationship”\textsuperscript{128} since he yielded at her request to be continent. The right thing to do would have been for her to go back to having sexual relations with her husband as requested. That is not the real issue for Augustine, however.

The problem that undergirded these sayings was the fact that Ecdicia took an active role instead of the proper (submissive) role as a wife. Augustine told her that “This great evil arose from your not treating him in his state of mind with the moderation you should have shown”\textsuperscript{129} and while she renounced sex by mutual consent, he wrote, “as his wife, you should have been subject to your husband in other things according to the


\textsuperscript{127} Ibid., 25.

\textsuperscript{128} Ibid., 26.

\textsuperscript{129} Ibid., 24.
Clearly, keeping the original promise, even when it is a promise made mutually before God, was less important than conducting herself “with a submissive demeanor that [she] might win him for the Lord, as the Apostles advise.” Hence, he concludes that he is “grieved at your husband’s conduct which is the result of your reckless and ill-considered behavior.” Just what is this reckless and ill-considered behavior? It is behaving “according to what you [wife] thought should be done” instead of consulting and ultimately obeying her husband.

As one can see, the notion of “woman” in this sense sometimes meant that even when a man committed sin or wrongdoing, the ultimate blame often went to woman. Men were hardwired, in such a model, to take credit for the good of the world, dodging the fatal culpability thanks to this interpretation of Eve, and staying at the authoritative level over woman. In a certain sense, because women were by nature associated with bodiliness and (original) sin and thus contrary to salvation, they were forever marked as “a source of temptation to men… symbolically identified with evil,” and therefore had to

130 Ibid., 24.

131 Ibid., 24; Cf. Gen 3:16 where after birth, women are to turn to their husband. Augustine takes this passage to show once again women’s needed dependence on men. He claims, “Do not many or almost all women give birth while their husbands are absent and, after women give birth, turn to them?” in *On Genesis* book 2 chapter 19, quoted in Ibid 40. However, this does not hold any longer since many men are present during childbirth in many parts of the world now. An interesting question then is whether such a position, or any (ecclesial), positions for that matter, can be altered or improved with the changes in the circumstances, as is the case here. For an answer to that question, one might turn to Augustine himself. He certainly takes into consideration some possibilities for adjustments to be made according to changing conditions of the time. He considered certain acts, now seen as sinful, to be permissible because of the need and the circumstances of the time when he discusses “the marriage of the holy patriarchs” and Sarah by using terms such as, “The mysterious difference of times,” or “…did what was suited to that time.” in *The Good of Marriage* chapters 15, 20, and 22, quoted in Ibid 52-54.

132 Ibid., 30 Certainly, according to Book 9, chapter 9 of the *Confessions*, part of the reason why he considered his mother, Monica, to be such a great model of women was that she was the epiphany of subordination in relation to his father Patricius. Also Cf. Reuther 159-160.
be controlled. Quite different from “becoming male” to solve this problem, a way out for women was to admit that they were naturally this way and be redeemed in childbearing or submit to a lifestyle that controls, or transcends their nature altogether. I will explain.

Woman’s redemption could only come from transcending her nature since her nature as such was contradictory to redemption. Some ancient writings, as I have already shown, worked out this transcendence of womanly nature by having them metaphysically become men. However, Augustine and other church fathers did not take this route. Both Augustine and Jerome denied that there would only be “male bodies” in the Resurrection, insisting that humanity will rise both as male and female. However, the female body as it is on earth must be transformed somehow. What is required of this transformation will indicate that women are no longer simply redeemed through childbirth, as pointed out above in 1 Tim 2:15, but through another path.

Because of a deep and undeniable suspicion about sexual relationships as such and woman’s body in particular, the early fathers had to juggle with the notion of sexual activities and redemption. How could one simultaneously claim that one was redeemed through childbirth and to accept the female body that is associated with shame in that same redemption? The answer was to remove the very characteristics that are problematic.

\[^{133}\text{Farley, 138-139.}\]

\[^{134}\text{Augustine De Civitate Dei 22.17; Jerome Ep. 108, 23, to Paula quoted in Reuther 160; “Nuptias ergo Dominus futuras esse negauit in resurrectione, non feminas.”}\]
That is, in the Resurrection, the female body would not be able to have intercourse or bear children so that it would be adequately vectored “to glory rather than to shame.”

In this same line of reasoning, Augustine maintained that while women are incorporated into bodiliness, he could not deny the possibilities of a woman being saved so long as she can overcome this bodiliness and live according to the spirit. He found a way for woman to be saved without becoming man: via virginity.

Since Augustine and many early thinkers attributed the effects of sin to woman’s nature, virginity was the way to be “unnatural” for it was better for woman to be against her sin-susceptible nature. Through virginity, women were able to become more like better-natured men, albeit without the independence and autonomy of men as evidenced by the abovementioned Ecdicia. These redeemed virgin women would curiously become virile and “contrary to nature,” notwithstanding the fact that being contrary to nature is usually seen in a bad light in everything else. Such an attitude might also explain the passage against the fancy ornamentation of women in 1 Tim2:9 since an ostentatious appearance represented more womanly behavior of the time. The important thing is that he upheld virginity to the extent that it was salvific for women ironically because it represented likeness to the male. He never went as far as Jerome did, who upheld the superiority of virginity over marriage to the extent that he only stopped

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135 Ruether 160 Cf. Ibid., De Civitate Dei 22.17.

136 Ibid., 158; My take on this position is that even in this solution women, by taking away things associated with fecundity and childbirth, Augustine is still trying to make female a de facto male. One should not mistakenly think here that I am claiming women are solely defined by such characteristics. What I am claiming, however, is that Augustine and many of his contemporaries did define women in terms of those characteristics and hence his effort to “save” women through virginity is not much of a progress from the “becoming male” language.

137 Ibid 159.
speaking so harshly about women when they decisively remain virgins, at which point he
turned ever so compassionate in his writings.\textsuperscript{138} While also praising virginity as superior,
Augustine retained somewhat more positive attitudes towards marriage than Jerome and
virginity was not so absolute a fast track way to salvation as Jerome thought.\textsuperscript{139}
Nevertheless, virginity—as it went against the sin-susceptible womanly nature—was the
way for woman to enter the kingdom of God.\textsuperscript{140}

Thomas Aquinas

The Dominican Doctor of the Church contributed to theology with a kind of
clarity of thinking unseen up to that point. Thomas Aquinas was, however, also a product
of his time and even this great thinker could not escape the cultural baggage that was
handed down to him. His writing reflected Aristotelian biology and Augustinian writings,
yet these writings were in many ways unique. Aquinas’ works on sex manifested a
continuation of androcentric views of his predecessors yet discontinued misogynic views
as his patristic processors had it.\textsuperscript{141} While his views on marriage and sex may have
improved a bit from the past, they unfortunately did not come with great improvements
on gender issues.

\textsuperscript{138} Ibid., 168-175.

\textsuperscript{139} Clark, 64-66.

\textsuperscript{140} For a further discussion on gender and sexuality in the late antiquity see Virginia Burrus, ‘Begotten Not
Made’: Conceiving Manhood in Late Antiquity (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2000), and cf.
aforementioned Matthew Kuefler, \textit{The Manly Eunuch}. Burrus demonstrates that Patristic thinkers
Athanasius of Alexandria, Gregory of Nyssa, and Ambrose of Milan construct the male model of power
and leadership associated with God, albeit each in very different routes but all for the detriment of
femininity.

\textsuperscript{141} Eleanor Commo McLaughlin, “Equality of Souls, Inequality of Sexes: Woman in Medieval Theology,”
in Reuther 216.
Aquinas contested the Greek fathers who thought that the *imago dei* resided only in the ‘nonsexual’ soul (but not body), and while they somehow could not deny its residence in the female soul, it existed much more fully in the male soul. In contrast, Aquinas acknowledged that both men and women, *both* in body and in spirit, participated in the *imago dei*, the image of God. Simultaneously, however, he was quick to point out that the participation in the *imago dei* occurred in different degrees. He could not fathom women being in the same status of *imago dei* as men because he, like his predecessors, could not get around the notion that women were somehow deficient as human beings.\(^{142}\)

As regards the individual nature, woman is defective and misbegotten, for the active force in the male seed tends to the production of a perfect likeness in the masculine sex; while the production of woman comes from defect in the active force or from some material indisposition, or even from some external influence; such as that of a south wind, which is moist, as the philosopher [Aristotle] observes (De Gener. Animal. iv, 2).\(^{143}\)

This “improvement,” then, slowly reveals itself in a certain sense as deterioration in reality.

Man, woman, animals, and in fact the whole of the creation have a mark, a footprint, or stamp (*vestigium*) of God and the spiritual soul.\(^{144}\) Since sexual difference is considered something “corporal,” it is relevant only in this domain. The *vestigium*, then, is sort of a “second degree” of image of God and hence relates to the bodily plane. On this bodily plane, woman’s existence is validated for Aquinas by her function as a

\(^{142}\) Farley, 42 note #54 and 139.

\(^{143}\) Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae* I.92.1

The reason is that on the bodily plane, the *imago dei* exists in man “in a way that is not found in woman.” Hence, unlike the Greek fathers, Aquinas thought that the image of God existed in both sexes’ bodies, yet in different (superior/subordinate) degrees. The subordinate state of women (*mulier, femin* *a*) is actually for her own good since she, because of her weakness, needs man’s direction and benefit from such leadership. Such a notion stems from the idea, again, that woman is somehow imperfect as a male *[manqué](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Maqu%C3%A9)* (or misbegotten male). Nevertheless, simple admittance, whether more or less perfect or not, of the existence any trace of God’s image in the body, including that of woman, is a kind of improvement from the Greek fathers. But how does Aquinas’ view fare in the discussion of the *imago dei* in the “intellect,” or soul? This may be a more important question since this image of God is in a more perfect form in the soul.

Again, Aquinas’ starting point is at the presence of *imago dei* in both sexes.

Therefore we must understand that when Scripture had said, “to the image of God He created him,” it added, “male and female He created them,” not to imply that the image of God came through the distinction of sex, but that the image of God belongs to both sexes, since it is in the mind, wherein there is no sexual distinction of sex, but that the image of God belongs to both sexes, since it is in the mind, wherein there is no sexual distinction. Wherefore the Apostle (Colossians 3:10), after saying, “According to the image of Him that created him,” added, “Where there is neither male nor female.”

146 Ibid., I.93.4. ad 1.
147 Ibid., I.92.2.
148 Ibid., I.92.1. ad 1; This idea is following the Aristotelian biology which states that girl child is defective as a result of an accident to the male sperm. See McLaughlin’s discussion of it in Ruether 217.
149 Ibid., I.93.6. ad 2.
Moreover, in the reality of souls, Aquinas claimed at times that there is nothing to distinguish between man and woman.\textsuperscript{150} However equally present these passages make \textit{imago dei} sound, Aquinas is clearly not consistent when he stressed the inequality and subordinate nature of woman. According to Kari Elizabeth Børresen, in discussing 1 Cor 11:3, Aquinas starts from the statement that man is more perfect than woman and the imperfection of woman is defined both in her body, as I have shown earlier, \textit{and} in her soul, referring both to Aristotle and Eccl 7:28.\textsuperscript{151} She continues to quote Aquinas in emphasizing that woman is more imperfect than man even as regards to soul (\textit{etiam quantum ad animam viro imperfectior}). Perhaps these collateral imperfections occur (that is, of body and soul of woman) since there is a certain participation between what belongs to the realm of body and the realm of soul. Since the human soul is the “substantial form of the body and has a certain power which works through bodily organs,” how one’s body is conceived may have an effect on how one thinks about one’s soul.\textsuperscript{152} Given that woman’s conduct is not perceived as “based on solid reason, but easily swayed by passion,” it follows for Aquinas that, like her body, woman’s soul is also inferior.\textsuperscript{153} In other words, woman’s inferior quality and the finality of her body “inevitably works a deleterious effect on woman’s soul.”\textsuperscript{154} Unlike the Latin fathers who thought that the \textit{imago dei} resided inferiorly in women’s body, Aquinas now thought that

\textsuperscript{150} Ibid., Suppl. 39.1. ad 1 “\textit{secundum rem in his quae sunt animae mulier non differt a viro}.”

\textsuperscript{151} Børresen, 172-173. I Cor 11. lect. 1 (end).

\textsuperscript{152} Thomas Aquinas, \textit{Summa Theologiae} II-II 156.1 ad 1.

\textsuperscript{153} Ibid., also Cf. Ibid II-II 149.4 wherein Aquinas claims sobriety is more requisite in women because they have not sufficient strength of mind to resist concupiscence.

\textsuperscript{154} McLaughlin in Ruether 218; Thomas Aquinas, \textit{Summa Theologiae} II-II 70.3, concl., 156.1 ad 1.
it also resided inferiorly in women’s soul. Aquinas, by admitting some sort of presence of *imago dei* in both male and female, and both body and soul, in fact differed from the Greek and Latin fathers by making woman ultimately inferior in every state of her being.

Børresen does acknowledge the fact that there are some places in Aquinas’ writing that seem to suggest equality of the sexes in the reality of souls. Nevertheless, even in those few exceptional cases, she maintains that woman’s body—because it is incapable or imperfect/subordinate—ultimately leads to the subordination of her soul. The reason is that the body has too great an influence on the faculties of intelligence and will. Hence, while woman does have the capacity for the equal knowledge of God as in man, it will not be fully realized until the state of glory. In the meantime, then, a postlapsarian woman is to remain in subjugation and comply in her subordinate roles in the domestic sphere. Consequently, then, man is in control domestically and enjoys sole possession of power outside the family.

**Roman Catholic Writings Up to Pope John Paul II**

Encyclicals

Aristotelian, Augustinian, and Thomistic—along with biblical— notions of sexual status became the cornerstone of Roman Catholic encyclicals and church documents in

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155 Farley 42 note #54 and 139.

156 Børresen, 177.

157 McLaughlin points out that in ST I.92.1, Aquinas saw woman—while possessing the rational soul—was created solely with respect to her sexuality, her body, as an aid in reproduction for the preservation of the species. Reuther 217.

158 Because this project specifically focuses on Roman Catholic thinkers for the most part, I will reluctantly skip the reformation period. I will discuss more about thinkers in the modern period a bit later in this dissertation.
the ensuing years. The blunt descriptions of woman’s inferiority continued to linger for a very long time. One can find, for example, such degrading expressions as recently as in the 1880 encyclical by Pope Leo XIII. Quoting Ephesians 5:25-32, Leo made sure that there was no question of which of the two sexes was associated with Christ and which one was not; which was the head, which was the subject; and which was to order and which was to obey. He did have some points in this encyclical where he advocated mutual sacrifice and love in the marriage and that the obedience of the wife came not in the same way as a servant. However, those statements are juxtaposed with the language of male headship and dominance over female. He did not resolve this tension. In fact, no one can deny the clear emphasis on the hierarchy of the relationship and hence one can conclude that Leo resolved this tension by being on the side of male headship over true mutuality of the relationship. Nevertheless, just for the sheer fact that such language of mutuality made it in to the encyclical gave great possibilities for later Popes and (many feminist) theologians to struggle with the resolving of this tension, as will be shown in chapter 2.

However pioneering those additional words were, Leo unequivocally maintained his position on what the role of man and woman should be according to his previous


160 Ibid., no. 11 and 26.


162 That kind of language enabled some, like Pope John Paul II, to attempt to resolve this problem with his gender complementary approach. Others, like many feminist theologians, called for moving beyond complementary model and to a truer mutual model. See later in this chapter and chapter 2.
opinion on the hierarchy of the sexes. In an encyclical written in 1891 titled On the Condition of Labor (Rerum Novarum), Leo claimed that by nature woman was not suited for works other than what she was “fitted for,” namely domestic duties involving promoting the good rearing of children and the well-being of the family. Woman taking up extra-domestic work was like “rough weather destroy[ing] the buds of spring.” So as to protect woman and children, man, the wage-earner, must be sufficiently paid to support his family and must not be taxed too heavily and woman must fulfill her domestic duties.163 In part, Christine Firer Hinze is impressed with the development of the notion of the worker’s right to a “living wage” or “Family living wage.”164 She also agrees that such a wage should avoid elements contributing to hunger and disease, and should yield—in a reasonable degree—food, clothing, shelter, insurance, and mental and spiritual culture.165 Since Hinze sees family as an “essential locus for spiritual education and formation” and that “in a real sense the civic and the economic spheres are there for the sake of the family,” she praises Ryan’s assertion that “Remuneration inadequate to secure all of these things to the laborer and his family falls, below the level of a Living Wage.”166 However, she sees some limitations. Instead of seeing working women as

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164 Christine Firer Hinze, “Bridge Discourse on Wage Justice: Roman Catholic and Feminist Perspectives on the Family Living Wage” The Annual of the Society of Christian Ethics (1991): 109-132. Hinze recognizes the significance of these advances—by Leo XIII and Pius XI—of the notion of the worker’s right to a “living wage” (i.e. a wage assuring that, through honest labor, workers are guaranteed material conditions necessary for survival and to a degree for security and material well being), and a “family living wage” (i.e. a wage assuring that both (male), household and his dependents are sufficiently given a basic level of material security), 110-111.

165 Ibid., 112-113.

166 Ibid., 111, 113 italics Hinze’s.
exceptions or economic devaluation of work performed in the home,\textsuperscript{167} she advocates for a “full” employment of the family living wage, i.e. “for every adult wage worker, male or female, regardless of marital or family status.”\textsuperscript{168} Full employment, including “childbearing and home-work,” would mean not just cash amounts, but hours and conditions of work, career tracks, benefits and leave policies, pension and insurance plans,” enabling both public and domestic vocation.\textsuperscript{169} Such a usage of wages and policies would ease the economic burden that a man carries—dealing with the pressure of sole economic responsibility—while initiating a process to terminate an attitude that continually views woman as a being that could not do much without the help of man. Indeed, this notion of family living wages is very conducive to my thesis and my ultimate goal for the project at hand, namely to construct a definition of masculinity that fosters the flourishing of both sexes.

Beyond 19\textsuperscript{th} century documents, unfortunately, one continues to find the image of woman in an undignified manner in the 20\textsuperscript{th} century encyclicals. In the 1930 encyclical \textit{On Christian Marriage} (\textit{Casti connubii}), Pope Pius XI, on one hand, picked up where Leo XIII left off and associated the husband with “primacy” which gave him the

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{enumerate}
\item \textsuperscript{167} Ibid., 116.
\item \textsuperscript{168} Ibid., 125.
\item \textsuperscript{169} Ibid., 125-126 Cf. Barbra Hilkert Andolsen, “A Woman’s Work Is Never Done,” in Barbara Andolsen, Christine Gudorf, and Mary D. Pellauer eds., \textit{Women’s Consciousness, Women’s Conscience} (Minneapolis: Winston, 1985), 15-16; Despite a very minimum coverage, in March 31\textsuperscript{st} 2010, President Obama called for workplace flexibility (“flex time”), which included grants for paid time off, childcare, the care for aging relatives, and seniors wanting to live independently. Very relevant to my project, he also said, “So let’s be clear. Workplace flexibility isn’t just a woman’s issue. It’s issue that affects the well-being of our families and the success of our businesses.”
\end{enumerate}
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authority over wife and children. The wife remained with “ready subjugation,” and “willing obedience” because that was the natural “order of love.” Also, similar kinds of economic, social, and familial expectations for men continued. The ramification for Catholic men is that they are solely responsible for material support (and not so much responsible for paternal or family obligations) and often chose a higher-waged job and/or profession that they might dislike for the purpose of maintaining their breadwinner status and maintaining the family.

On the other hand, just as Leo’s small additional word or two can be seen as pioneering, Pius also made a slight, yet monumental, move in the same encyclical. This move concerned the dignity of woman as human being. Notwithstanding his remarks about womanly obedience/subjugation, he did not mean by those words that the woman should be deprived of the liberty that “fully belongs” to her “in view of her dignity as a human person.” Moreover, he expanded on Leo’s comments about the mutual nature of love by stating that the mutual “molding” of husband and wife “can in a very real sense,” “…be said to the chief reason and purpose of matrimony” “…as the blending of life as a whole and the mutual interchange and sharing thereof.” Just as Leo created tension by adding a few phrases, Pius created a tension by simultaneously acknowledging both man and woman as bearer of human dignity and to be called into increasingly mutually and equally loving relationships, and holding on to her required ready subjugation and willing obedience. Pius also did not resolve this tension. In fact, Casti connubii found itself being


171 Ibid., No. 27.

172 Ibid., No. 24. [my italics]
used in defending “different but equal” attitudes about women and their bodies being primarily, or solely, a vessel for procreation and family nurturing after marriage. Also, Pius—along with other popes—does not deal with the possibilities of deprivation of man’s dignity in his model for the family when these possibilities are plentiful. The burden of living up to the standard of male perfection, with the pressure of maintaining the responsibilities of male headship, may yield anxiety, depression, and violence. This danger increases exponentially when he fails to live up to these expectations or when he is born with a more cooperative instinct, which simply does not fit the “hierarchal” model for man. In these instances, the model which calls for a complete responsibility of a role as a breadwinner disregards the dignity of a man. These unresolved problems were again left to his successors to settle.

The question, then, about how to deal with these received notions in the tradition, is still at large. If a tradition, as it was in the case for the Bible, contains elements that are disregarding of human dignity, a responsible Christian should work to ameliorate the situation using other sources of moral wisdom and materials from his or her own tradition. To begin this process, I will examine some exceptional aspects of the tradition that may prove more helpful in this trajectory.

Exceptional Writing

It would not be fair to claim, therefore, that there has been a monolithic characterization of man and woman since Augustine. To be sure, there was at least a

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174 Since encyclicals do not pick up on this theme, I will do so later in the project that deals with social scientific data (Chapter 4).
general consensus on defining men and women in terms of headship and subjugation in 
the hierarchy, respectively. There existed, however, some other distinctively different yet 
very important exceptions within the Catholic tradition. It was these kinds of exceptional 
 writings that enabled popes Leo XIII and Pius XI to include more progressive ideas that 
continued (and continue) to crystallize in the Roman Catholic attitudes toward woman 
and man. I will discuss in greater detail some alternative viewpoints within the Catholic 
tradition in the next chapter and chapter six. At this point, I wish to briefly discuss John 
Chrysostom, and only mention Alphonsus Liguori and Patrick Kenrick. I believe that a 
great example that set precedence to some of these improvements was St. John 
Chrysostom, a contemporary of Augustine.

I do not intend to present Chrysostom, however, as someone who championed 
gender equality or who completely broke away from the normative model of the time, 
namely \textit{paterfamilias} model. It should be made perfectly clear that Chrysostom was also 
the product of his culture and did not challenge the hierarchal model that he and his 
culture inherited. To put it explicitly, Chrysostom held that it was part of God’s intention 
to delegate the “more necessary and important part to the man,” namely managing public 
affairs. On the other hand, God assigned the “lesser and inferior part to woman, namely 
domestic affairs."}

Yet, well before Leo XIII expressed his thoughts, Chrysostom preceded him in 
not treating wives, in his writings, as servants of husbands. A wife was to be chosen not 
as someone who would best fit for the husband as a servant but should have “virtue of 

soul and nobility of character” so to live in “peace, harmony, love and concord.”\textsuperscript{176} Of course, I am very aware that even these statements are highly androcentric and that Chrysostom never wrote a book entitled \textit{How to Choose a Husband}. The androcentric nature of the expression notwithstanding, the kind of language used by Chrysostom may be seen to be much more radical if one were to put it in the context of a contemporary such as Augustine. Unlike Augustine who—along with some of the most significant theologians—unfortunately preoccupied himself with the troublesome influence of women, Chrysostom took the classic Roman ideal of harmony in a well-ordered marriage and put it in a context of “a largely, if not wholly, positive Christian reading of sexuality, women, marriage, and parenthood.”\textsuperscript{177} He considered marriage as an opportunity for “a fellowship for life” and “a warm and genuine friendship.”\textsuperscript{178} He continued to call for “a close collaboration of wife and husband…mutual love and respect in marriage, attend[ing] to both men’s and women’s faults, and potential virtues… [and] concentrat[ing] on family stewardship of assets…”\textsuperscript{179}

Even more striking is his treatment of the body. His treatment of sexuality establishes the body as “an axis of common experience.”\textsuperscript{180} Despite the norm of the time where the body was a “marker of class difference,” he insisted that since we all have bodies, we share in common a struggle with the excessive pull of sexual desire. His

\textsuperscript{176} Roth and Anderson ed. \textit{St. John Chrysostom}, 97-98 in Ibid., 57.

\textsuperscript{177} Ibid., 57.

\textsuperscript{178} Roth and Anderson ed. \textit{St. John Chrysostom}, in Ibid., 56.


\textsuperscript{180} Ibid., 55.
solution is to be simple, restrained, and modest.\footnote{Ibid., 55.} Children should be taught these modest values of sexuality in preparation of a marriage of mutual devotion and respect.\footnote{Ibid., 55-57.} “Only John was prepared to see” the bodies of men and women as “a shared body.”\footnote{Peter Brown, The Body and Society 316. It is noteworthy to remark that Cahill also cites Brown as showing that John’s insight is not unparalleled as he sites a similar text from Jerome’s Letter 77.6 in Ibid., 147.}

Again, his interpretations and expressions are androcentric. Nevertheless, compared to most of the writings of the time, the amount of “mutuality” achieved, and the notion of possible “friendship in marriage” reached, is extraordinary. The body, as the common shared experience, is a source of compassion as well as passion for the spouses. Even with the “patriarchal packaging” of the time, he was able to come up with his version of mutuality in family, marriage, and sexuality.\footnote{For a further discussion, see J.N.D. Kelly, Golden Mouth: the Story of John Chrysostom—Ascetic, Bishop, Preacher (London: Duckworth, 1995).}

Furthermore, Chrysostom—while continuing to advocate a kind of male preeminence—opened, however slight, a possibility for women’s leadership. In a telling relationship with a women named Olympias, who had an aristocratic lineage and connections, Chrysostom seemed to allow, or was indifferent at the very least, a kind of leadership by her. Because of her lineage/connections and her choice not to marry after being widowed, Olympias was able to support church-related projects and people, including Chrysostom. She served as advisor to the bishop of Constantinople and was
eventually ordained as a deaconess.\textsuperscript{185} She enjoyed exercising a considerable amount of authority among male religious associates because of these associations with the powerful\textsuperscript{186} and her virtues. Chrysostom, for example, praised her “modesty, humility, asceticism, and charity” in his surviving letters to Olympias.\textsuperscript{187} He never really moved away from the cultural norm of \textit{paterfamilias} but “his attitude toward Olympias shows that this model did not entirely exhaust his ideas of women’s leadership.”\textsuperscript{188}

Aside from a more positive image of women, for somewhat mutual ideas of married relationships, and more possibilities for women’s leadership, one can turn to Alphonsus Liguori (18\textsuperscript{th} Century) and Patrick Kenrick (19\textsuperscript{th} Century) for yet more encouraging possibilities, this time for the “body” which had traditionally been pejoratively associated with women. As shown earlier, body and bodily pleasure had been tangled up on the negative side of the dualistic thinking of the ancient world. As such, anything associated with women/body/bodily pleasure remained in the negative realm. However, Alphonsus Liguori affirmed that bodily pleasure produced by marital coitus was not only permissible but also recommended based on natural law.\textsuperscript{189} Patrick

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{186} Clark, \textit{Jerome, Chrysostom}, 115.
\item \textsuperscript{187} Cahill, 59.
\item \textsuperscript{188} Ibid., 60. Pauline writings present similar stories. While there are some Pauline passages that seem to silence or subordinate women, it is difficult to deny Paul’s welcoming attitudes towards women’s leadership in the stories of Chloe, Euodiam and Syntyche, Prisca (Priscilla), Phoebe, Junia, Mary of Rom 16:6, Tryphaena and Tryphosa, the beloved Persis, the unnamed mother of Rufus, Apfha, and Thekla in the \textit{Acts of Paul}.
\item \textsuperscript{189} Thomas Aquinas also declared that there was no venial sin attached to the pleasure produced by marital coitus. See Patricia Beattie Jung, “Sanctifying Women’s Pleasure,” in Patricia Beattie Jung, Mary E. Hunt, Radhika Balakrishnan eds. \textit{Good Sex: Feminist Perspective from the World Religions} (New Brunswick, NJ:
Kenrick, the bishop of Philadelphia in the nineteenth century, also claimed that not only was physical pleasure allowed, a husband sinned venially “if he failed to remain sexually active until his wife climaxed.”

Conclusion

A clear historical analysis of the ways in which men and women were viewed is crucial for this project. Undoubtedly, the received notions of dualism and the androcentricism of the Greco-Roman period play a significant role. However, they are not the only causes of modern attitudes about sex and gender. It is impossible to detail all the influences which led to the current models for gender, especially when there is not a single model for gender today. Despite these diversities, it is possible to identify some major players and sources. I have highlighted some of them in this chapter. Broadly speaking, some commonalities in attitudes surfaced regarding men and women. For the most part, the Ancients, the Bible, the Patristic thinkers, the Scholastics, and the modern papacy, in some form or another, advocated a kind of male preeminence, leadership, and authority. While some acknowledged female human dignity more than others, they ultimately maintained women as being opposite or less than men, needing manly leadership for receptive and responsive women to obey. This fact, however, does not

Rutgers University Press, 2002), 95-77 see footnote #1. I am mindful of the fact that much of these discussions were in context only of coitus and potentially procreative sex.

190 Ibid., 187, Peter Gardella, Innocent Ecstasy: How Christianity Gave America an Ethic of Sexual Pleasure (New York: Oxford Press, 1985), 9. In fact, he argued that if she had not climaxed during coitus, she had the right to bring herself to climax by “touches” afterwards! I should also mentions that I recognize that there are many other examples than the ones that I presented. I chose to highlight just a few to prove my point. More thorough study may show, for example, that Clement of Alexandria wrote of marriage in terms of cooperation, ministry, and care. One may point to the Council of Gangra from the 4th Century to note the positive notions of marriage and the married life. For a further discussion on these, see Carol P. Harrison, “The Silent Majority: The Family in Patristic Thought,” in The Family in Theological Perspective, ed. Stephen C. Barton (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1996); David Hunter, ed., Marriage in the Early Church (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1992); Julie Hanlon Rubio, A Christian Theology of Marriage and Family (New York: Paulist Press, 2003).
stand alone. There have been thinkers whose imaginations went ahead of their times. Albeit not without problems, some thinkers were able to achieve a level of mutuality in thinking about family, marriage, and sexuality unforeseen during their time. Suffice it to say, then, that much of our outlook on sex and gender has not come into being out of a vacuum and that there were a number of thinkers who were able to see to a degree beyond the social stereotypes of their surroundings.

Hence, the next proper step—after having an idea about how we got here and how there existed some exceptional thinking about the subject matter at hand—is to see if the received tradition is acceptable. In the next chapter, I will discuss some 20th Century Catholic feminist critiques of the received tradition, focusing my attention on the writings of John Paul II. In doing so, I will highlight how harmful a dimorphic model for gender roles is. Also, I will make a case critical of the current Roman Catholic nuptial imagery for all men and women. I will demonstrate once again that there are yet more possibilities for improvements within the tradition by using documents from the Second Vatican Council and other post-Vatican II encyclicals.
CHAPTER TWO
MORE RECENT CONSIDERATIONS:
CHURCH DOCUMENTS AND FEMINIST RESPONSES

In the last chapter, I pointed out that there are some ancient ideologies that contributed to a trend that has shaped the way we think about gender and sexuality. I also indicated some exceptions to that trend. As is true in most investigations concerning historical tendencies, what we received from the past did not continue on with perfect consistency. In some very important ways, Pope John Paul II (hereafter JPII) also did not continue on the same trajectory as his predecessors. Starting with the publication of *Familiaris consortio*, JPII and the Church began to make a slight, but immensely important, shift of language in the Church’s official writing concerning gender, sexuality, and marriage.\(^1\) Underscoring his writings on gender was the idea of “the equal dignity and responsibility of women with men” that practices “reciprocal self-giving.”\(^2\)

Comparing this idea with the attitudes held by previous pontiffs, one can easily sense the modified tone of the encyclical. The most visible evidence with respect to the subject

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1. JPII was not the first to do so, however. I will discuss other documents, from Vatican II for example, in the later part of this chapter. Also, see John XXIII’s insistence on, although alongside the authority of husbands, the equality of women in Christine E. Gudorf, “Encountering the Other,” in Charles E. Curran, Margaret A. Farley, and Richard A. McCormick, S.J. *Readings in Moral Theology No. 9: Feminist Ethics and the Catholic Moral Tradition* (New York: Paulist, 1996), 68-69.


92
matter at hand is the elimination of the language of submission and inferiority regarding women.

In this chapter, I will explore both the extent to which JPII has made great improvements and to which he has left some room for improvements. I will then present how, along with the dualistic and androcentric ideologies of the ancient times and its biology, JPII’s Thomistic personalism, theology of the body, and his nuptial imagery have all contributed to essentialism, physicalism, and the modern Roman Catholic notion of gender complementarity. With the help from the writings of some feminist theologians, it will become evident that his results are an incomplete representation of the reality of the human sexuality and gender. Because his writings on sex and gender are not adequate descriptions of humanity, his vision is not enough to resolve our current problems of patriarchy, abuse, unjustly assigned gender roles, and deeming fecundity and motherhood compulsory. Therefore, unless the model that undergirds the current papal understanding of sex and gender changes, it will be difficult to solve the problems that the Church faces today and that it will continue to face in the years to come.

**Pope John Paul II**

In *Familiaris consortio*, JPII maintained that man, with regard to woman, is “not her master but her husband” and instructed man that a woman is “not your slave but your wife.” As such, the direction to the man was to “reciprocate her attentiveness to you and be grateful to her for her love.” In order for man to do so, the church must provide the condition for the possibility of following through with such an instruction. Hence, JPII

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3Ibid., 25.
urged that the church must promote as far as possible, the equality of rights and dignity of men and women.\(^4\)  

In other places, JPII continued, indirectly but consistently, to support the idea of eliminating harsh and direct prescriptions for the submission and obedience of women. Referring, for example, to the passages which had been used to justify women’s obedience and submission (e.g. Ephesians 5:22-23)\(^5\), JPII claimed that the passages are actually pointing not to a one-sided spousal subjection but “mutual subjection out of reverence for Christ.”\(^6\) In fact, in the same document, he referred to passages in Genesis (1:26-27, 2:18-25, 3:16) to require married couples to understand that 1) by “helper,” it refers to help provided “on the part of both, and at the same time a mutual ‘help,’” and 2) by dominion, it cannot mean that the woman “become the ‘object’ of ‘domination’ and male ‘possession.’”\(^7\)

One can also see how the Church’s position on gender roles shifts according to the changing milieu. Women had few options outside the domestic sphere within the official Roman Catholic writings before this era. While JPII acknowledged some social changes for women that had already occurred by his papacy—to work in the public sphere and to allow women’s role beyond the private realm—he is commendable insofar

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\(^4\) Ibid., 23-25; Lisa Sowle Cahill, *Family: A Christian Social Perspective* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2000), 85; I am very aware of the fact that such statements should be read with a hermeneutic of suspicion. Whether this call for equality is consistent with the Roman Catholic Church’s policies will be discussed a bit later.  


\(^6\) *Mulieris dignitatem*, 24, italic JPII’s. Cf. Cahill, *Family*, 85 and 152 no. 6; It should be noted that JPII is making this statement within the allegorical usage of the nuptial imagery. See chapter one, in the “Nuptial Metaphor” section, for possible problems with this approach.  

\(^7\) Ibid., 7 and 10, italic JPII’s.
as he accepted some of the social changes. Against the backdrop of the time of this encyclical (1980’s), JPII’s accomplishment in such an expression is understandable. It is fitting in that, by this time, the women’s movement was already about 20 years old by the time the encyclical was published. Historically and contextually, JPII’s allowance for the public functions of women seems to make sense. However, in a way, it is remarkable because the Roman Catholic Church, JPII more specifically, recognized the signs of the time—more so than the previous Popes—and wrote about and gave more attention to women.

More pertinent to this project, JPII claims that for a man, the love for his wife and his children is the natural way of understanding and fulfilling one’s own fatherhood. He speaks against societies and cultures that discourage the father’s involvement in the family and calls for fathers to realize their important role in and for the family. While not referring directly to social scientific data but using its language, he asserts that “experience” teaches us that,

…the absence of a father causes psychological and moral imbalance and notable difficulties in family relationships, as does, in contrary circumstances, the oppressive presence of a father, especially where there still prevails the phenomenon of ”machismo,” or a wrong superiority of male prerogatives which humiliates women and inhibits the development of healthy family relationships.

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8 Familiaris consortio, 23; “There is no doubt that the equal dignity and responsibility of men and women fully justifies women’s access to public functions.” See also Cahill, Family 91.

9 Ibid., 25; all the following information in this paragraph is also from #25.

10 Ibid., 25.
A man can achieve such fatherhood by sharing in the education of children, taking a job that promotes the unity and stability of the family, and by living a Christian life.\textsuperscript{11}

Already, one can see that JPII had made some great strides in seeing the signs of the times and in recognizing what we now know about the social situations in which we find ourselves. Nevertheless, a responsible and faithful scholar should ask whether there are any places in the tradition where there are yet more possibilities for improvements and/or for criticisms. Notwithstanding the aforementioned accomplishments, there are areas in which more improvements are possible. I will place JPII’s theological anthropology at the root from which these possible areas of improvements stem.

One of the problems that many scholars have with JPII’s thought is his idealization of a “biology is destiny” approach. That is, given his approach as a phenomenological essentialist, JPII teaches that the nature and role of women (and men) are biologically determined and that “women as mothers have an irreplaceable role.”\textsuperscript{12} While because of this attitude JPII rightly acknowledges the miraculous moments of conception and birth, he places women on such a high pedestal that women cannot escape their femininity and the roles stemming from it.\textsuperscript{13} In other words, by accepting this kind of theological anthropology, women are acknowledged as doing something natural, something miraculous, and, in fact, something as wonderful as what Mary—the embodiment of true femininity and the example \textit{par excellence} for women—had done.

\textsuperscript{11} Ibid., 25.


\textsuperscript{13} See \textit{Familiaris consortio} 23 where he says that women cannot renounce their femininity (as he defined it), and women cannot escape the maternal obligations as their priority (without a similar emphasis of paternal obligation to the family). See Ibid., Gudorf, 70-74; although on a different point, see Gudorf’s usage of the term “pedestalization.” Gudorf also talks about the negative effects on men as a consequence. I will save these discussions for later chapters dealing specifically with masculinity.
Women would find a definition of femininity, elevated in such a high place, unrealistic. As I will make clear later, most women did, and do, deviate from it.

Theology of the Body

This notion of biological/natural destiny of the sexes stems from the longstanding ideas outlined in his series of addresses to the Wednesday audiences in the Pope Paul VI Hall on the “theology of the body” and the first chapters of Genesis. In this series of 129 lectures lasting from September 1979 to November 1984, JPII continues what he had been preaching and writing as Karol Wojtyla long before he became Pope. The general idea of the theology of the body goes something like the following.

The foundation for JPII’s theology of the body is Thomistic personalism.14 Thomistic personalism is characterized by an insistence that persons, in their subjectivity, rationality, objectivity, and sociality, are radically different from non-persons.15 This uniqueness of human persons, however, does not mean that a person is seen as a single countable individual who is interchangeable with any other member of the species in a homogenous species of beings. Rather, a person in this schema is characterized by uniqueness and irreplaceability.16 A person is “a concrete self, a self-experiencing

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15 Thomas D. Williams, L.C. “What is Thomistic Personalism,” Alpha Omega 7.2. (2004), 178

16 Ibid., 180.
subject” and cannot be replaced by another person the way one can replace an apple with another because it is just as good. In this sense, a human person is essentially different from all other species and it is in this unique subjectivity that a Thomistic personalist can claim that “Subjectivity is, then, a kind of synonym for the irreducible in the human being.” As such, each human person possesses human dignity unique to that person and this fact requires one to treat human beings as an end in themselves. For these reasons, it is understandable that JPII’s notion of theology of the body claimed that personhood is the “highest perfection” in the created order.

A related concept of the theology of the body more relevant to this project, however, is his notion of sociality of human persons. Distinct from the mere fact of human beings’ social nature, JPII specifically means by communion the sociality of human persons; it is a deeper sense of sociability than one that is applied to all animals. After all, animals form social groups and interact with each other, often for the sake of their own gain or other interests. However, God’s love is not of self-interest but of life-giving. Similarly, it is self-surrendering and life-creating when man and woman love


18 Ibid., 181.

19 Wojtyla, “Subjectivity and the Irreducible in the Human Being,” 211, quoted in Ibid 184; italic Williams’.

20 Ibid., 192.

21 Modras, 150.

22 I say “related” since interpersonal communion is discernable and as such distinct from the sociability of other species.

23 Note the discussion on individualism and society’s sociability in Williams, “What is Thomistic Personalism?” 194-197.
within a family.\textsuperscript{24} The family reflects God’s love and enters into a communion of persons (\textit{communio personarum}).\textsuperscript{25} Whereas society may locate the need for sociality and attempts to find the personal realization in self-interest, according to Thomas D. Williams, Thomistic personalist locates them in “a sincere giving of himself (\textit{sic}).”\textsuperscript{26}

Consistently, JPII sees relationships of total self-giving thereby achieving a \textit{communio personarum} as the point of human existence.\textsuperscript{27} Then, we must strive to give ourselves totally in order to find ourselves in the \textit{communio personarum}—in our schools, our workplaces, our family, and even in our bedrooms. More specifically, the communion of two persons (man and woman) expressed through their bodies (sexually) is an act of mutual self-giving, mirroring God’s self-giving covenant with human beings.\textsuperscript{28} In this act of (God-like) self-giving, expressed through the body, differently from any of our other acts, human beings touch “the central mystery of the human person,” enabling them to “transcend truths they know about themselves from their other acts.”\textsuperscript{29} In order for the act to be self-giving and selfless, then, it cannot be done for the sake of fulfilling desire, in a


\textsuperscript{26} \textit{Gaudium et Spes} 24 quoted in Williams, “What is Thomistic Personalism?” 197.

\textsuperscript{27} Julie Hanlon Rubio, \textit{A Christian Theology of Marriage and Family} (New York: Paulist Press, 2003), 82.

\textsuperscript{28} Ibid., 82.

\textsuperscript{29} Hogan and LeVoir, “The Family and Sexuality,” 162; JPII, therefore, defends the ancient biblical terminology for sexual union of man and woman, “to know” on the identical ground. Through the act of sexual intercourse, the couple (heterosexual, non-contraceptive, and married couple), gains knowledge of each other which one cannot gain in any other way.
self-fulfilling way. It must be done in a way that overcomes concupiscence so as to “participate in the mystery of the redemption of the body.”

Hence, unlike many of his predecessors, JPII praises and celebrates human sexuality, body, and sexual relationships. He does not, of course, have a complete trust in the body. JPII does argue that before the Fall, there existed a sort of original self-mastery and self-control (represented by the unashamed nakedness) which was lost as the result of the first sin. Consequently, our bodies are marked by concupiscence and are in forever need of self-mastery and self-control since they are connected to the sexual desires, reactions, and emotions that constantly cloud our visions. We struggle with the limits of concupiscence, being able to redeem ourselves only in the “nuptial” or “spousal” meaning of the body. In this nuptial setting, then, spouses are called, once again, to become a full (selfless) gift for one another, in their masculinity and femininity, in one flesh, and in procreation.

How indispensable is a thorough knowledge of the meaning of the body, in its masculinity and femininity, along the way of this vocation! A precise awareness of the nuptial meaning of the body, of its generating meaning, is necessary.

As a phenomenologist, then, JPII takes seriously the notion of the body and sexual relations. In his theological anthropology, I conclude that for JPII, marriage, and

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31 Ronald Modras, “Pope John Paul II’s Theology of the Body,” 153-154; See for example John Paul II, *Original Unity of Man and Woman, Catechesis on the Book of Genesis*, with a preface by Donald W. Wuerl (Boston: Daughters of St. Paul, 1983), where it states that “nakedness” assumes the original “self-mastery” and “self-control,” (p.51), and when the self-mastery is lost as a result of the first sin, that our “humiliation” of the nakedness represents how concupiscence took over (p.50).

32 Ibid., 153.

33 *L’Osservatore Romano* #23, English edition. 8 April, 1980.
sexual relations within it, must be about God, that is, a selfless and total gift of oneself to
the other. One can achieve this in the context of marriage in which self-control against
our tendencies to surrender to concupiscence is practiced. In terms of sexual intercourse,
the spouse in one’s masculinity and femininity must fight self-serving desires and give
oneself to the other. However, while these wonderful images of selfless love and gift can
possibly serve as a beneficial model, many scholars have noted some serious problems.

Ronald Modras, for example, argued that “most lay Catholics would not connect
with the pope’s focus on self-control, his distrust of erotic desire, or his assertion that
anyone involved in a sexual relationship that is not heterosexual, non-contraceptive, and
marital is ‘using’ another person.” The lived experience of sexual relationships is such
that it is not always under complete control, rarely if ever about complete and total giving,
sometimes great and other times not, and often about love as a result of receiving, not
always of giving. In the lived experience of many Catholics, then, “What the pope
approaches from the outside and calls lust, they live on the inside and call love.”
Completely losing one’s body or desire, or merely wanting to receive pleasure, may
indeed lead to “using” another person. Nevertheless, the extremity of the spiritualization
of the body, the idealization of sexual intercourse, and the lingering suspicion and
degrading of human desire and pleasure is the key element of JPII’s theology of the body
that many scholars and laity find difficult to connect to the reality of their lived
experience.

34 Rubio 83; Modras, 155.
35 Modras, 152-156 especially 155.
36 Ibid., 156; also mentioned in Rubio 83.
Gender Complementarity

Related to such a criticism is his notion of “gender complementarity.” This concept essentially claims that all men and women possess qualities and characteristics specific to their sex which enhance the other both in their biological and personal realm. In this model, men and women are born with internal and external organs that complement and perfect (via procreation) each other. Also, resulting from the physical complementarity, it further claims that men and women are hardwired to complement each other in all aspects, including physical, emotional, psychological, spiritual, and relational and social realms. The implication is that a true balance is created between a man and a woman to do what they are naturally equipped to do: to procreate and to properly rear children.

Table 1. Types of Sexual Complementarity in Magisterial Teaching

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Heterogenital complementarity</td>
<td>The physically functioning male and female sexual organs (penis and vagina)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reproductive complementarity</td>
<td>The physically functioning male and female reproductive organs (testes and sperm,</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

37 “In the ‘unity of the two,’ man and woman are called from the beginning not only to exist ‘side by side,’ or ‘together,’ but they are also called to exist mutually ‘one for the other.” Mulieris dignitatem, 7 (Cf. my earlier discussion of Aristophanes and Plato’s symposium in chapter one and Farley, Just Love, 141-142 especially #60). This is not an assumption specific to JPII. Nevertheless, it is his overarching assumption and it continues to be problematic for a number of scholars.


39 Ibid., 127-138 and 145-150.

40 Ibid., 138-150.

41 The summary of the types of sexual complementarity is found in the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith’s (CDF’s), Considerations Regarding Proposals to Give Legal Recognition to Unions between Homosexual Persons (2003). The table is from Salzman and Lawler, The Sexual Person, 141.
II. Personal Complementarity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Communion complementarity</td>
<td>The two-in-oneness within a heterogenital complementarity marital relationship created and sustained by truly human sexual acts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affective complementarity</td>
<td>The integrated psycho-affective, social, relational, and spiritual elements of the human person grounded in heterogenital complementarity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal complementarity</td>
<td>Heterogenital complementarity parents who fulfill the second dimensions of reproductive complementarity, namely, the education of children</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Such a view also posits “both men and women as being incomplete outside marriage.”

It also presumes that all “traits and roles are essentially sex-based,” making all men and women essentially (physically and otherwise) different. In such a model “…a man will be more different from all women than from any man.” Thus, in JPII, the polarity, “opposing” sex, and the differences are emphasized and similarities downplayed. One of the possible harmful effects of this is couples not being able to relate (mentally,

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42 Christine E. Gudorf, “Encountering the Other,” 74; Later Catholic mentality on gender thinking resulted from gender complementarity. Cf. USCCB, *Marriage: Love and Life in the Divine Plan*, November 17, 2009 8-11; Of course, a long tradition of Catholicism claimed that staying celibate is a superior option to living a married life; See also chapter four of Rubio, “Traditional Ways of Speaking about Marriage,” 65-75 for a brief historical analysis of discussion of marriage vis-à-vis celibacy. In this sense, religious priests and nuns may be seen as being more fully human. However, a single person who is not part of a Catholic religious order does not share the same status in the church. Note, for example, *Mulieris dignitatem* 20 where it praises virginity for the sake of the kingdom only if one is part of the religious order. “This [the evangelical ideal of virginity] cannot be compared to remaining simply unmarried or single, because virginity is not restricted to a mere "no", but contains a profound "yes" in the spousal order: the gift of self for love in a total and undivided manner.”

43 Ibid., 75.

44 Ibid., 75.
physically, and intimately) to one another and being detached emotionally, or in rare cases, even justifying dominance over one another as a consequence.\textsuperscript{45} I will consider the discussion on whether such strong claims of harm are true, directly or indirectly, wholly or partly, later in this dissertation.

History certainly shows that such a schema—which is a byproduct largely of the history of dualism of gender as shown in chapter one—disadvantages women\textsuperscript{46} since often women are often restricted to less socially valued domestic/receptive/ inferior roles.\textsuperscript{47} Collaterally, men are \textit{de facto} missing from the family because JPII’s “understanding of mothers alone as ‘detecting the cry of the infant,’ or understanding children and loving each of them, excludes men from relational intimacy in the family.”\textsuperscript{48} Gender complementarity that continues to praise and romanticize the agapic sacrifice of women is, in fact, harmful also for men—because of unrealistic expectations and what happens when those expectations are not met—as I will show in later chapters. The current Roman Catholic position that claims that we are incomplete in ourselves if not for our “complementary” (sex) partners can mistakenly lead to our not seeing the inherent value in a single human life as such.\textsuperscript{49} I agree with Farley that “as the poet Rainer Marie Rilke once wrote, we must move toward a time when ‘there will be girls and women

\textsuperscript{45} Ibid., 74-79; Farley, \textit{Just Love}, 156.

\textsuperscript{46} Farley, \textit{Just Love}, 134-135.

\textsuperscript{47} Note for example, “…society must be structured in such a way that wives and mothers are not in practice compelled to work outside the home,” \textit{Familiaris consortio} 23. Women, while technically allowed to take part, are discouraged from encroaching into the public sphere, where many important, self-determining, free, and “leadership” decisions are made. Cf. Cahill, \textit{Family}, 91.

\textsuperscript{48} Gudorf, “Encountering the Other,” 71-72.

\textsuperscript{49} Also note the discussion about celibacy in such a representation of complementarity, Christine E. Gudorf, “Encountering the Other,” 75-76.
whose name will no longer signify merely an opposite of the masculine, but something in itself, something that makes one think not of any complement and limit, but only of life and existence.”

The complementary position could easily result in unhealthy relationships for all the members of the family and potentially leads us to think that life’s worth depends on what we do and with whom we choose to live.

In her article “Papal Ideals, Marital Realities: One View from the Ground,” Cristina L.H. Traina agrees with JP II that when sexual activity is done according to the complementary expectations for the purpose of procreation where “pregnancy is a hope,” there is no anxiety about unwanted pregnancy and consequently no fear involved, making sex a joyous experience. However, Traina rightly points out that since JPII prohibits the use of contraception, the “opportunities for generous, appropriate marital sexual expression are few in a lifetime” in his complementary model. The complexity of marital life is more than the complementary model can encompass. The total giving of each other, being open to conception, and finding the energy and the right time to have sexual activity are rarely possible, at least in a world where the married family lives come

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53 Ibid., 274.

54 Ibid 278.

55 Ibid., 275-278.
Traina argues that the notion of gender complementarity is out of touch with reality—more specifically, the reality of the lived experience of women and men. That is, because not all women have regular cycles and most people have many other responsibilities, a genuine sexual relationship as defined by JPII is rarely possible. In fact, I think a proper sexual relationship, as defined by JPII, adds to the worries, instead of alleviating them. Not only will the unrealistic selfless expectation in sexual activities increase anxiety but also the possibility of unwanted pregnancy using the often inconsistent rhythm method will add to the worries. Since in her view and experience, Traina is able to give herself more fully and wholly through a “worry-free” intercourse, she maintains that the complementary model is not enough. The model must be extended so that it is not defined by the unrealistic expectations (total self-giving, always with procreative possibility, and complete self-control) doomed for failure. It can be “complementary.” However, rather than “falling under the stereotypical gender lines” supposedly engraved in nature, it can be grounded in something else. Rather than being grounded in a model that complements a generic person (or a specific person) or grounded in ontology or anatomy, one can use a model in which the couple complements a particular person and his or her particular personality.

JPII’s suggestion of ontological complementarity, then, is misleading, according to Traina. She maintains that one’s relative skill at a role depends on how much practice

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56 By “right time” I mean not only the right time of the cycle but I am also referring to (1) the time when the couple is able to find in the midst of their busy married lives, and (2) the time that pregnancy is desired. Pregnancy indeed may be desired at certain times in one’s life but undoubtedly it is not desired all the time.

57 Ibid 278.

58 Ibid., 281-282.
one gets at it. Furthermore, and consequently, the “role” of maleness or femaleness in lovemaking, in her experience, becomes less and less significant.\textsuperscript{59} Instead of simply deciding that male and female fit into certain roles, she concludes that fruitfulness and durability of \textit{any} union has to do, not with physicality, complementarity, or procreation, but affection and hard work along with faith, friendship, generosity, and support.\textsuperscript{60}

The fact that gender complementarity as a model does not come with any room for change, or improvements, adds to the problem. The rigid division between the two continues on, I think, without any possibilities of compromise. To be fair, this fact is not simply due to JPII’s uncompromising attitude. It has more to do, I believe, with his conviction that since gender complementarity is an “ontological” truth, it is an external or eternal law. Hence, the rigid division between the sexes cannot be altered not because he does not want to; it is because, in his view, a human being is not able to do so. Since this unalterable gender complementarity undergirds any theology relating to it, JPII could not fathom any modification to it. Nevertheless, JPII’s conviction that all of this is out of his control does not change the fact that the problem that the Catholic Church is unwilling to improve on the one-size-fits-all model for men and women remains. Also, there are a number of other problems—to which I alluded previously—stemming from such an inflexible division of the sexes: the abusive demand for sacrifice and the tendency to downplay the integrity (in terms of wholeness) of persons.

Gender role assignments resulting from gender complementarity usually mean that men and women are not only different biologically but also assigned a role toward

\textsuperscript{59} Ibid 281.

\textsuperscript{60} Ibid 284.
which they are “naturally” inclined (“domestic” childbearing and childcare for women and “public” warfare and material productivity for men). Historically, any attempt to restrict social roles on such a basis inevitably leads to inequities that hinder growth in human and in Christian life. The perception of agapic self-sacrifice, for example, continues to be a notion more specifically applied to women because they are traditionally associated with receptivity, passivity, and submission. While some women may possess some of these qualities, the absolute nature of these traits (i.e. that all women possess all these qualities) becomes very harmful in many ways. Firstly, such a firm stand gives a potential message to a battered woman to be submissive or that she should be subject to her husband. While a complementary model is not a direct cause of such violence, it does help to support a picture of reality where such practices can come to seem justified. Even if it is not a case of domestic violence, one can easily come up with numerous situations where different manifestations of abuse and violence can more

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63 The culpability for supporting such traits does not lie solely on religious institution, of course. These traits are socially supported. I will save this discussion for chapter 4.

64 Margaret A. Farley, “The Church and the Family: An Ethical Task,” Horizons 10.1 (1983): 66. Joanne Carlson Brown and Rebecca Parker, “For God So Loved the World,” in Carol J. Adams and Marie Fortune eds., Violence Against Women and Children (New York: Continuum, 1995), 37; I do not agree with Brown and Parker’s overarching and assertive claims that “Christianity is an abusive theology that glorifies suffering (56)” and that if such is not condemned, women have no reason to stay in it (38). There is not a monolithic “Christianity” to make such a generalizing statement and there may be many other reasons to stay in, one of which is to ameliorate it. Also, sacrifice is “essential in the furthering of the kingdom,” so long as it is “always aimed at the establishment of mutual love.” Christine E Gudorf, “Parenting, Mutual Love, and Sacrifice,” in Barbara Hilkert Andolsen, Christine E. Gudorf, Mary D. Pellauer eds. Women’s consciousness, women’s conscience : a reader in feminist ethics (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1985), 190. Nevertheless, I find Brown and Parker’s article helpful insofar as it points to the dangers of romanticizing and accepting abuse.
easily come to appear acceptable in this schema. Hence, many have found this agapic model unsatisfactory since these situations too often mean that women are more prone to destructive self-abnegation and that the sacrifice of women is for the sake of men, whether it was in the family, in the workplace, or anywhere else.

Secondly, focusing only on those qualities undermines the multifaceted nature of women and men alike. That is, the current Roman Catholic complementary model would downplay men’s domestic capabilities and capacities along with women’s potential and competence for participating in active public roles. In this model, all the ways in which men receive, encircle, and embrace and all the ways in which women are active, giving,

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65 I want to be very clear that I am not claiming that agape is problematic per se. It only becomes a problem in a society of inequality where it is more specifically applied to, or stressed for, one group, especially the socially disadvantaged, more than the other. The idea of “forgiveness” or “love your enemy” would carry similar problems for the same reason. For non-Catholic Christian perspective, see Karen Lebacqz, “Love your Enemy: Sex, Power, and Christian Ethics,” in Lois K. Daly ed. Feminist Theological Ethics: A Reader (Louisville, KY: Westminster/John Knox, 1994). My point is that there are limitations of agape as a norm. See Barbara Hilkert Andolsen, “Agape in Feminist Ethics,” in Lois K. Daly, 146-159.


67 During the recent economic downturn in the US, many men became “stay at home dads” and women “breadwinning moms.” Even excluding men who had been “forced to” stay home with kids, stay-at-home-dads jumped 38 percent in the last three years, according to 2009 census estimates. See Kim Janssen, “More dads at home playing Mr. Mom: a choice for some but men lost most jobs in recession,” in the Metro & Tri-state section, Chicago Sun-Times September 30, 2010 http://www.suntimes.com/news/metro/2755976,CST-NWS-dads29.article; Cf. Jeremy Adam Smith, The Daddy Shift: How Stay-at-Home Dads, Breadwinning Moms, and Shared Parenting are Transforming the American Family (Boston: Beacon Press, 2009); My point is that an inflexible complementary model based on the sex of a person, vis-à-vis such a reality of today, would result in negative consequences stemming from feeling that one is doing something that they are not supposed to be doing. My contestation is that the complementary model would make one feel “less manly” and “less womanly,” which could have unfortunate consequences in one’s life. I will examine whether that is the case or not later on in this dissertation.
and penetrating would be ignored. The destructive result is that these gender role assignments become obstacles for the possibility of growing insights into patterns of mutual, loving, and Christian relationship. By focusing on some aspects of human sexuality as if they were the whole, one (man or woman) is not able to wholly express oneself in relation to one’s spouses, family, and ultimately God.

Thirdly, and related to how one cannot fully express oneself to one’s spouse, Catholic thinkers often deemed compulsory childbearing and procreativity as not only natural but also as one of the two essential ends for love-making in a marriage. The idea was that women, unlike men, are naturally (reproductively) vectored toward childbearing and hence men and women are made for each other with fecundity as their ultimate goal.

Before Vatican II, while many sought to allow sexual relations within a marriage even when conception could not occur (i.e. infertility, rhythm method) these instances are inevitably seen as either a lesser, abnormal, or deficient form of the love relationship. These cases raised some serious questions about people who choose to live as single, separated, divorced, widowed, married but without any offspring (infertile or not),

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68 Ibid., 637. Scientific discoveries of the 19th and 20th century show that even in the physical bodily structural level, women’s body is not simply receptacle for sperm. Ovum and sperm meet “together in order to form a new reality,” forever ruling out the analogy of earth receiving a seed. The ovum plays an active role in aiding the passage of the sperm. These studies show that receptivity and activity began to coincide and that receiving does not necessary mean passive. There will be more extensive discussion of such facts in the chapter dealing with scientific data.

69 Farley, “New Patterns of Relationship,” 638.

70 Pontifical Council for the Family, Family, Marriage, and “De Facto” Unions, July 23, 2000, 23. Until the Second Vatican Council, the Roman Catholic tradition (for example, St. Augustine, The Council of Trent, Alphonsus Liguori, Casti Connubii), regarded the marital sexual act as a remedy for sin and/or procreative, with the superiority of celibacy acknowledged. However, see Farley, Just Love, 47-49 for modern Roman Catholic developments and how (unitive) love became equally important as the procreative.

71 Ibid., Farley, 47-48.
homosexuals, or even celibates (religious or not).\textsuperscript{72} Also, such an attitude forced one to focus on a relationship between “physical” body parts or sexual organs and biological functions, not between the two full human beings with interpersonal moral dimensions.\textsuperscript{73}

Since Vatican II, however, some of the problematic notions of body, sexual relationship, and marriage have changed.\textsuperscript{74} The Council famously stated that the unitive and procreative functions must be held together.\textsuperscript{75} JPII, as I mentioned earlier, developed the idea of theology of the body where body became important. Nevertheless, there is still a very strong emphasis on childbearing, to the point where a sexual act that is not open to procreation is still seen as a disorder “in the heart.”\textsuperscript{76} Again, this kind of an emphasis raises the question about the legitimacy of the existence of single persons and couples who choose not to have a child. Moreover, such a notion of the compulsory procreativity, even for active, fertile, heterosexual couples, forces them to express their marital love sexually only legitimately during certain times of the monthly cycle and only during

\textsuperscript{72} Jung, Patricia Beattie, \textit{Heterosexism: An Ethical Challenge} (Albany, New York: SUNY Press, 1993), especially Ch. 2.

\textsuperscript{73} James P. Hanigan, “Unitive and Procreative Meaning: The Inseparable Link,” in Patricia Beattie Jung ed. with Joseph A. Coray, \textit{Sexual Diversity and Catholicism}, 22-38, especially 33. Again, this attitude was more problematic prior to some adjustments made during and since The Second Vatican Council.

\textsuperscript{74} Farley, \textit{Just Love}, 48.

\textsuperscript{75} \textit{Gaudium et spes}, 48; Cf. 29, 49, and 60.

\textsuperscript{76} Modras sees using birth control as an example, Modras 155; The idea is that an intentionally non-procreative sexual act can only be seen as man committing adultery in his heart because he is treating her “as an object to satisfy instinct.” JPII, \textit{Theology of the Body} 43.3 (October 8, 1980). \url{http://www.ewtn.com/library/papaldoc/jp2tb42.htm}. While I must applaud a call against the objectification of women for a selfish purpose of fulfilling just one of the spouses’ desires, I must raise the question about what is defined as objectifying. It is my opinion that even in an intentionally non-procreative sexual activity the couple can express themselves lovingly and participate in a “unitive” act, without one “objectifying” the other for the sheer sake of fulfilling one’s instinct.
childbearing years, that is, if they want to limit children.\textsuperscript{77} Similar to the previously mentioned problem, such a model limits—here, specifically in a sex act—one’s ability to wholly and freely express oneself in relation to one’s spouse. In order for the church that holds the unitive function (i.e. love) equally as important as the procreative, it is imperative that the church’s model does not unrealistically limit either of the two functions.

One of the common threads in these criticisms, then, is that the gender complementary model fails to accommodate the integrity and complexity of the human person. That is, whether by limiting the growth of the loving couple through demanding unjust sacrifice, undermining the multifaceted nature of persons, or requiring an approach to sexual acts which is always open to childbearing, the model fails to allow for the fullness of loving expression. As I briefly highlighted above, many Catholic feminists, along with many others, pointed out a number of serious limitations in the complementary model in this regard.\textsuperscript{78} Only in a model where complementary roles are assigned not according one’s sex but one’s talent, both the passive and active aspects of oneself are acknowledged regardless of one’s sex, and partners are able to more fully, freely, and realistically express their love sexually, could a complementary model function properly in the Christian Catholic context.


Despite these problems, however, one may still consider gender binaries more favorably if it is nature’s intent. Even if one wants to follow obediently JPII’s notion of gender, however, many will find it not only difficult but also quite naturally unable to follow. I can imagine, for example, a woman who has a non-regular menstrual period failing to adhere to JPII’s rules for sexual activity. Again, related to the discussion above, this problem stems from not recognizing the integrity, or the whole, of the person. The kind of dimorphic, dualistic, complementary model of gender does not adequately serve all men and women. Many, including myself for example, do not fit the norms set forth by JPII and previous thinkers who insisted on definitive characteristics for men. A great number of men tend not only to enjoy and be good at “domestic” roles and duties, but also have characteristics that go along with this domesticity. I do not particularly think that they are abnormal either. The idea of gender complementarity does place them as deviants nonetheless. These “deviants,” in fact, are forced to fit the current Catholic paradigm despite natural tendencies that contradict that model. What makes these arguments especially heated is the fact that, with scientific developments, there is increasing evidence that many gender differences are the products of social construction, and are not necessarily all innate. In addition, there is theoretical and experimental evidence of much diversity in human sexuality as a whole.

Christine E. Gudorf also sees the papal assumption about dimorphic sexuality as limiting. She claims that all three of the major Western religions, as well as most other


80 For this reason, interdisciplinary conversation is becoming more important. See Patricia Beattie Jung, and Aana Marie Vigen eds., *God, Science, Sex, Gender: An Interdisciplinary Approach to Christian Ethics* (Urbana, University of Illinois Press, 2010). Similarly, I will use an interdisciplinary approach to discuss the issues at hand in more detail in Chapter four.
ancient religious texts, presume that humans are naturally divided into two sexes; this
determines sexual identity, reproductive roles, social roles, and the sex of one’s partner.  
If one does not fit neatly into this bifurcation, one may be considered abnormal. In
contemporary Western medical practice, for example, when one is not born in accordance
with these dimorphic norms, one is treated as an “emergency” and undergoes a
“necessary” treatment that would “assign” their sex according to the either of the two
dimorphic sexes.  
As Natalie Kertes Weaver noted,

> When they do occur, however, they are not regarded as variations but pathologies. Physicians, psychologists, gender theorists, pediatricians, and an array of others treat sexual variety as birth defects that can be corrected surgically and with hormone therapy. Labeling sexual variety as defective birth invites us to ask, defective for whom? In rare cases where the condition prevents, for instance, the normal drainage of urine, the condition could be life-threatening. In more common cases, for example, when a female has an enlarged clitoris or a male a micro-penis, the “pathology” is hardly life-threatening. The question of defect is largely a question about what parents, doctors, and the presumed world-at-large can tolerate in its midst, irrespective of the intersexed person who may not experience his or her body as particularly problematic until it is pointed out to her that she should.

Naming intersex as a defect or disorder reflects powerful assumptions about the presumed heteronormativity of sex and gender, while simultaneously silencing the decentering anthropological questions that sexual ambiguity raises. It is no wonder that the standard medical practice for decades… was to keep silent parents and to withhold information about their conditions and surgeries from intersexed patients— even into adulthood.


However, there are certainly non-Western societies where there are much more open practices than that of the dimorphic practices of the West.\textsuperscript{84} Also, some scientific discoveries give some grounds for the reasonableness of these practices. According to Gudorf, the biology of dimorphic sexuality is not and has not been as “clean-cut” as many people think.\textsuperscript{85} She maintains that human beings have obligations to God and our society and how we follow such obligations differs according to many factors. However, sexuality should not specially oblige or excuse us from following them. Since it is becoming more and more evident that sexuality is at least more complex than the binary model, one must not, according to Gudorf, make a definitive classification of sexuality and recognize the diversity of sexuality.\textsuperscript{86}

I will discuss scientific data in chapter four. My purpose at this moment is simply to note that there are a number of Catholic feminist scholars who insist that JPII’s approach of gender complementarity can lead to much harm and also claim that it may not be social-scientifically or biologically sound. Even when one accepts the dimorphic model, however, there is a great diversity \textit{within} the two sexes. Women are very diverse, as are men. There is not a monolithic “woman” or “man.” Sexual and gender diversity is a reality about which more people are feeling comfortable, as diversity is becoming more evident, more extensive, and more accepted. Society and religion lean toward

\textsuperscript{84} Ibid., 216-217. Gilbert Herdt for example, found societies that created special roles for people who are exceptions to the dimorphic sexual model. These include \textit{Hijras} of India, the Sworn Virgins of Albania, and the Mojave Native American tribes. Some believed that the roles of these exceptional people played, “brought honor and leadership responsibilities to affected persons.” Gilbert Herdt, \textit{Same Sex, Different Cultures} (Boulder: Westview, 1997), 90-98, 106-18 quoted in Gudorf, “The Erosion of Sexual Dimorphism,” 869.

\textsuperscript{85} Gudorf, “The Erosion of Sexual Dimorphism,” 874-880; there is a lot more research on this in the biological literatures (chapter 4).

\textsuperscript{86} Ibid., 882-885.
categorization and neatly organized realities. However, such a rigid categorization can only house a few people.

Some, albeit rare, who do not fit into these categories receive the spotlight. The recent controversy about the South African runner, Caster Semenya, who is “too fast to be considered a woman” and who is declared to have both male and female organs, may be an example of such a person. Such a case yields some tough questions.

For instance, in marriage legislation, should a religion recognize or perform a marriage for a woman and her transsexual fiancé (who is chromosomally female) or for a man and his chromosomally male fiancé who suffered a circumcision accident at birth and was surgically reassigned and raised as a girl from six months? Or how about the transgendered person—a couple, chromosomally and anatomically male and female, both present themselves as women who want to bear and rear children as joint mothers? How does one interpret the (dimorphic) regulations in these situations? Who is male, and who is female?

However, the point that many scholars are making, and the point that I will make more explicitly in chapter four, is that people do not fit neatly into the two categories in a variety of ways and forcing someone into those categories or into the “abnormal” category is destructive, damaging, and dangerous, regardless of one’s sexuality.

**New Catholic Feminism**

Some have responded to these feminist responses quite negatively. In the political arena, the conservative Catholic activist, Phyllis Schlafly, became famous for a kind of


“grassroots conservatism” that spoke against feminism per se. Catholic activists such as Helen Hull Hitchcock also continue to speak against the dangers of feminism, especially when it comes to the liturgy and the threats of using inclusive language. Of these groups, there is a group that is not as extreme—and perhaps influenced by the personalist and phenomenology movements of the 20th century—called “new feminists.”

People in this movement, largely Catholic (to whom Tina Beattie refers as the new Catholic feminists) try to take the middle ground between “feminism” and the conservatism that rejects feminism altogether. Following JPII’s Evangelium vitae, this form of feminism (NCF henceforth) rejects male dominance, discrimination, violence etc., thereby acknowledging that they do exist and are problems. Thus, NCF has “some affinity with the ‘old’ brand of feminism… associated with the women’s liberation movement.” Ultimately, however, this group claims that the old version is a failure. Notwithstanding the fact that a great deal of the works of NCF are being “plundered for ‘sound bites’ but never discussed or analyzed in any detail, and at times [their] embittered and narrow-minded assault… casts serious doubt on the scholarly integrity and judgment


90 Phyllis Schlafly, Feminist Fantasies (Dallas, Texas: Spence Publishing Company, 2003); She is Roman Catholic but is widely known for her political activism.


92 Tina Beattie, New Catholic Feminism: Theology and Theory (New York: Routledge, 2006).

93 Ibid., 19; Cf. Evangelium vitae, 99; Also, for a usage of the term “new feminism” in the secular context, see Natasha Walter, The New Feminism (London: Virago Press, 1999).

94 Ibid., 23.
of the authors," it must be taken seriously, according to Beattie. The reason is that some of the criticisms are fair and not uncommon, and NCF does not claim to speak for all women.

Some of the more serious and fair criticisms of feminism by NCF are exemplified by the work of Michele Schumacher. Aside from rejecting male dominance, discrimination, and violence and thereby agreeing in part with feminism, NCF disapproves of feminism on the grounds that, by advocating the socially constructed notion of human nature, it has failed to see the essential aspect of that nature. That is, NCF maintains—by drawing attention to Judith Butler—that concepts like the social construction theory went so far as to reject the metaphysical and real (essential) part of nature that is simply there a priori, before any cultural influence took effect. In the eyes of NCF, the social constructionists are extreme relativists who deconstruct to the point of nihilism. In response, Beattie, in spite of the fact that she finds problematic Schumacher’s selectivity in arguing against feminism and feminists, offers a solution by

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95 Ibid., 24; Beattie thinks that these efforts contain many inaccuracies, insults, and distortions without any references or grounds for them. 24-25.

96 Ibid., 25.


98 Beattie, 40; Schumacher, “The Nature of Nature in Feminism, Old and New,” 19-33.

99 Ibid., 40-41; Schumacher is critical of Simone de Beauvoir (and Jean-Paul Sartre and Judith Butler), for not acknowledging the a priori meaning of life, referring to the famous quote, “One is not born, but rather becomes, a woman.” Ibid 40; Schumacher would find unfathomable the notion that some believe that there is simply no a priori reality. Judith Butler, for example, does not believe in an a priori reality and hence maintains that not only is gender socially constructed but ‘sex and the naturalized institution of heterosexuality are constructs, socially instituted and socially regulated fantasies or ‘fetishes’ not natural categories…’ in her Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity (London: Routledge, 1999), 161; italic Butler’s.
way of Nancy A. Dallavalle that Schumacher does not offer. Building on Dallavalle’s notion of “Critical Essentialism,” Beattie rediscovers the Catholic sacramentality that can acknowledge the body’s grace. This is an attempt at taking seriously the constructed, contextual, and *a posteriori* nature of a person (thus avoiding essentialism) while simultaneously acknowledging the innate value in the engraced body (thus avoiding extreme forms of relativism, deconstructionism, and nihilism). Thus, Beattie demands not just a criticism of sexual stereotypes of NCF but also says that

…a recovery of the sense of the essential giftedness of the self, which brings with it an absolute valuing of the dignity of the self as the gift of God, made in the image of God, may offer feminist theology a new model of relationality that is not parasitic upon the autonomous subjectivities of modernity, nor prey to the many forms of subordinationism and subjugation which haunt the Christian theology of woman.

To be sure, Beattie is very aware of the danger of the uncritical acceptance of essentialism, complementarity, and of NCF’s sexual stereotypes. Although she would ultimately disagree with NCF, she finds its “insight into the graced relationship between the bodily self and God… vital for the development of a feminist sacramental theology.” She rightly identifies how selective and sometimes scholastically irresponsible NCF can be in choosing feminist thinkers to the advantage of its

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100 Ibid 42; According to Beattie, Schumacher only identifies the problem and not offer a viable solution.


102 Ibid., 42-45.

103 Ibid., 42.

104 Ibid., 48.
arguments. Concurrently, she also rightly identifies the shortcomings of some versions of feminism for overlooking the sacramental meaning of the body. Instead of taking social constructionism to the point where there seems to be no meaning to our bodies other than constructed meaning, she claims that our graced selves already have a sacramental significance and meaning a priori. By drawing upon the notion of the graced body, she masterfully comes to this viable solution in between essentialism and an extreme form of relativism and deconstructionism. Thus she says, “However problematic the new feminism might be in its uncritical acceptance of sexual stereotypes and essentialism… [f]eminist sacramentality… needs to incarnate hope beyond nihilism by rescuing the female body from the weary truths of an exhausted religion, as a potential catalyst for sacramental transfiguration.”

She refers, often yet understandably, to the female body, feminist sacramentality, and woman’s experience. She claims that the understanding of the female body and female self as sacramental—a gift—is necessary. Much of that has to do with how female body and self were viewed pejoratively. However, her solution is very much applicable to the embodied, graced, masculine body as well. It works because she wants to move beyond including women in the notion of imago dei and to pursue the notion of imago dei and Catholic sacramentality that retains “its sense of the revelatory significance of gender and sexuality, while acknowledging the equality in difference of the sexes as beings

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105 Choosing Judith Butler, for example, as an example par excellence for feminism, rather than acknowledging the variety of theories and ideas that exists under the rubric of feminism, is problematic.

106 Ibid., section on “The self as gift” 45-48.

107 Ibid., 48.

108 Ibid., 48.
before God… constituted… by the dynamics of difference and desire which suggest to us something of the nature of our relationship to God." Male body and self, then, can also be the source of revelation, graced in *imago dei*, and seen as sacramental—a gift. Hence, the male body, equally engraced, can also be the starting point for sacramental understanding of the self. It follows that men’s body, similar to women’s body, has a certain innate meaning as well as a constructed meaning. This notion will play a pivotal role in the constructive portion of this dissertation.

**Hope in the Tradition**

Unlike the divisive language of ontological gender complementarity in the encyclicals and by the new Catholic feminists, there is some language of shared identity of the sexes within the tradition. Of course this language is concurrent with other language that emphasizes the essential difference between the sexes. It is important, however, to point out the fact that there has been a shift in language starting with Vatican II and that there clearly is a reason to hope for improvements in the tradition regarding justice for women and men. In order to demonstrate this reason for hope, then, we must go back to Vatican II.

My examples come from documents from Vatican II. In *Gaudium et spes*, the Council proclaims that discrimination based on sex be eliminated and equality between the sexes be implemented.

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109 Ibid., 121-128 especially 127; She presents the dangers of both sexual differentiation—at least the kind demonstrated by Hans Urs von Balthasar and JPII, both of whom advocate the kinds of “equality” that ultimately make women serve to fulfill men’s existence and are “textually… existentially and ontologically… chronologically, temporally, historically, accidentally second”—and the omission of difference—since forgetting difference would only lead to the fading of feminine and only the masculine would survive. See Ibid 92-111; quote from 102.
…with respect to the fundamental rights of the person, every type of discrimination, whether social or cultural, whether based on sex, race, color, social condition, language or religion, is to be overcome and eradicated as contrary to God’s intent. For in truth it must still be regretted that fundamental personal rights are still not being universally honored. Such is the case of a woman who is denied the right to choose a husband freely, to embrace a state of life or to acquire an education or cultural benefits equal to those recognized for men.\footnote{Gaudium et spes, 29.}

The Council advises further and gives possibilities for men and women to participate in society according to their own particular and natural, given—and perhaps even acquired—talents.

We must strive to provide for those human beings who are gifted the possibility of pursuing higher studies; and in such a way that, as far as possible, they may occupy in society those duties, offices and services which are in harmony with their natural aptitude and the competence they have acquired. Thus each human being and the social groups of every people will be able to attain the full development of their culture in conformity with their qualities and traditions.

Women now work in almost all spheres. It is fitting that they are able to assume their proper role in accordance with their own nature. It will belong to all to acknowledge and favor the proper and necessary participation of women in the cultural life.\footnote{Ibid., 60; Emphasis mine.}

This sort of language is consistent with the Council’s decision to drop ranking terminologies such as “primary and secondary” with respect to the telos of marriage.

Instead, the Council teaches that love is essential to marriage as are spousal love/union and offspring.

\footnote{This is not meant to imply that this is chronologically the first example, since there are more examples that predate these documents. Rather, this is simply the first set of examples that I choose to give which are recent enough to be more significant for the modern ears. For examples prior to Vatican II documents, see Rosemary Radford Ruether and Rosemary Keller ed. \textit{Women of Spirit: Female Leadership in the Jewish and Christian Traditions} (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1979); Susan A. Ross, \textit{Extravagant Affections}, 104.}
By their very nature, the institution of matrimony itself and conjugal love are ordained for the procreation and education of children, and find in them their ultimate crown. Thus a man and a woman, who by their compact of conjugal love "are no longer two, but one flesh" (Matt. 19: ff), render mutual help and service to each other through an intimate union of their persons and of their actions. Through this union they experience the meaning of their oneness and attain to it with growing perfection day by day. As a mutual gift of two persons, this intimate union and the good of the children impose total fidelity on the spouses and argue for an unbreakable oneness between them.¹³

This love is uniquely expressed and perfected through the appropriate enterprise of matrimony. The actions within marriage by which the couple are united intimately and chastely are noble and worthy ones. Expressed in a manner which is truly human, these actions promote that mutual self-giving by which spouses enrich each other with a joyful and a ready will. Sealed by mutual faithfulness and be allowed above all by Christ’s sacrament, this love remains steadfastly true in body and in mind, in bright days or dark. It will never be profaned by adultery or divorce. Firmly established by the Lord, the unity of marriage will radiate from the equal personal dignity of wife and husband, a dignity acknowledged by mutual and total love.¹⁴

Pope Paul VI, JPII, and the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith all went on more explicitly to affirm the inseparability of the unitive and procreative meaning for marriage.¹⁵ In the latest document from the USCCB in November 2009, the US Catholic bishops were clear in stating that “the procreative meaning of marriage is degraded without the unitive,” and in fact “the unitive meaning of marriage… is ordered toward the equally obvious procreative meaning.”¹⁶ The conference reiterated the clarification of

¹³ Ibid., 48.
¹⁴ Ibid., 49.
the meaning of the word “helper” as not necessarily “inferior,” seeing the union as still blessed, complete, and useful even in some cases where a marriage does not result in procreation.\textsuperscript{117}

While not without some problems,\textsuperscript{118} the inclusion and the tone of the language in the document is of some value. Along with the promotion of equality, equal participation according to talent, and the elimination of sexism, the document’s language about the unitive function of marriage as equally important as the procreative can all serve as a tool for advancing a more mutual, not dimorphic or gender complementary, vision of the sexes and their appropriate roles. However, while language has a profound effect on people and there is a reason to stay hopeful, such an influence is a good inasmuch as it is followed up with appropriate changes in policies, stands, and rules accordingly.

\textbf{Conclusion}

JPII has made some strides by acknowledging women’s dignity alongside men’s, encouraging men to be involved in the family and not to be abusive, giving at least some extra-domestic possibilities for women, and jettisoning the direct and harsh language of inferiority for women along with superiority for men. However, this model for

\textsuperscript{117}Ibid., 9, 14-15. The reader should be mindful of the fact that the document is talking about infertile couples, \textit{not} couples “deciding” not to procreate. Also, I am aware that this document is deeply problematic for its insistence on the essential differences in ontology, biology and roles.

\textsuperscript{118}Similar stands with the Conference’s position in USCCB, \textit{Marriage}, 23-24 on same-sex marriage, for example, have been widely criticized over the years. See Charles E. Curran and Richard A. McCormick, S.J. eds. \textit{Readings in Moral Theology No. 8: Dialogue about Catholic Sexual Teaching} (New York: Paulist, 1993); Jeannine Gramick and Pat Furey eds., \textit{The Vatican and Homosexuality: Reactions to the “Letter to the Bishops of the Catholic Church on the Pastoral Care of Homosexual Persons”} (New York: Crossroads, 1988).
improvement is “a causal model.” That is, he is using a model which deals only with the “superficial cause” of the problem, namely the usage of language, and not with the “basic cause.” In this case, the basic cause of the problem has more to do with the fundamental notion of men and women. What JPII deems essential (i.e. motherhood defined by her domesticity and fatherhood by his public work and leadership, complementing each other in this way) is only partially true. JPII does not acknowledge or account for the multiplicity and diversity that exists not only between the “two sexes” but also among them. Because of this approach, his model may be too simplistic to explain the complex spectrum of sex and sexuality. Furthermore, because of his essentialism and physicalism, his complementary and nuptial models come short of solving the problems of 1) associating women with a lower (humanity) realm vis-à-vis men’s association with God, 2) disadvantaging and not doing enough to oppose the tendency to abuse against women, 3) expecting men to be “manly” breadwinners, and solely and financially responsible for the family, and 4) making compulsory fecundity and motherhood vis-à-vis single(d), infertile, or homosexual persons. To solve these problems more adequately, one must locate the basic cause of the problems and improve upon it. One must, that is, grasp the nature of men and women better. In order to do so, one has to realize the need to go beyond JPII’s changes in some of the language. To that end, I now turn to some contributions that male scholars have also made on the subject-matter.

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120 Ibid., 278.
CHAPTER THREE

THEOLOGICAL CRITICISM BY MEN… AND BEYOND

Thus far, I have shown how dualism, androcentricism, and spousal imagery were the major players in the germination of unequal viewpoints about gender, especially affecting women. In the process, many brave women scholars came forth to criticize inequity. Most of their critiques, however, are based on the fact that women are the victims and/or that men are the perpetrators. Such problematic notions and practices against women and male complicity in them notwithstanding, there is also a need for closer attention to men in order to improve the conditions for all human beings. The problem originated, in part, from thinking that one only needs to pay attention to the problem (women) and not the norm (men). A better understanding of men and their realities, therefore, will yield clearer notions of the gender spectrum and ultimately will enable men to appreciate and accept themselves as true gifts of God.

Via Positiva

To achieve this goal, however, men must overcome their defensive attitudes and society must help by using a different methodology. The reason is that many become defensive, not because they deeply reflected on the issue, but because they too feel, rightly or not, victimized. For example, some writers believe that it has been popular in
the modern world “to engage in male bashing and blame men for all the ills of the world.”\(^1\) Conservative commentators, in particular, claim that such tactics have been used as an excuse to say or write many harmful statements about men in general. Bernard Goldberg, for example, shares his frustration with some reporters and anchors, especially women, who make pejorative statements about men on air without them becoming an issue or much less their being held accountable for them.\(^2\) Goldberg’s argument is that if it is unacceptable for men to make similar statements about women, the same should hold true for women making statements about men.\(^3\) While I do not entirely agree with blaming “liberals” and their biases in the media,\(^4\) I do agree that it has become somewhat culturally à la mode to present men as infuriating, childish, or naturally uncontrollable. Whether it is simply putting the blame on men for the ills of the world or making a mockery of men as being childish, this negative approach is not a healthy way to a solution. This is “neither therapeutic for men nor helpful to women who may be seeking a suitable partner.”\(^5\) It will only lead to the perpetuation of the same problems since the

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2 Bernard Goldberg, *Bias: A CBS Insider Exposes How the Media Distorts the News* (New York: HarperCollins, 2003); Goldberg shares a story, for example, about Katie Couric, then an NBC anchorwoman, in which she asked a bride who had been jilted at the altar, “Have you considered castration as an option?” He would argue that if an anchorman made similar kinds of statements about a woman, he would be fired right away. Goldberg, Chapter 9 especially 138-139. While Goldberg never defines terms like “feminists” or “liberals” and makes generalizations in criticizing “left-wing media,” he does make some good points about “targeting men.”

3 Ibid., 139.

4 Ibid., passim; Goldberg repeatedly makes these statements against the “liberal media.”

5 Cowan and Kinder, 305.
vicious cycle of negativity, or the chain reaction of evil, will impede any progress made by feminist and sympathetic male scholars.

If, on the other hand, one considers a more positive way, a better solution can emerge. That is, instead of continually blaming the privileged—whether that would be men, white, the upper class, etc.—the time has come to go beyond pointing out the problems. While this is necessary, we must seek a solution that works for not only women or men but for both. Gender is best understood only as part of a system. In the words of Christine E. Gudorf, “we can never adequately address the injustices to women in our society without at the same time transforming the process of socializing men, for they are two sides of the same coin.”

The first step into the right direction, then, is to reject unjust practices and *simultaneously* to foster a healthy way for women and men to achieve that objective. My goal in this effort is to use more positive language, a language that men can and are willing to understand, so as to help men open up and start to accept the unjust gender structure of society. This strategy may foster a better conversation for men because they may feel less defensive and less personally responsible or guilty about the structural problems of the society that benefit and favor them over women.

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6 Christine E. Gudorf, “The Power to Create: Sacraments and Men’s Need to Birth,” *Horizons*, 14.2 (Fall 1987): 309. The reverse is also true. “Masculinization, consequently, can be reliably studied only if observers keep a close eye on the processes of feminization” Cynthia Enloe, *Globalization and Militarism: Feminists Make the Link* (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield Publishing, 2007), 52; Bayard Rustin used a similar approach in debating Malcolm X on issues concerning separation vs. integration. Bayard did not think solution can be reached without at the same time changing whites.

7 While not having directly to do with this discussion, I am borrowing a similar approach as that found in Ronald F. Thiemann, *Religion in Public Life: A Dilemma for Democracy* (Washington, D.C., Georgetown University Press, 1996). Thiemann argues for a kind of “revised liberalism” where the religious voice is not completely separated from public affairs. One of the ways to achieve this task is to refer to religious claims using more public language (instead of using strictly religious language that may alienate people). Similarly, I am advocating using a kind of language that is at least more effective, perhaps more just, in an attempt to convey the message to a wider audience of men (and women).
To that end, I will undertake an investigation into the ways that men can and ought to embrace positive ideas of masculinity. I will point to several authors through whom a more integral picture of men and masculinities will emerge. Such work is a necessary initial step since it calls not for an invention of something new, but bringing to new light something already in existence and hidden within men. Through this process, I hope that the reader will conclude that both aspects of the traditional notion of masculinity and newly highlighted characteristics of men should be embraced. Ultimately, similar to what Tina Beattie has done for women, this methodology will lead to a sacramental understanding of men and their bodily experiences in the final chapter.8

James B. Nelson

I find the work of James B. Nelson to be a very helpful source for such a task. I am aware that he is a Protestant theologian and I am working towards a “Roman Catholic” masculinity. However, since it is obvious that Protestant theology can contribute to Roman Catholic theology, I will proceed to use his helpful insights.

Nelson’s starting point is that of the male body. Just as many feminist scholars have been able to find the particular experience of the female body as an important mode of revelation—i.e. the nature of their breasts and genitals, the experience of menstruation and birthing—so too can men find the idiosyncratic experience of the male body a source of a great discovery and awakening. Following Mircea Eliade’s view that sees “our human sexual experience as an ‘autonomous mode of cognition,’” and “a

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fundamental way of knowing reality immediately and directly,” Nelson goes on to claim that sexuality is “a manifestation of the sacred, revealing to us what is beyond our conscious rational apprehension.” As such, the best place to start exploring the most distinctive masculine part of man and his sexual experience is the male genitals.

Prior to a discussion about male genitals, however, some caveats warrant necessary attention. First, a discussion about male genitals is a delicate subject. The meanings associated with them are often violent and detached, “as its slang names amply suggest—cock, prick, tool, rod, and even a gun with its bullets.” Hence, I must admit that, like Nelson, I am aware of these connotations, the dangers of giving any kind of attention to male genitals, and the possibility of accidentally being part of the same masculine oppression that I criticize. These connotations are true of masculinity in general. As Victor Seidler writes, “masculinity is an essentially negative identity learnt through defining itself against emotionality and connectedness.” Thus, I can only do my

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10 Ibid., 195.

11 By no means is this the only approach. Male genital energy can be compared to male scrotal energy, for example. Richard Rohr, OFM with Joseph Martos, both Catholic thinkers, discuss some of these examples in their *From Wild Man to Wise Man: Reflections on Male Spirituality* (Cincinnati: St. Anthony Messenger Press, 2005); I will save the discussion on various possible approaches for chapter 6.

12 Ibid., 196.

best and honest work to evade these problems or, to face them directly and offer an alternative.

Secondly, as shown in the earlier chapters, the effects of dualism have a tremendous amount of influence in seeing and overvaluing a more one-sided reality of male genitalia. Such conditions have resulted in not only undervaluing the other aspects of male genitalia but also creating discomfort about the topic per se. More specifically, by a “one-sided” approach to a discussion about the male genitalia, I am referring to Nelson’s notion of the phallic interpretation vis-à-vis penile interpretation. That is, our society spends most of its energy talking about the rigidity and the (big) size of the male genitalia, forgetting the fact that for the majority of the time, the reality of it is much more malleable and small. By focusing too much on one side of the reality, Nelson argues, it is only seen—like the rest of the body—as something to be controlled and disciplined “by imposing upon it an alien will, treating it in short as a dead object to be pushed around,” or to become alive (resurrected) again.\textsuperscript{14} The outcome from this approach, either of devaluation (of softness) or overvaluation (of hardness), does not do justice to the reality.\textsuperscript{15} That is, seeing our bodies, genitals more specifically, in a dualistic


\textsuperscript{15} This is true of course of women also. For dangers of overvaluation, see my earlier discussion of Gudorf’s “pedestalization” in Chapter 2. Also Cf. Sallie McFague, “Mother God,” in Anne E. Carr and Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza eds. \textit{Motherhood: Experience, Institution, Theology}. (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1989), 139-140. McFague discusses how it is dangerous both to devalue the female body by claiming it is biologically hardwired to only have and raise children (patriarchal binary patterns continued) and to overvalue it, which creates “a new hierarchy dualism with a matriarchal model of God.” She finds vital the affirmation of uniquely female experience of female body inasmuch as such an assertion not claim that therefore women are essentially suppose to take on limited roles. I agree wholeheartedly with McFague’s method, hoping that I could extend this insight to men also in this dissertation. For a discussion of these and for a work using this kind of method, see Irene Oh, “Performativity of Motherhood: Embodying Theology and Political Agency” \textit{Journal of the Society of Christian Ethics} 29.2 (2009), 3-17.
master-slave relationship, oppresses and denies “the right to live except as slave machines.”

On the other hand, giving our bodies an unadulterated freedom, the sexual revolution for example, allows them to give in to compulsion, probably more so because of the years of suppression. Thus, the dangers of oppression and compulsion must both be noted as something very real, as we proceed. In order to have a serious discussion of this subject matter, one must do away with a one-sided focus while avoiding an extremely relativistic approach and see the reality as it is.

Phallus

In discussions about male genitals, it is the phallus that is the customary center of attention. The meaning associated with the phallus is pretty typical: it is linear and vertical with its “strength, hardness, determination, sinew, straightforwardness, [and] penetration.”

Nelson extends his criticism of the amount of attention given to the phallus to claim that in fact not enough attention is given to it in reality. He is convinced that a much better understanding of the phallus surfaces after a careful examination. That is, he claims that not only do male genitals have more than phallic reality, but even the phallus—as is true in most of the dualistic views (i.e. man/woman, conservative/liberal, black/white, Eastern/Western etc.)—is also not a monolithic reality but a diverse one.

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18 Nelson attributes the continuation of this dualistic one-sidedness to the following categories of possibility: historical inheritance and conditioning, biological misinformation, sexual fears (Freudian) male envy of women’s biological power, “father-wounded son” (Greek mythology and Freudian) and homophobia/sexist. James B. Nelson, Between Two Gardens: Reflection on Sexuality and Religious Experience (New York: The Pilgrim Press, 1983), 47-52.

Borrowing the term coined by Eugene Monick, he distinguishes the phallus into the earthly\(^{20}\) and solar\(^{21}\).

The earthly dimension of the phallus is perceived as “sweaty, hairy, throbbing, wet, animal sexuality.”\(^{22}\) Positively speaking, it has a life-giving energy with strength, vitality, and vibrancy. Negatively, it has the potential to use others solely for gratification. This side of the phallus is helpful and useful inasmuch as it is balanced with the consideration of the other side to curb its ugly, brutal side.\(^{23}\)

The solar dimension is perceived as erect, tall, proud, transcendent, and “the satisfaction of straining to go farther intellectually, physically, and socially.”\(^{24}\) It is the driving force, an engine, which impels men to build “the church steeples and skyscrapers.” It gives a man direction and movement. Yet, the distortion of it oppresses those who do not “measure up,” claiming bigger, powerful, richer, etc. is necessarily better.\(^{25}\) This dimension shuns mediocrity, effortlessness, and idleness and drives a man to challenge, excel, and be motivated inasmuch as it does not idolatrously claim itself an absolute standard to which every man should measure up.

\(^{20}\) Monick calls this the “clithonic phallos.” See Monick 94-96.

\(^{21}\) Monick, 48-49.


\(^{23}\) Ibid., 198.

\(^{24}\) Ibid., 198.

\(^{25}\) Ibid., 198-199.
Because both dimensions are “not fully under a man’s conscious control,” the notion of phallus “seems to be an appropriate metaphor for the masculine unconscious.”\textsuperscript{26} However, since both the “earthly” and “solar” dimensions are unconscious metaphors, regardless of how valuable and beneficial, they must be balanced with the awareness of the aforementioned dangers for the optimal usage of these metaphors. Being aware of the benefits and dangers, then, the earthly and solar metaphors can be used for men and the notion of phallus can become a vital part of masculine experience.

Nevertheless, the phallus is just that: a part. The phallus is a part, a much smaller part (of the shared time) at that, of the male genital experience. It is truly ironic, therefore, that there has been a preoccupation with the phallus in anything related to the male genital experience.

In Roman mythology Priapus…was the god of fertility…marked by grotesque ugliness and an enormous erection. In human sexual disorders, priapism is the painful clinical condition of an erection that will not go down. Priapus and priapism are symbolic of the idolatry of the half-truth… Phallus, the erection…is only part. Were it the whole thing, his sexuality and his spirituality would be painful and bizarre, both to himself and to others. That this in fact is too frequently the case is difficult to deny.\textsuperscript{27}

While the phallus is vital, important, and necessary, to better understand the male experience—and to avoid the demonic and self-destructive results that come from taking partial truth as the whole truth\textsuperscript{28}—one must turn to the examination of the phenomenon which is the reality for man most of the time.

\textsuperscript{26} According to Nelson in Ibid., 197-198; the limitation of the metaphor is duly noted. While the “control” may be unconscious, men are more conscious of it once erected than when limp. Hence this metaphor works here only when one is talking about the “control.” Cf. Nelson’s discussion in Ibid., 199.

\textsuperscript{27} Ibid., 199.

\textsuperscript{28} Ibid., 202.
Penis

Nelson uses the word penis in contrast to “phallus” to designate it as “the organ in its flaccid, unaroused state.” Years of neglect of the notion of penis resulted partly from undervaluing it. Certainly, part of the undermining comes quite naturally from the fact that the penis does not demand our attention the way the phallus does. However, Nelson argues that another important part is from a quite intentional valuation. These are values obtained from patriarchy: “bigger is better… hardness is superior to softness… upness is better than downness.” In this setting, the penis represents all that which is inferior: small, soft, vulnerable, cyclical, horizontal, and mortal. Nelson claims that one of the products of this representation is “the deprivation of a significant kind of masculine spiritual energy and power.”

That is, just as representing God both through a *via positiva* (affirmation, thanksgiving, ecstasy) and a *via negativa* (emptying, emptied, darkness) may be needed for balance and completion—as over-development of the one will bring distortion of the other—the historical neglect of the penis (associated with *via negativa*) brings about a distortion of male experience and spirituality. The reality, however, is that the experience of *via negativa* is a man’s experience, perhaps even more so than that of the phallus, and

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29 Ibid., 199.
30 Ibid., 200.
31 Ibid., 196 and 200.
32 Ibid., 200.
33 The two terms come from Nelson, Ibid., 200-201.
its symbolic strength can be just as energetic, powerful, and necessary. All the ways in which man experiences “sinking” and “emptying” lets him learn to trust God; “that we do not need to do, that our being is enough.”34 All the ways in which man experiences darkness lets him admit fear, anxiety, anger, death and the unknown in him. Without darkness, “there is no growth, no mystery, no receptivity, no deep creativity. Without the gentle dark, light becomes harsh.”35 If this significant aspect of being a man is not highlighted, acknowledged, and studied, he is left to achieve an unrealistic expectation, possibly resulting in stress, depression, and deprivation.36

Nelson does not think, however, that the model of androgyny is the answer. First, it assumes “both” characteristics in one being, as if there were one set of masculine and one feminine characteristic. Second, this model either calls, like the ancient thoughts mentioned in chapter one, for woman to become more like (perfect) man or man (who lost his perfection) to develop the feminine side for his human completion. Here, Nelson uses the image of a second language/bilinguality to demonstrate his point. Requiring man to “add on” feminine qualities is like learning a second language as an adult. However, if one were born into a bilingual family/society, one would naturally learn both and not feel “foreign” because it is just as originally part of him or her “as the language with which, by accident of circumstances, we have become more familiar.”37 He claims that the latter

34 Ibid., 201.
35 Ibid., 201.

36 I will go in depth about whether this assumed result is true or not in the later portion of this chapter and the next.

37 I am, as Nelson certainly is, very aware the limitation of this example. Languages are social inventions and bodies are not, at least not fully like languages. But the point is that we are given “bilingual bodies”; that our bodies are also, to some extent, socially constructed. See Ibid., 204.
is the appropriate image for man. Men are not to develop feminine energy, personality, or sides. Rather, men are to develop their masculine energy, personality, or sides, but just more fully. The “issue is fullness.”\textsuperscript{38} The vulnerable, soft, receptive, small, horizontal, and mortal qualities are not feminine. They are, as a penis is, as authentically masculine as are the characteristics associated with the phallus.\textsuperscript{39} Men do not need to add on, be feminine, or be who they are not. However, men do need to be manlier, which means he is to develop his masculinity more richly, more fully, and more honestly. Men are active and passive, unwavering and vulnerable, hard and soft. In this sense, men do not necessarily “need” women to become fully men, to become complete. Women certainly may bring much joy, delight, love, etc. but men are already fully men and fully human. The qualities that they lack are the result of neglect of the qualities already existent in their beings, not from “complementary” reasons\textsuperscript{40} or not being in touch with their “feminine” side. For this reason, no man, be he a Catholic priest, the pope, or even Jesus of Nazareth, ever needed to develop his feminine side; he simply need to be more fully manly to be more real and honest, less oppressive and violent, likely to avoid compulsion and depression, and closer to wholeness and authenticity. Ironically, then, the very assertion that I set out to criticize—“be a manlier man”—is what I now proclaim. The only difference is that being “manlier” means something quite different than being active, hard, stoic, stronger, faster, etc. It does mean being honest about all aspects of being a man and not trying to categorize or fit into an extremely one-sided social definition of

\textsuperscript{38} Ibid., 204, italics Nelson’s.

\textsuperscript{39} Ibid., 204.

\textsuperscript{40} See his discussion of Karl Barth’s gender complementarity as in “fellow-humanity” in Ibid., 202. Cf. Karl Barth, Church Dogmatics vol III part 4 (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1961), especially 166.
masculinity. In fact, a closer look at Jesus, the most wholly, holy, and complete man for Christians, reveals that he would not be considered “manly” enough for today’s dualistic or complementary norms of masculinity.

Jesus Christ the Man

For Christians, including Roman Catholics, seeing man as such more fully, quite naturally leads one to Jesus of Nazareth. The theological implications of Nelson’s claims, then, are profound. However, confronting Jesus in the same breath as talking about male genitalia or sexuality can be a difficult and delicate exercise. Much of that can be traced, Nelson believes, back to ancient thoughts and practices.

A deep suspicion about sexuality and the shameful treatment of it can be found throughout history. Consistent with this propensity, Docetism and Gnosticism desexualized Jesus in a way that had a rippling effect on history and Christianity more specifically.\(^41\) Undermining Jesus’ sexuality and its goodness and beauty raises many problems. However, patriarchy did open up some conversation about Jesus’ sexuality, but only inasmuch as it is used as an instrument of patriarchal oppression: to emphasize maleness, to prove the maleness of God, and to keep men in control over women. What kind of a picture would surface if one examined Jesus as man, a representation “of male sexual wholeness, of creative masculinity, and of the redemption of manhood from both oppressiveness and superficiality”?\(^42\)

The picture would be one with which many men as well as women could find intimate connection. Seeing Jesus fully, not in a one-sided way, not complementarily or


\(^{42}\) Ibid., 211; Emphasis mine.
androgynically, enables his followers to relate to him better. Here is how. Just as we have been concentrating on one aspect of men (that is the strong unafraid side) so too have we been concentrating on the “maleness” (in its stereotypical definition) of Jesus, when in fact we should be concentrating on his humanity as a whole (and his true maleness as a result). By concentrating on his humanity, one can not only extract a dominating judge, and ruler but also a compassionate man who risked being vulnerable in becoming man and dying on the cross, who cared and empathized with the weak, who was “deeply moved” and cried over the death of Martha and Mary’s brother, and who received even the worst of the sinners as forgivable because they knew not what they had done. In many accounts of modern standards of masculinity, Jesus of Nazareth is simply not manly enough. Yet it is with this Jesus that Christians are to identify. Because he was perfectly

43 Just as an aside, a quick search on the internet yields many writings and images of “macho Jesus” some of which are fully equipped with firearms. Also Cf. G. Ronald Murphy S.J. *The Heliand: the Saxon Gospel: A Translation and Commentary* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992), for an English / pagan example in interpreting Jesus as “macho.”

44 Nelson, “Embracing Masculinity,” 211.

45 One can make an argument that some German thinkers of the modern era share similar views about Jesus and religion in general. Whether seeing religion as the opium of the people, or as something unnecessary if you are (Übermensch) man enough, Jesus and Christianity represents “weakness” for some. Nietzsche, for example, thought that Christian appeal to God’s mercy “weakens the believer’s general state of vitality.” Because Christian morality leads to weakness, it looks to use the religion as a vehicle for personal security. Christians do this by 1) finding “selfescape through fostering oneness with God,” 2) offering “eternal happiness as a reward for devotion.” 3) providing “vicarious sense of power by virtue of his or her relationship to [or association with] God,” and 4) promising “an escape from death” and “endless bliss for the devout.” Without this safety, Christians do not feel strong enough to feel secure. Kathleen Marie Higgins, *Nietzsche’s Zarathustra* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1987), 50-55, 62 and passim; Karl Marx also argued that religion serves the world and its people as a “spiritual aroma,” that it serves as the “opium of the people” who cannot take the reality as is, because we cannot bear the sufferings of our lives. However, Marx maintained that these are just illusions of reality, illusions of suffering and that we must dis-illusion man “so that he will think, act, and fashion his reality as a man who has lost his illusions and regained his reason; so that he will revolve about himself as his own true sun.” see Karl Marx, “Contribution to the Critique of Hegel’s Philosophy of Right,” in Edward T. Oakes ed., *German Essays on Religion* (New York: Continuum, 1994), 95-96, which is volume 54 of a series called *The German Library*; Finally, Sigmund Freud thought that religious ideas were illusions stemming from a kind of “wishful-thinking” of mankind [sic]. Religion, in this sense, is the “universal obsessional neurosis of humanity,” similar to that of the obsessional neurosis of children. Most of these neuroses, wishful-thinking, and
human and perfectly divine, “he possessed the same human nature we all have, but remarkably and fully open in mutuality with God’s loving power.” For this reason, women can also find their connections with him. For the same reason, men can find their connections but in new ways. Seeing Jesus fully enables one to realize that he “embodied the divine-human communion with a fullness that awes, compels, judges, challenges, comforts, and attracts us.”

It is precisely because of this conviction that I believe men and women can relate to each other better if we stop seeing each other as essentially different or as opposites. This argument would also claim, then, that it does not help to think that “men are from Mars and women are from Venus” but that they are all from the earth and are created imago dei. I believe that seeing the other not only as similar but also (or more so) as intimately relatable is a healthier approach to relationships. Similarly, understanding our relationship with God not only as profoundly different, or even worse, dominating or being dominated, but also as intimately relatable, is more effective, affective, healthier, and theologically sound. There is a crucial need for a new definition of masculinity precisely in order to make this situation possible.


47 Ibid., 213.

48 I set out to argue for this position in this dissertation and it will become more evident as one moves along this project.
I do find Nelson’s method somewhat problematic since in some ways he perpetuates a dualistic understanding. That is, while rightly acknowledging the “other side” or aspects that have been neglected, he still works in a bifurcated paradigm: earthly/solar, *via negativa* / *via positiva*, humanity / divinity, soft/hard, between “two” gardens, etc. Also, while I do acknowledge that often he uses these dimorphic examples *within one* side of the greater bifurcation—a step forward from the past, no doubt—he also maintains at least *a* kind of dualistic thinking without addressing potential problems with it or acknowledging that he is aware of all this but that it is purposely done for a reason. Because I will later demonstrate that in fact there is much more diversity than these dualistic approaches, especially when it comes to gender, I find his continual use of the *language* of dimorphism problematic without a caveat. If he were aware of his usage of dual and dualistic categories—and I think one can rightly raise the question whether it is possible to talk about all this without “duality”—then what is missing is a more thorough explanation of the diversity of qualities that exists between the two characteristics. 49 Nevertheless, his work is pioneering and has immense benefits for projects such as mine.

**Daniel C. Maguire (Roman Catholic)**

The starting point for Daniel C. Maguire is the mistreatment and exclusion of women and the consequences that follow from those behaviors. He asserts that such maltreatment results in impeding, impoverishing, or blinding our moral and religious perceptions. Since he believes that women have at least four experiences that give them

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49 He *does* differentiate dualism (dichotomy) from duality (polarity). Unlike a dualism, a duality is the perception of two elements, while distinguishable, that truly belong together. Nelson, *Body Theology*, 44. Again, this is certainly an improvement; nonetheless, he does not avoid the two-way approach or explains why this is acceptable.
some advantages in their moral and religious knowing, to limit or deny such advantage will deprive the human species an opportunity to more clearly see and know. For this reason, he welcomes the incipient feminization of our culture (and hence the title of one of his articles, “The Feminization of God and Ethics.”)⁵⁰

The moral sensitivity of women is, Maguire insists, “generally enhanced and therefore better in at least four basic ways.”⁵¹ First, women’s intellectuality is more “wholesomely rooted in the terrestrial order” through pregnancy and nursing, and their realities such as menstrual experiences remind them of “earthy service of the body and its actual environment.”⁵² In this sense, women are less alienated from bodily existence, less likely to think abstractly, and more likely to be attuned to values in the concrete. Second, because women’s affectivity is less suppressed by society, they integrate affect in moral judgment and recognize it as “the enlivening mold of moral judgment”—as opposed to “hypothetical dilemmas.”⁵³ Third, women have historically been graced with closeness to the “normative primacy” of the “gentlest rhythms of our humanity,” including trust, celebration, love, and joy—as opposed to accepting “misery as normatively normal.”⁵⁴ Fourth, women even tend to take their negative experiences of alienation and turn them

⁵¹ Ibid., 6.
⁵² Ibid., 7.
⁵⁴ Ibid., 8.
into an opportunity for growth; they have had many such occasions to build up their growth in history.  

Adding to the problems of ignoring these ways for enhancing our moral visions, Maguire continues, are “the perils of macho-masculinity.” He can think of at least four consequences from instilling warrior-like macho-masculine qualities as the norm for men. First, men are prone to violent modes of power. When they cannot find a violent mode of power in war, it is manifested in other forms of aggression in their work, religion, homes, schools, teams, governments etc. A better and a more productive approach for Maguire is a “more feminine model.”

Second, macho-masculinity tends to lean toward an anti-communitarian and more hierarchal structure. This model encourages competition, domination (and hence violence) and control, instead of cooperation, community, mutuality, and harmony. It is inevitable then that men become more divisive than harmonious and seek control rather than solution or communion. Third, flowing from the first two, macho-masculinity feeds the idea that violence requires and begets abstractionism. The idea is that killing a million only becomes a number, removed from the reality of actual people being killed. Hence, fourth, it is the result, outcome, bottom-line, the “end” that matters. The end becomes everything and the idolatry of the outcome is yet another product of machismo. Finally, the macho attitude, when applied to women, reveals itself as hatred of women. It is this

55 Ibid., 9.

56 Ibid., 11; Maguire explains this model by referring to the Japanese business model where it uses a more “cooperative” paradigm. I am very aware that women are not always mutual or cooperative either. I will discuss the problematic parts of his arguments later in this chapter.

57 Ibid., 12.

58 Ibid., 13-14.
attitude, which directly or indirectly but undoubtedly and inevitably, subordinates women, Maguire maintains, that has caused the Roman Catholic Church to distrust women. This aversion is so great that (all-male) priests stay “uncontaminated” in and through their celibacy. Maguire believes that this attitude toward women is from a male-centered mind-set deeply rooted in the culture and, more specifically, Roman Catholic culture. Following Aristotelian teachings, it was Thomas Aquinas who infamously stated that a woman is “something deficient and misbegotten,” (aliquid deficiens et occasionatum) and therefore “children and even the insane could be validly ordained as priests—as long as they were male—but adult and healthy women could not be!”

In the end, Maguire believes that the continuation of feminization will heal distorted notions of masculinity and femininity. Hence, he encourages the feminization of God and ethics. Ultimately, however, his goal is not to have femininity triumph over masculinity. Demonizing men as a class, or excluding man from the conversation about

59 Some of his arguments for the problem of the maleness of God are similar or identical to the discussions already covered in the earlier chapters of this dissertation.

60 Ibid., 15-16; While historical connections between the attitudes toward women and the (male), Roman Catholic celibacy in an attempt to be uncontaminated from women is undeniable, I feel that it is important to note that 1) in modern times, very rarely will one find a Roman Catholic priest taking vow of chastity, partly or wholly, for such a reason and 2) Roman Catholic (female), nuns are also celibate and their decision (and/or acceptance) for a celibate life is not in order to abstain themselves from contaminating other men either. Attributing celibacy to evading contamination in modern times does not do justice to those people who took the vow “to pick up one’s very being and place it down in affirmation of God,” for the sake of love, as a way to refine human capacity to live and love, and to leave all things for the sake of the reign of God. Nevertheless, I do agree that the idea of contamination, and the economy of purity, is very real, certainly still at large, and “at the root” of the problem. A helpful discussion on celibacy is a series of lectures in “The Church in the 21st Century Project” at Boston College, given on March 22nd, 2004 called, A Seminar on Celibacy: Margaret A. Farley, RSM, John O’Malley, SJ, Columba Stewart, OSB accessible for the public at http://frontrow.bc.edu/program/omalley.

gender, is not the answer. (After all, how often do we actually think “men” when looking at a university course on gender studies?) Maguire asserts, “Gynocentrism is no better than androcentrism. Macha is not superior to macho….Male anatomy, any more than female anatomy, is not destiny.” Rather, he envisions “an emerging humanity” that “blends the masculine and the feminine into ever more genuine modalities of the species human.” He is hopeful, as I am, that despite many of the injustices of the religions, it is the same religious institutions that contain within them “renewable moral energies… awaiting creative application to the human alienations and terracidal threats that confront us.” This project at hand is indeed in search of that creative application within the tradition.

Clearly, Maguire’s conclusion and his work, especially as a Catholic man, are ground-breaking. He not only sees the harm caused by the mistreatment of women but also sees the damage caused by hyper-masculine expectations. His conclusion points to a much needed Catholic male voice proclaiming the termination of unjust treatment of women, feminization as the method of getting there, and the collaterally positive results for men. Notwithstanding all this, however, I see yet more possibilities for improvements in some parts of the process through which he comes to his conclusion.

Firstly, despite the fact that he points to the dangers of the acceptance of the absolutist Freudian formula, “anatomy is destiny,” he does not escape the very generalization he criticizes. While accepting meaningful differences between boys and

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64 Maguire, “Conclusion,” 281.
girls, he himself goes beyond that and continues to make generalized statements about
men and women—which may be fair and true to a degree—but without taking up the
problems of such simplification, other than merely asserting that there is a danger in
generality. Secondly, if there are indeed positive or even superior aspects of “femininity,”
what are some of the positive dimensions of masculinity? Are there any? Is finding only
negative aspects of men ultimately unavoidable or is it helpful to designate general
categories of positive attributes of the sexes? Finally, and related to the first two, he does
not discuss the opposite problem of extreme relativism in depth. If his solution of
feminization ultimately moves towards the “blending” of the two into an emerging
humanity, what is the need for masculinity at all, other than either to pay back what is
owed to women or to ameliorate situations for women and only correlative or
collaterally helping men? Are there some things that anyone can do to more directly and
effectively influence, help, and improve the situation for men, and thus for women as
well?65

Unmistakably, Maguire is aware of the first two dangers: generalization and
simplification. He does not think that the “feminine advantage” is “only in women, or in
all women, or that… macho-masculinity [is]… only in men or in all men to the same
degree.”66 Moreover, he states that “feminine advantages do not imply immaculate
conception,” of women and “men… have not just done ill.”67 Yet, he too makes similar

65 I can make similar criticisms about popular spiritual writings by Richard Rohr, Joseph Martos, and
Patrick Arnold. I will save these criticisms for chapter 6 of this dissertation.


67 Ibid., 9.
generalizations. He claims that “the moral insensitivity of women is generally enhanced and therefore better.”

68 In sexual encounters, for example, “man can inseminate and ride off dreamfully into the sunset, but for woman a biological drama… will tie her to the moment for many months.”

69 Although he acknowledges that men and women are not completely hardwired to have certain traits and to behave in certain ways, he portrays the two sexes in such a way that it certainly looks as though those traits are pretty much true. While he speaks against the notion that gynocentrism is better than androcentrism or that macha is superior to macho, in the end, he seems to think that one is better, or advantaged, than the other.

70 However, he must ask the question: to what extent is the “feminine advantage” already an important part of men, or “masculine” traits already a part of women? To what degree are these characteristics present in their own respective categories? Also, since he acknowledges the existence of some positive attributes in men

68 Ibid., 6.

69 Maguire, “The Feminization of God and Ethics,” 6-7; Interestingly in sociobiology, there is evidence in nature that it is the female, not the male (the female chimpanzee for example), who “flirts, seduces, and does everything she can to attract males—whom she then abandons as she moves on to the next customers.” While her aim may be different from the male chimpanzee, does this evidence demonstrate “that females are genetically programmed toward promiscuity and male toward monogamy?” Michael S. Kimmel, The Gendered Society 2nd ed. (Oxford University Press: Oxford, 2004), 28. I will examine this further in the next chapter.

70 For example, Maguire claims that “For three hundred years, Christian literature was pacifistic,” and that as late as the year 240 CE, “Origen conceded… that Christians were pacifists.” When Constantine required one to be Christians (men) to enlist in the army and gave more power to men, however, the “non-macho style of life collapsed.” While this may be a huge and barely substantiated claim, what is important for the discussion at hand is the fact that he seems to be hinting that (Christian) men were not bio-naturally (macho-like), warriors but the Sitz im Leben led them to a warrior-hood and warrior mind-set thereafter. Ibid 10.

71 He claims that “only a man could have stood in the ashes of the totally destroyed village of Ben Tre during the war in Vietnam” to say that they “destroyed the village in order to save it” and that woman’s experience would not allow women “to miss the disconnection between ashen destruction and saving.” See Maguire, “The Feminization of God and Ethics,” 6; However, serious questions must be raised as to superiority of this maternal instinct vis-à-vis the enormous evidence of infanticide as a method of birth control throughout Western history, and the fact that it was women who did most of the baby killing.” Lloyd DeMause, “Our Forbears Made Childhood a Nightmare,” Psychology Today (April 1975) quoted in Michael S. Kimmel, The Gendered Society, 29.
and some negatives in women, what are those and can those qualities help us to better understand sex and gender?\(^\text{72}\) Are those traits too insignificant for serious consideration or is not discussing them at all perpetuating dichotomous gender injustice?\(^\text{73}\) Can such generalizations, which have hurt women throughout human history, also hurt men?

**Dichotomous and Androgynous Problems**

These are difficult yet crucial questions. For the most part, men doing “feminist” theology seem to have a difficult time escaping dimorphic thinking. When they acknowledge some inevitable differences between the sexes, they seem to forget the issue of differences among men and among women. Stanley J. Grenz, for example, begins by rightly highlighting that the Christian triune God is fundamentally relational and mutual.

The ancient Christian approach is of linear conception. A linear or asymmetrical model of the Trinity is characterized by a hierarchal system in which the authority flows from the Father, to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit.\(^\text{74}\) Contrast to this model, a “two directional model” is characterized by the fact that the Father not only generates the Son but also the Son constitutes the Father; The Father is not the Father without the Son and the Son is not

\(^{72}\) Evaluating those qualities is important since it is my desire to find a positive solution to the problems. It is my conviction that no sermon, no book, no discussion and no messages whatsoever, work effectively when using guilt or when one is simply being accusatory. By simultaneously stating the problem and working towards justice and positively helping the perpetrators become better, one can come to a healthier solution. This conviction is similar to that of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and the notion of “chain reaction of evil,” where if a negative experience were met with a negative approach for a solution, then only a negative outcome can result. To break this chain reaction, the problem must be interrupted by something positive.

\(^{73}\) It is difficult to talk about gender injustice when I belong to the group that traditionally has perpetrated gender injustice. However, as a Korean male person living in the United States, I have had some experience with racial injustices. While gender and racial injustices are different experiences, I believe similar claims can be made on similar ground, namely experiencing injustice based on the way in which one is born.

the Son without the Father. In contrast, the “linear conception” of the triune God is harmful in many ways since it encourages hierarchal paradigm, which has been the model that promoted males having authority over females, just as the first person of the Trinity would over the second and the third. He advances the idea that, like Origen and Athanasius, no person of the Trinity is greater or less than the other and insists that the relation between the Father and the Son is two directional. One can see that Grenz solves the theological problem of linking God to every man and humanity to every woman but also creates new questions. The first question is whether subordination is on an equal level with dependence. The second question flows from his argument that a fundamentally relational God created fundamentally relational human beings in the *imago dei*. He pursues this notion to claim that for this reason God created a “female counterpart” because the “fulfillment of our sociability depends on fellowship with the opposite sex.” However, if, as he correctly states, “we are fundamentally social beings [a]nd rather than finding fulfillment within, human completeness arises from outside the individual self,” how is it that this relational/social/communal fulfillment comes solely through the opposite (*sic*) sex? Insofar as we are communal, is it not possible that such communal fulfillment can arise from other groups outside the individual self, not necessarily from the “opposite” sex? Better yet, is it not possible that our fulfillment

75 Ibid., 618.

76 Ibid., 617-619, 622-623.

77 I find problematic that this kind of phrasing also makes it sounds like man is still prior.

78 Ibid., 620-622; also quoting Mary Stewart Van Leeuwen, *Gender and Grace: Love, Work and Parenting in a Changing World* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 1990), 41. Notwithstanding these problems, I do want be sure to give credit where credit is due. The amount of “mutuality” achieved in this article and Grenz’s efforts to eliminate the idea that strict gender roles are rooted in the Judeo-Christian Creation narratives are commendable. My only purpose in this section is to suggest further possibilities for development.
arises from within our own sex along with the “opposite” sex? If, in fact, “man and woman are as mirrors to each other…[and] their differences reveal to each other who he is or she is,” then how much better can we know about ourselves if even more people, not just the “opposite sex,” participate in such examinations? Again, these problems stem from dimorphic thinking about sex and gender, and seeing man and woman as monolithic realities.

Using a dichotomous model for gender also has a harmful effect on men doing anti-feminist theology. Leon J. Podles, for example, places the blame for men’s lack of interest and/or involvement in religion and the Church in the present on women. This phenomenon of men’s absence in the Church was not always the case, he insists. Two major reasons for a lack of men in the churches is the feminization of the Church and threats to masculinity resulting from the feminization. His argument states that since the 13th Century, when women began to get more involved in the Church and the focus started to shift to women, the feminization of Western Christianity began and never looked back. Since then, the churches became more and more feminine and “normal men,” as they do with their mothers, broke away from anything feminine, including their churches. All this—along with having girls as altar servers and the new family model that does not have man as the head—contributed to the Church becoming a threat to their masculinity. The mainline (Protestant) churches have seminaries with a female majority

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81 Ibid., 28.

82 Ibid., 27-28, 30.
and hence, Podles predicts, “shortly the ministry will be a female occupation” and that one “will have to say male ministers as one now has to say male nurse.”

Podles’ solution? Welcome boys back to the churches by having more physical training joined with religious training. Also, the father should lead prayers, read the bible, and get more involved in the church so that the boys do not see the Church as something feminine. Most importantly, that means the role of the pastor should be that of father, not mother. The assumptions in this (2001) article are clear. A lack of men in Christian churches is due to women and their “sentimental motherhood” from which “normal men stay away,” because men want to break away from mothers. He makes no exceptions. “Men can be taught to be men only by men, and all too many pastors are not real men.”

According to Podles, it is a lack of masculinity as a result of dominance by women that threatens men and the future of Christianity. Podles’ article is an extreme example but it demonstrates how demeaning such rigid models of masculinity and femininity can be. Assuming that all, or most, men and women are a certain way can make femininity the cause of ill or evil just as strongly today as in the ancient periods. Moreover, it can lead men to think that masculinity is defined by power and that without that power and control, a man is not really a man—the effect of which will be discussed later.

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83 Ibid., 31; It should be noted that while he acknowledged Protestant Christian complicity, Podles places most of the blame for the feminization of the Church on Roman Catholics for letting women be too involved and too dominating in the Church.

84 Ibid., 26-32, especially 31-32.

85 Ibid., 27-28, 30.

86 Ibid., 31; See also his discussion about child development and how the boy usually imitates and turns to his father in an attempt to break away from his mother in Ibid., 27-28. I will look at the psychoanalytical literature on this in Chapter 4.
Contrarily, the “blending” of the two, by way of feminization, is not the answer either. Maguire’s idea of blending will lead man to learn from woman—which as such may be very wise, yet not wholesome without mutual learning—or to accept that woman’s moral sensitivity is somehow better than man’s is—or in the extreme case, that women are just better than men. This approach, if successful, will lead not to equal power but to reversal of power dynamic. The one-side-as-the-answer approach is what got us into trouble in the first place. Also, the popular idea that it is woman’s turn to enjoy benefits at the expense of man (this attitude is not Maguire’s) may be a short term solution but a quick fix thinking is often the cause of great evil\textsuperscript{87} and such a “pay back” approach is not an effective model anyway, especially for Christians. Aside from all this, any “blending” must confront the issue of extreme relativism, already discussed in Nelson’s call against androgyny. That is, when categories are blended into a melting pot, there is a danger of losing self-identity for the sake of a single category or no category at all. The task should be, then, to maintain and to acknowledge individuals without melting his or her self-identity.\textsuperscript{88}

\textsuperscript{87} See for example African American theologian Howard Thurman’s discussion of the dangers of wanting “the time interval between wish and fulfillment [to be] zero,” as in the case of personal relationships and, on a “larger scale and more tragic scene,” in the case of war. Instead, Thurman advocates patience, so that decisions are not made so hastily, or with short-term solutions in mind, but that they are made through patience so as to provide “an opportunity for revising, refreshing, and reshaping the initial desire.” Howard Thurman, \textit{Disciplines of the Spirit}, 8th repr. (Richmond, Indiana: Friends United Press, 2001), 38-46.

\textsuperscript{88} Similar arguments are made in ethic and immigration debates in the U.S. This debate between assimilation and retaining one’s cultural identity gave a rise to the idea of “salad bowl,” “symphony,” or even “bibimbap” (a traditional Korean rice dish with mixed vegetables), to replace the idea of “melting pot.” See Milton M. Gordon, \textit{Assimilation in American Life: the role of race, religion, and national origins} (New York: Oxford University Press, 1964), and Michael D’Innocenzo and Josef P. Sirefman eds., \textit{Immigration and Ethnicity: “Melting Pot” or “Salad Bowl”?} (New York: Greenwood Press, 1992); Also, “post-racial” theories are criticized in similar ways. See Ki Joo KC Choi, “Should Race Matter? A Constructive Ethical Assessment of the Postracial Ideal,” \textit{Journal of the Society of Christian Ethics} 31.1 (Spring/Summer 2011): 79-101
Ultimately, for this dissertation, the questions are these: what are some positive paradigms for men? Can such an optimistic approach lead to enhanced lives for men and also save them from guilt-stricken defensive responses, help them acknowledge their historical advantage, work towards reconciliation, fairness, mutuality, and justice in the face of the very real history of unjustifiable male dominance? The first step in answering these questions must be to identify the ways in which certain assumptions about men and women have hurt not only women but also men.

**Christine E. Gudorf (Roman Catholic)**

An avalanche of articles has reflected on the effects of those suppositions on women over the years. In her article, “Western Religion and the Patriarchal Family,” Christine E. Gudorf was the first Catholic theologian to consider the effects of the Judeo-Christian model of family (masculinity and femininity inclusive) on men. Maguire’s article already took the necessary step and uncovered the kinds of negative consequences of the traditional model for others, including women, social institutions, countries, and the world at large. Adding to Maguire’s significant contribution, Gudorf now turns to the subject and examines the profound and poignant effect that such a model has, not

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89 These challenges are evermore significant as news and researches are starting to report that there are some signs of “minorities” becoming the majority, and women outnumbering men in the workforce. http://www.nytimes.com/2008/08/14/washington/14census.html http://www.nytimes.com/2009/02/06/business/06women.html .
The fact that the coverage on these issues are reporting the “numbers” and not how is in the position of power is duly noted.


91 Scholars sometimes blame men to the extent to which men are collectively responsible for rape, pornography, harassment, and other forms that harm women through their cumulative effect. See Larry May, *Masculinity and Morality* (New York: Cornell University Press, 1998).
only on the others caused by men, but also on men themselves.\textsuperscript{92} If she can show, then, that inherited socialized norms are not only causing much pain and harm to those with whom men associate themselves but also to men themselves, then there are more reasons, and a greater motivation for men perhaps, to construct a better and a more just model for gender and family structures.

The Jewish tradition as well as the Christian tradition conferred power on men.\textsuperscript{93} However, according to Gudorf, this power was not bestowed on all men equally. Only a small number of the male elite enjoyed social power. For the most part, men benefited from this power in their own homes in the form of the absolute headship of men over women and children. Such a power structure is directly proportional to the amount of economic responsibilities expected of men for the entire family. The result of this socially mandated association of man with work outside the home is that often his worth, and that of his dependent spouse, is measured by his “paychecks.”\textsuperscript{94} The pressure from these

\textsuperscript{92} Cynthia Enloe does ask the question “How will this decision… affect men?” and discusses the negative effect of masculinization on others. I chose Gudorf, however, for the discussion at hand because 1) Enloe’s discussions concentrate more on the effects of men on others rather than negative effects on men. Although she raises the concern about the effects on men, she does not develop the issue; 2) she presents militarism as inextricably and necessarily interchangeable with masculinity (i.e. strategic rational, hierarchal, obedient to superior orders, tendency to use force etc.), and 3) she does not discuss the religious dimensions. See Enloe, \textit{Globalization and Militarism}, passim and 13, in Keun-joo Christine Pae, “Western Princesses—A Missing Story: A Christian Feminist Ethical Analysis of U.S. Military Prostitution in South Korea,” \textit{Journal of the Society of Christian Ethics}, 29, 2 (2009): 133; Unlike many scholars, both Pae and Enloe at least raise the question of the negative effects of masculinization on men, albeit without further development.

\textsuperscript{93} The following discussion is from Christine E. Gudorf’s “Western Religion and the Patriarchal Family,” 285-301 esp. 287-292 and 301.

\textsuperscript{94} Ibid., 289; one must note here that men did not always have this responsibility. Works by Robert Griswold and Stephanie Coontz show that this association occurred from a historical development. For example, before the Industrial Revolution in America, fathers labored on farms or worked in family-owned stores, or used the household as a “little factory,” allowing them more time to be at home and with their children. In fact, child rearing manuals were directed mostly to men during this time. As such, both men and women contributed to the task of providing for the home. It was only after the Industrial Revolution that fathers’ role shifted from moral instruction of children to breadwinning. Robert Griswold, \textit{Fatherhood}
onerous expectations, along with the fact that work often means for man “remuneration” alone (not “contribution to the society” or learning/development of his talents), only adds to the stress, albeit with some expectation for receiving “the warm refuge of the family hearth” as a reward.  

However, Gudorf sees several problems with the power that men have, other than the injustice that it has caused. First, unshared power means unshared accountability for the family. The effect of the kind of sole responsibility of a single breadwinner reveals itself as a tremendous burden for man. Secondly, if and when something happens to male headship and his role as a breadwinner in the current model—either by way of getting laid off, of women and children not needing to be dependent any longer, or even of having women bosses—man’s value, worth, recognition, and contribution to the family are all in jeopardy. Without power and material provision, man now becomes anxious to find that recognition necessary to gain warmth and acceptance in his own family. When a man does feel this way, he may have a loving home to which he can return and share this anxiety. Unfortunately, men are socialized not to show these kinds of “unmanly” weakness or emotions. One can imagine how this is increasingly the issue in a recession and material provision is even greater if one lives in a society where there is a permanent surplus of workers and a shortage of jobs. See Christine E. Gudorf, “The Power to Create: Sacraments and Men’s Need to Birth,” 308.

(in the U.S. starting in 2008, for example), where older “male” (industrial) jobs are either outsourced to other countries or eliminated due to technology. \(^98\)

Consequently, man becomes emotionally isolated, feels lonely, anxious, and emotionally repressed in his struggle to find an identity in power and responsibility. These conditions potentially yield a lack of relational skills in nurturing children, in friendship, and in married spouses, often with lethal consequences. \(^99\) Adding to the problem is that the fact that manifestations of power in its illegitimate forms (including domestic violence of women and children), unfortunately, have not been adequately countered by religious institutions and sacred texts—with Christian churches and states only recently recognizing marital rape as a reality/possibility. \(^100\) These illegitimate uses of power have occurred beyond the personal and also have happened in an institutional and religious level. Religious institutions’ legitimatization has included, though not exclusively, marital rape, enforced pregnancy, wife beating, exclusion from property ownership, restriction of domestic space, sexual harassment, religious exclusion, and spiritual inferiority. \(^101\) On the personal and institutional (religious) levels, men have

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\(^{98}\) I will discuss further on the implication of losing one’s job, including the “IMF crisis” in South Korea, in the next chapter.


\(^{100}\) Ibid., 291.

\(^{101}\) Christine E. Gudorf, “Violence against Women in World Religions,” in Daniel C. Maguire and Sa’diyya Shaikh eds., *Violence against Women in Contemporary World Religion: Roots and Cures* (Cleveland: The Pilgrim Press, 2007), 9-28. Gudorf argues that religious institutions have supported these kinds of violence
responded to these legitimatizations defensively, much of which is due to their sole and onerous responsibility and the inability to channel emotions that comes with such accountability. Gudorf suggests that there are other important historical events that galvanized this trend—including the Industrial Revolution (when women were no longer producers but consumers depending on male producers) and the shift from “extended” to “nuclear” families (making the family more prone to domestic violence). The most important of these, however, is the gender expectations stemming from the dimorphic paradigm for human sexuality—wherein human sexuality is split definitively and unequivocally into male and female realms, rather than a multidimensional model that accommodates gay, lesbian, transgender, and sexually ambiguous persons. They, together with many feminists and sexuality researchers in biology and medicine, “question the division of all humans into male and female, behaviors into masculine and feminine, and sexual orientation into homosexual and heterosexual.”

Apart from the pressure, stress, and anxiety suffered by men, men are also deprived of many important human experiences due to their “Headship” and the responsibility of breadwinning. One can easily imagine a number of situations where needing to make work a priority could exclude a man from important family experiences. However, Gudorf sees a deeper issue at stake. Where direct nurturing of ordinary life is

when 1) in the process of conserving the revelation of their stories they also conserved the cultural context, 2) they excluded women from access to religious texts and roles 3) they turned a blind eye.

102 However, according to Gudorf, men interestingly did show surprising ability to channel their emotions when the violence was directed towards other men, as in the case of the theories of just war. Ibid., 17.

103 Ibid., 20-25; Patricia Beattie Jung, and Aana Marie Vigen eds., God, Science, Sex, Gender: An Interdisciplinary Approach to Christian Ethics (Urbana, University of Illinois Press, 2010), 7.

104 Ibid., 27.
relegated to women by social and religious norms, men find themselves not directly participating in activities related to nurturing life. Gudorf argues that this approach forces men to miss out on the intimacy and affectional power that men desire especially in situations of caring because they are unable to be vulnerable. By missing out on some of the ordinary activities involving important moments in “sustaining life”—which is what is “sacramental” and what the sacraments represent—men are denied participation in the very sacramental meaning and therefore sacramental power. If men simply participate in the sacraments and the (ritual) reenactment of basic human experience and make only that reenactment meaningful and powerful, then we draw our attention away from ordinary human life, to which sacraments are supposed to point and imitate. The sacraments, she writes, “should not draw our attention away from ‘ordinary’ human life, but should transform ‘ordinary’ life by causing us to understand it more deeply.” As such, the call for men to be directly involved in life nurturing process is nothing short of sacramental and suggests that sacraments, officially, take men away from “earthly” experiences.

People are starting to make some efforts to overcome these problems, especially in the West. The masculine model is shifting toward a more masculine co-operative, interpersonal, mutual teamwork model that is caring and intimate. However, the


106 Men’s participation is in “usurping the ritual initiative of the community and entrusting it to the cleric [male] elite…” In other words, men participate in the “ritualized” version these important moments, thereby taking over what is sacred. Ibid., 297.

107 Christine E. Gudorf, “Power to Create: Sacraments and Men’s Need to Birth,” 305.

108 Ibid., 296-7, 308-309.
hierarchal and outdated family model still serves as an obstacle. My own view is that these efforts work to men’s detriment if practiced simultaneously with the hierarchal model for men at large. The idea is not to encourage sole responsibility of “double duty” and of being a “super-dad,” but to share in those responsibilities. The ideas of the “double-shift” and the “super-mom” are not just wrong for women; they are also wrong for men. Sadly, according to Gudorf, religious tradition—which “manifests itself in opposition to all changes in what is perceived as the revealed tradition”—is holding us back from moving towards the direction that allows for healthier individuals and relationships. How then should a religious person go about ameliorating the inherited model of masculinity?

As a Catholic Christian, one must look to Jesus of Nazareth as the model par excellence. It is crucial to look at “Jesus’ treatment of women, children, work, and power.” More pertinently for this project, however, we must imitate his mode of being and how Jesus exercised his freedom in behaving in a particular manner. By today’s standards, Jesus is quite “feminine.” In all the ways in which Jesus was active, aggressive, in control, dominant, etc., he was also the opposite of all that. Jesus exercised his freedom “in tears, in pity and tenderness, in eschewing the privileges of authority, and especially

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110 I do not mean to take anything away from the honorable work, out of necessity, of supermoms and super-dads who work double, triple shifts for the survival of their families. The double-shift and supermoms and dads about which I am writing are of those who have enough income, yet continue to put work over family obligations. If the parents have enough income, perhaps choosing to work less for the sake of taking care of the family is a better option. A great discussion of this issue is found in the section entitled, “The Dual Vocation of Christian Parents” in Rubio, A Christian Theology of Marriage and Family, 89-110.

111 Gudorf, “Western Religion and the Patriarchal Family,” 301.

112 Ibid., 301.
in serving others in subordinate roles as when he washed his disciples’ feet.” He cared deeply about nurturing life especially those marginalized from society. Jesus as the model for masculinity works in “revamping” the harm that the traditional model has caused men, not necessarily because he had more “feminine” characteristics, but because his characteristics are just as masculine and necessary parts of being a man.

**Christian Manliness**

It should be noted that some thinkers have maintained that even these “vulnerable” qualities are “manly” ones. Their purpose is not to demonstrate those qualities as a natural part of the male characteristics but to claim that it took a man’s strength to be gentle. That is, “far from saying that Jesus was not manly”, “…there was nothing mushy, nothing sweetly effeminate about Jesus… [he was] a man’s man.” Already in the 19th century, Reverend S.S. Pugh, for example, claimed that Jesus, and his gentleness, was an example of a man

...who is strong, who in fidelity and courage and self-reliance and self-mastery can keep the even tenor of his ways, can afford to be gentle without fearing to be suspected of weakness.

Christ’s sacrifice is a true prowess, the true prowess, the true valour, the true chivalry, the true glory, the true manhood” to which we should all aspire.

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113 Christine E. Gudorf, “Power to Create: Sacraments and Men’s Need to Birth,” 286.

114 Ibid., 287.


However, in these kinds of movements—such as the “Christian manliness” movement from the Christian Socialist, Thomas Hughes—there are, generally speaking, ambiguities in emphasizing the tougher and more “masculine” aspects of the Christian faith. In a certain sense, attempting the masculinization of gentleness and compassion generates the kind of characteristics that such a movement is endeavoring to avoid. Yet someone like Thomas Hughes rejects pacifism (e.g., Quakers) as impracticable, even though one can easily conceive pacifism as “masculine,” just as Hughes did with the notions of gentleness and compassion. Hence, there remains “the unsolved tension” between what is seen as masculine and what is not.

The product of these kinds of movements—resulting sometimes in jettisoning any attributes of femininity altogether—which include those of Robert Bly, Brandon O’Brien, Harvey C. Mansfield, Lionel Tiger, Brett McKay, W. Bradford Wilcox, the “retrosexual” movement, and Brad Stinne’s “God men” ministry, to name a few, deserves more attention. I will give it appropriate consideration in the later chapter. At this point, I would simply like to assert that alternative perspectives on Jesus do in fact exist.

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119 Ibid., 165.

120 Ibid., 167.
Conclusion

There are very good reasons to rethink our notion of gender dimorphism. Maguire formulates his reasons from the perspective of women and some feminist scholars. Gudorf gives reasons from both the victims and the perpetrators. She also reveals the religious obligations and motivations that should necessitate a reevaluating and remodeling. In his process of remodeling, Nelson points to the importance of the realities that are often overlooked and neglected—namely passive, vulnerable, soft, and receptive characteristics of men—and guides his readers towards the fullness manhood.

Despite these efforts, gender dimorphism remains an issue. To begin to resolve the issue more effectively, however, one cannot move towards “blending” of the sexes. The identity of a person as a man or a woman still and must remain important. The most promising solution, then, is threefold: (1) continue to point out how unhealthy, unjust, and rigid binary models—whether it be complementary, dualistic, or dimorphic—can be for women and men; (2) flesh out some of the positive attributes and paradigms for men and for masculinity as a whole; (3) allow for a multidimensional model where the sexual spectrum of men and women is much more diverse and fluid. In such a model, the two-sex prototype remains intact while the diversity within and among the two-sex spectrum is acknowledged. It is true that the edges of spectrum do become blurred in this model. The only difference with the “blending” model that I previously discussed is the fact that, in this example, blending occurs in parts (edges) of the spectrum. Instead of blending the two sexes in entirety—a melting pot, where an individual identity and characteristics are melted and lost—the new model accepts as natural both the tremendous amount diversity within the two sexes and the edges of the spectrum where the lines become unclear. In
the end, the task is not to come up with different kinds or names of sexes every time there is evidence of diversity but to allow for a multidimensional spectrum of the two sexes as natural and “normal.”

These important arguments will be more compelling and convincing, however, if it can be shown that not only ought we to rethink gender but that scientific evidence also demands us to do so. Thomas Aquinas may also agree—coming from the natural law tradition after all—that one way of discerning what and how God is communicating to us, while not enough in itself, is by turning to empirical evidence and looking at the world around us. Gudorf, as I have shown, has already begun such an endeavor. She refers to some socio-biological works to illustrate her claims; it is, in fact, impossible to take on a project of this sort without using these data. Prompted by her method, one soon realizes that data from other disciplines are not only desirable but are necessary. It is important to make this point because none of the Roman Catholic encyclicals relevant for this project use or mention any other sources from scientific disciplines. 121 Only theological references from within the tradition—most of which are based on the biology of Aquinas and therefore Aristotle—are used. This is problematic. Using scientific data, one must see how it can inform us about men and women. In order to see whether Gudorf’s findings are true, to extend on her introduction, and to see how viable the alternative interpretations from Christian manliness’ perspective are, then, I will now turn to the social and natural sciences for some assistance.

121 There are occasional scientific footnotes from documents by the United States Catholic Bishops’. See for example, USCCB, Marriage: Love and Life in the Divine Plan (Washington, DC: 2009), 27; Even when encyclicals seem to use scientific terms such as psychological imbalance, the phenomenon of machismo, or “absence of a father,” the scientific sources are never acknowledged, credited, or footnoted. In fact, more often than not, scientific progress is acknowledged only in passing (especially when it is advantageous to the encyclical’s viewpoints) and mostly (ultimately) downplayed as dangerous and/or suspicious. See for example Familiaris consortio, # 25, 30; Cf. Veritatis splendor, #33, 46, 76.
CHAPTER FOUR
SCIENTIFIC CRITICISM OF SEX DIFFERENCE

In previous chapters, I suggested that it is imperative to use social and natural sciences to guide this project. In this chapter, however, I want to clarify my intentions. The sciences are not perfectly objective and “true.” When something is said to be scientifically proven (i.e., fact), it must be taken with a grain of salt. Fundamentally, this chapter claims that the sciences do not dictate the truth, but “at the very most, they whisper suggestions.”¹ I believe that empirical research can certainly inform ethics but ultimately cannot dictate how people ought to act.² Pope John Paul II seems to have agreed on this point:

Moral theology cannot be reduced to a body of knowledge worked out purely in the context of the so-called behavioral sciences. The latter are concerned with the phenomenon of morality as a historical and social fact; moral theology, however, while needing to make use of the behavioral and natural sciences, does not rely on the results of formal empirical observation or phenomenological understanding alone. Indeed, the relevance of the behavioral sciences for moral theology must always be measured against the primordial question: What is good or evil? What must be done to have eternal life? … The affirmation of moral principles is not within the competence of formal empirical methods. While not denying the validity of such methods, but at the same time not restricting its viewpoint to them, moral theology, faithful to the supernatural sense of

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the faith, takes into account first and foremost the spiritual dimension of the human heart and its vocation to divine love.\(^3\)

Nevertheless, the sciences do inform us in many important ways. We rely on the results of science and also make “use of the behavioral and natural sciences” by “not denying the validity.” While this project is not socio–biological or psychological in nature, findings from these disciplines must be considered since ignoring the data could create incomplete and inadequate results. One might imagine, for example, the consequences of developing a model for gender roles based on outdated Aristotelian biology by ignoring what we scientifically now know about men and women. Methodologically, then, one of the important sources for ethical discernment, but certainly not the only one, is science. While “religious and moral reflection bears the burden of discerning the morally proper ends of human action,” many Christian Ethicists today are “convinced that current scientific knowledge and faith claims aren’t mutually exclusive and won’t ultimately contradict one another.”\(^4\) I intend to keep in mind both the fallacies and facts of science as I proceed.

Because I could not address all of the relevant sciences and theories here, however, I have concentrated and relied mostly on the social sciences, with some reference to the natural sciences. Through these sources, I argue (1) that the differences between men and women are real but significantly exaggerated because of presuppositions and social constructions, (2) that the diversity within the normative

\(^3\) John Paul II, *Veritatis splendor*, 111,112. I am aware that the emphasis in this section of the encyclical is on upholding the authority of the Magisterium, and the sciences are downplayed and only acknowledged in passing in this encyclical. However, this section clearly gives some credence to the sciences.

categories of men and women are great, and (3) that the similarities between men and
women are greater than once thought. If, contrary to my claims, the scientific data
support the traditional views of gender, then one must acknowledge the validity of these
views. To test my claims, I begin by considering some common beliefs about sex and
gender, including Darwinian natural selection and biological, sociological, psychological,
historical/anthropological, and socio-theological perspectives. Although my discussion of
these beliefs is not comprehensive, my survey of these perspectives provides the
minimally appropriate foundation for discussion of gender and the notion of masculinity.
The extent to which these common beliefs are sound (or not) play a major role in this
project.

Exaggerated Differences and Downplayed Similarities

Common Beliefs

One common belief is that men and women are different from conception. The
proponents of this position are vast and diverse, though their arguments generally hinge
on certain biological qualities, sexual characteristics, historical tendencies, and/or
empirical data. Therefore, I examine the following common beliefs: (a) Men and women
throughout history developed certain reproductive strategies in accordance with their
biological make-up in order to survive; (b) Survival instincts caused men’s psyches to
develop naturally to be more aggressive, controlling, and managerial than women’s; (c)
the natural sciences (concerning genes, brain, hormones, chromosomes, organs, etc.)
prove that men are one way and women are the opposite; and (d) the history of humanity shows that, compared to women, men are more analytical, competitive, aggressive, controlling, abusive, brawny, rational, organizing, cold, and dominant. 6

These viewpoints seem especially convincing because they do not reflect just Western or Eastern values. Rather, these beliefs seem to be universal and not bound by time or location, with a very small number of exceptions. Their persistence is part of the “proof” for the fundamentally essential nature gender differences. 7

Thus, the arguments point back to the essential question of nature (biology) vs. nurture (sociology). Were we born into certain genders or are our genders constructed? Does gender difference cause gender inequality or is it caused by gender inequality? My answers to these questions, I anticipate, will bring some dissatisfaction from both naturalists and nurturists. However, if successful in my arguments, I may satisfy both groups in some ways.

Darwinism and Beyond

In his seminal theory of natural selection, Charles Darwin claimed that species that tend to survive have reproductive success, and pass on the very characteristics that enable them to survive because they have the best adaptive characteristics necessary for survival. 8 As opposed to artificial selection, in which, for example, a farmer determines


7 Likewise, the Roman Catholic Church’s attitudes toward gender stem from such essentialism.

what survives in an attempt to breed the best possible species, natural selection holds that it is the natural environment that selects species that best fit the survival model.\(^9\)

In their effort to survive and pass on their genes to the next generation, males choose females who are “more vigorous and better nourished” and rear a large number of offspring. Females choose showy, virile, strong, and vigorous males.\(^10\) According to this idea of sexual selection, over time, the “retarded” females are more likely to unite with the “conquered and less powerful males,” are less likely to survive, and will eventually die off.\(^11\) Furthermore, it seemed to Darwin, during this process, women tend to show “greater tenderness and lesser selfishness;” and men are more competitive, ambitious, and selfish.\(^12\) Hence, the weak females are the weakest of the weak and less likely to survive as humans evolve.

Facing possible extinction—according to the post-Darwin sociobiology in the tradition of evolutionary biology—humans developed certain strategies to ensure that their genetic code passed to the next generation. Through these attempts, which are the result of obeying biological principles,\(^13\) we have observable differences between women and men. That is, to make certain that their genes pass on, males try to fertilize as many eggs as they can with as many females as possible (thus, they are naturally promiscuous).

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\(^10\) Ibid., 164-165.

\(^11\) Ibid., 165.


For their eggs to be fertilized, the females, requiring only one successful breeding—preferably with the best potential male parent—are choosy (thus, they are naturally monogamous). Thus, the survival instinct of both sexes further advances the idea that males and females have distinctively different characteristics.

According to socio-biologists, even psychologically, men and women think differently, according to their hardwired biological conditions. Men are aggressive, controlling, and decisive, whereas women are reactive, emotional, and passive. Hence, the hunter–gatherer characteristics of men and the domestic characteristics of women—from hunter–gatherer societies to most other societies all over the world—are not just anthropological realities, but the result of the natural course of biology and evolution refined over the human evolutionary cycle. For some extreme thinkers, these data even explain the phenomenon of rape in that men who rape are fulfilling their predisposition to reproduce when they cannot do so in any other way.

Alternative Interpretation

The one who has interpretive sway holds the power. That is, it is not what evidence is found that is important, but how and by whom the evidence is interpreted. Michael S. Kimmel gives one alternative interpretation of Darwinian explanations.

14 Ibid., 25
Instead of using the data to conform to preconceived ideas, Kimmel does the opposite. For example, one could take the same data from Darwin and deduce that human females are uniquely equipped in the biological sense (thereby psychologically developing a corresponding sexual strategy) to enjoy sex primarily for physical pleasure, and are not naturally monogamous, choosy, or primarily concerned about reproductive potential.¹⁸ Human females are the only primate females with the potential for sexual receptivity of pleasure. For example, the human clitoris has no other function other than sexual pleasure. Furthermore, most women experience their peaks of sexual desire just before and just after menstruation, the most infertile period.¹⁹ One can just as convincingly make an argument, then, that women are equipped primarily to enjoy sex, rather than procreate, and to be polygamous to fulfill that end.

Continuing on with Kimmel’s thought experiment, for most of human history, when a baby was born, fathers were not completely certain that the baby was theirs. Hence, even if the goal of the mother were to ensure the survival her offspring, it would make more sense to “deceive as many males as possible into thinking that the offspring was theirs … since none of them could risk the … death and obliteration of his genetic material.”²⁰ In this interpretation, and in this schema of hardwired biological conditions, women can be seen as aggressive, controlling, and strong-minded, the traits formerly associated with men. Kimmel demonstrates that socio-biological science has not definitively revealed the truth about men and women. If one uses Kimmel’s method—i.e.

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¹⁸ Ibid., 29-30.

¹⁹ Ibid., 30.

²⁰ Ibid., 30.
inductively interpreting from gathered data rather than deduce from what one presupposes—one may come to a very different conclusion. The socio-biological evidence, then, requires more careful examination and more scholarly responsible interpretations.21

Brain Research

Brain research can also provide “evidence” for gender differences. Interpretation of the data on brain research is complex. However, advocates for the existence of decisive differences between the sexes share some common views. First, while these advocates could not decide about which hemisphere is superior, they “assign[ed] that superior one to men.”22 That is, when it was considered superior, men were identified with the right hemisphere, which is associated with visual, spatial, artistic, musical, and mathematical talents, which dominates the left hemisphere.23 Yet, when the left side was considered to control reason and intellect, men were considered overwhelmingly more left-brained.24 Since men were associated with whatever was considered superior at a given time, they were linked to different sides of the brain depending on the norm of the time. Thus, despite inconsistencies, the one constant is that men are associated with, and believed to have, advanced development in whatever side of the brain that was considered superior.

21 Ibid., 29-31.

22 Ibid., 33.


A second common belief within the same group is that the differentiation between hemispheres (called lateralization) demonstrates that men’s brains are much more focused and concentrated on one side (lateralized) than women’s, enabling men to be more capable of spatial tasks. Interestingly, however, studies that found women’s brains more lateralized than men’s also found men to be more capable at spatial tasks.\(^\text{25}\) When one researcher found the female brain to be more lateralized, the conclusion was that such lateralization of the female brain interfered with special tasks. However, when another researcher found the female brain less lateralized, the conclusion was that less lateralization interfered with spatial tasks.\(^\text{26}\) Again, despite the inconsistencies, the constant is that these scholars suggested that lateralization, regardless of the extent, interfered with spatial functioning in women but enhanced spatial functioning in men. Thus, the importance lies not in what researchers found, but in how they interpreted the findings. Whoever has interpretive power holds the power to instill his or her norms, consciously or not.

Similarly, when scholars suggested that the determinant for sex difference lies not in the side of the brain one uses more often, but in how the brain is used, the proponents for definitive differences between the sexes argued that male brains are always better equipped than female ones for visual–spatial tasks. Accordingly, they claimed that women, even when using the right side of the brain, tend to use communication skills,


including nonverbal ones, ignoring the fact that men do too.\textsuperscript{27} Hence, researchers found that although men and women use all parts of the brain, they use them differently.

An important theorist for my argument is Joan Roughgarden. She argues that there are differences, albeit small, in the brains of men and women. Most of these differences have to do with brain size, muscles, symmetry/asymmetry, neurons, tissues, and clusters of cells and nerve cells.\textsuperscript{28} Apart from these small differences in the brain, however, “male and female human brain anatomy is very similar—the big story here is the overlap between the sexes, not their difference.”\textsuperscript{29} Roughgarden concludes that the differences “follow the familiar script: small statistically valid differences in the average, with a large overlap.”\textsuperscript{30}

Apart from neural categories, one must also consider cognitive aspects of the brain. Whereas overall intelligence does not differ between men and women, there seems to be a clear difference in cognitive abilities and aptitudes. Women test better than men in verbal fluency, articulation, and memory, and men in general test better at visualizing how to rotate a shape or object in two- or three-dimensional space, which has been especially noted in reviews of SAT test scores.\textsuperscript{31}

\textsuperscript{27} Ibid., 34.

\textsuperscript{28} For a fuller discussion see the outline in Roughgarden, 226-228.

\textsuperscript{29} Ibid., 226; See MRI data in Lange, Giedd, Castellanos, Vaituzis, and Rapoport, “Variability of human brain structure size: Age four-twenty years,” \textit{Psychiatry Research: Neuroimaging Section}, 74:1-12, esp. 8.

\textsuperscript{30} Ibid., 228.

Men and women also seem to use their brains differently, using different parts of the brain for the same task.\textsuperscript{32} Although it is important to note this difference, researchers have often overlooked the fact that it pales in comparison with the differences among men as a group and among women as a group. According to Janet S. Hyde, her colleagues, and “virtually every single study ever undertaken,” the most significant differences exist among men and among women, even though the differences between men and women are more heavily stressed.\textsuperscript{33} As Doreen Kimura, a neuropsychologist stated, “The similarities between human males and females far outweigh the differences.”\textsuperscript{34} Nevertheless, the notion that men and women are definitively, physically, and essentially different, despite scientific evidence to the contrary, is omnipresent. The persistence of this idea is often used as the foundation for claims about essential differences between men and women.

Research on Sex Hormones

Hormonal research is another area where dominant masculine interpretations are hotly debated. When men demonstrate any form of aggression, inextricable links to testosterone are often drawn. In a certain sense, the decisive difference between sexes is

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{32} Ibid., 230-231.
  \item \textsuperscript{34} Ibid. 35; April Austin, “Is it Girl’s Nature to Nurture?” \textit{Christian Science Monitor} 94:65 (April 27, 2002) 11.
\end{itemize}
the hormonal system. That is, the male sex hormone (testosterone) is responsible for masculinity in men, and the female sex hormone (estrogen) is responsible for femininity in women. According to Steven Goldberg, “Every society demonstrates patriarchy, male dominance and male attainment”; thus, it is logical to conclude “the hormonal renders the social inevitable.” There seems to be some scientific evidence to support Goldberg’s claim. Men, in general, have higher levels of testosterone and aggressive behavior than women. Also, when the level of testosterone is increased in a “normal” male, his level of aggression also increases.

Before making the leap to inevitability, however, one should be mindful of several facts. First, both men and women have testosterone and estrogen. Men have a higher level of testosterone than women, generally speaking, but at least some women have higher levels of testosterone than some men and some men have more estrogen than some women. Second, the level of testosterone varies greatly among men; the same goes for estrogen levels among women. Third, testosterone has a permissive effect on aggression; that is, it does not cause aggression but exaggerates aggression that is already present. Studies have shown that aggression produces testosterone, not vice versa.

One study even showed that men with low testosterone were more likely to be angry,

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36 Ibid., 40.
37 Following information is from Ibid., 40-41.
irritable, and aggressive than men with normal or high levels of testosterone.\textsuperscript{40} Also, because violent men with high levels of testosterone may previously have been diagnosed with an antisocial personality disorder (which produces more testosterone), evidence points to the permissive effect of testosterone on aggression.\textsuperscript{41}

Finally, from the beginnings of hormonal research, researchers located their hormonal interpretations only in preconceived binary terms. When female hormones were found in men’s urine, for example, scientific communities reacted by calling the finding “disconcerting,” “anomalous,” “somewhat disquieting,” “surprising,” “curious,” “unexpected,” and “paradoxical.”\textsuperscript{42} Preconditioned deductive thinking, instead of evidentiary inductive thinking, is evident in these reactions.

The two camps of thought on the issue agree on a few points. They agree that men, in general, have higher levels of testosterone and aggressive behavior than women. They also agree that testosterone and estrogen are both present in males and females, albeit in different levels. However, the explanation for the effects of the hormones differs. The fact is that men’s and women’s testosterone and estrogen levels vary greatly among members of each group. Also, many scholars have shown that aggressive behavior explains increased levels of testosterone. Then, the focus for both positions must be of the effects on how human beings behave. Hence, instead of assigning testosterone as the cause of male aggressions—perpetuating the unjust accentuation of sex difference—one

\textsuperscript{40} Kimmel, \textit{The Gendered Society}, 41.


should start thinking about why men became aggressive, causing their testosterone to increase.

Research on Genetics

As mentioned in chapter 2, Christine E. Gudorf has claimed that the traditional dimorphic structure for sex is not clear-cut. Part of the reason for her argument is that the genetic make-up of humans is much more diverse than many accept or expect. Gudorf claims that in terms of sex chromosomes, there are more than two primary human patterns, XX and XY—for example, there are XXX, XXY, XYY, XO, and occasional XXXX. The most common of these uncommon patterns, namely Klinefelter’s syndrome (XXY) and Turner’s Syndrome (XO), occur in significant numbers. In addition, there are ambiguities in external organs, internal reproductive organs, gonad patterns, and the aforementioned hormonal patterns and brain-related realities.

Many scientists agree that genetic research does not provide data that assure a clear dimorphic model for sex. Scientists have discovered that each human has about 30,000 genes and differs from other humans, on average, by only sixty (0.2 percent) (exclusive of genes on the sex chromosomes). In terms of genes on the sex chromosomes, there are also differences. Three of the genes on the X chromosome,

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44 The two syndromes occur once in every 700 males and once in every 2,500 females, mounting up to 5.5 million people today, other patterns not inclusive. See Ibid and Janell Carroll and Paul Root Wolpe, Sexuality and Gender in Society (San Francisco: HarperCollins, 1996), 76.


which has 1,500 genes, differ from person to person.\textsuperscript{47} One of the genes on the Y chromosome, which potentially has 500 genes (twenty-four of which have been identified thus far), differs from person to person.\textsuperscript{48} After considering all the variations, a person with an XX—typically a woman—differs from one with an XY—typically a man—by about 250 genes from the sex chromosomes and sixty genes from the nonsex chromosomes. This difference is much greater (about four times) than the difference found among men or among women.\textsuperscript{49}

The genetic differences between men and women seem to be the one place where the data show greater diversity between women and men than among men or women independently. In terms of the whole body, genetic comparison brings about a significant amount of overlap, while allowing for a sharp gender binary between XX and XY bodies. That is, in mammalian species, the bodies of males and females can sometimes be nearly identical overall in some (though different in gamete size) or strikingly different in others.\textsuperscript{50} Feminine males who have an XY may easily be considered, and socially “counted,” as women, and masculine females who have an XX may be considered men in the same sense. Thus, genetics does not necessarily dictate a gender binary.

Although the mammalian system of sex chromosomes produces a binary based on gamete size, the gender bodies that make those eggs and sperm are not constrained by the genetics of sex determination; they are free to adapt evolutionarily to local context. Indeed, research on the human genome is revealing that all people are genetically different. Individuality is not skin-deep, but extends deep into our DNA. … “Normal” people are not a sea of

\textsuperscript{47} Ibid., 208, Wizemann and Pardue, Exploring the Biological Contributions, 29.

\textsuperscript{48} Ibid., 210.

\textsuperscript{49} Ibid., 212.

\textsuperscript{50} Read examples of such in Ibid. 213 and the possibility of males resembling females and vice versa from “allelic variation of X at loci that escapes X inactivation” in Ibid., 214.
homogenous genotypes, bodies, and brains. “Normal” people are as genetically diverse as snowflakes.\textsuperscript{51}

Despite the great diversity and individuality among humans, however, I do not deny some commonalities among men and among women. I do not believe that the concept of sex is so relative and subjective as to suppose that sex is purely fiction. Rather, men and women are useful categories and should be kept as such.\textsuperscript{52} Nevertheless, the difference between the two is amplified by social conventions and is not purely natural or inherent. Conversely, the similarities between the two are downplayed, moving farther away from the reality, which shows much similarity between men and women.

Researchers must study the process of the augmentation of sex difference to determine the extent to which social influences play a role in this process. Here, I consider psychological, historical–anthropological, and sociological perspectives.

\textbf{Social Construction}

Freudian Influences

Researchers agree that gender identity and sexuality formation start at an early age, although researchers vary slightly as to when the starting point occurs. According to Freud, gender identity and sexuality formation are not biological achievements but psychological accomplishments.\textsuperscript{53} Freud generally thought that the human body is not hardwired to become an adult man or woman and different experiences affect the psyche,

\textsuperscript{51} Ibid., 215; Cf. my comment about the South African runner, Caster Semenya, and a transgender man, Kye Allums, playing for a female basketball team in the US in chapter 2.

\textsuperscript{52} A strong case can be made, however, for having additional categories. I will pick up on this issue later in this chapter.

\textsuperscript{53} See Ibid., 75, 80.
resulting in observable differences between women and men.\textsuperscript{54} That is, until we reach the genital stage of development, when our desires (id) for food (consumption and excretion), shelter, and pleasure are still being gratified at the instant of our need, both boys and girls experience roughly the same things.\textsuperscript{55} When humans reach the genital stage, however, they (ego) learn to repress and discipline the id and find a way toward socially approved goals (superego). This marks the beginning of becoming masculine or feminine.\textsuperscript{56}

Freud’s literature, and its interpretations, is very complex. However, forming his arguments in a nutshell is as follows: as weaning and toilet training begins, we begin the process of identification and differentiation. A boy, unlike a girl, unlearns his attachment with his mother and his ego transfers the identification to his father because although he has the biological capability to act on his desires for sexual relations with his mother, he knows that his father may punish him if he were to compete for sexual access to his mother with his father (Oedipus complex). The boy will be satisfied with mother-like substitutes and become a dad himself, whereby he develops a masculine active sexuality. A girl, who also wants sexual relations with her mother but does not have the biological equipment necessary, experiences penis envy. She retains her identification with her mother and transfers her focus from the clitoris (her equivalent for penis) to the vagina.

\textsuperscript{54} The following descriptions are from Ibid., 72-75.

\textsuperscript{55} Ibid., 73-74.

so that she finds her satisfaction in having a baby, whereby she develops a feminine, passive sexuality.\textsuperscript{57}

The proponents of Freud’s theories belong to diverse groups. One of these locates gender identity formation somewhat later than Freud placed it. Only when children are more aware of themselves, the world around them, and their gender do they begin to identify and label themselves as boys or girls.\textsuperscript{58} According to this theory of cognitive development, children see the world around them, develop their identity through cognitive filters, and interpret the world according to the categories that they see as socially acceptable.\textsuperscript{59} Of course, this process of gender identity, self-identity, and social acceptability is an ongoing process.\textsuperscript{60}

There are others who, by the time that they enter grade school, have experienced confusion because the social categories of boys and girls simply do not correspond with who they are. Hence, if one does not cognitively move according to socially acceptable categories, then the people around him or her help to direct them. For example, the mother of a girl who does not walk like a girl might say, “For heaven’s sake, Lisa. You

\textsuperscript{57} Ibid., 74; of course, Freud is much more detailed and more complicated than this brief description. For the purpose of the point that I am attempting to make, however, this short summary will suffice.


\textsuperscript{59} Ibid., 78.

\textsuperscript{60} Ibid., 79.
walk like John Wayne,” or a boy who does not act boyish may be called a “wimp, fairy, or Little Lord Fauntleroy.”

Therefore, unlike proponents of the arguments for biological inevitability, Freud and his followers described—instead of prescribed—sex differences in terms of how they are produced or learned. According to these theories, nurture, not nature, plays a greater role in how gender identity is achieved. However, there are fundamental problems with this position. That is, even if Freud is correct about the social construction of gender identity and sex differences, this does not necessarily mean that the notion at the heart of his work is not deeply flawed. One may turn to psychoanalytic feminism to locate these flaws stemming from male-centered analyses.

Doing his study from a man’s vantage point, Freud’s model always places women at an inferior level to men. Women are lacking, envious of what they do not have (a penis), and are the objects of devaluation by both men and women. According to Nancy Chodorow, however, one must move away from the traditional psychoanalysis that puts the son and father relationship at the center and towards one that puts the relationship of the mother and children of both sexes at the center. The effect of this method is that men do not have to worry about the social expectations of demonstrating their successful achievement of masculinity by necessarily distancing themselves from their mother. Then, men, along with women, are able to value intimacy, connection, and community as healthy adult experiences alongside more impersonal and cognitive learning. In such a

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61 Roughgarden, 264-268.

model, the boy’s shift from connection and intimacy with his mother and to his father does not have to be impersonal or traumatic. Also, his attitudes toward and capacity for intimacy with women do not have to take a violent form.63

In a similar trajectory, Carol Gilligan noted something in human psychology that extends beyond the impersonal, cognitive, abstract, and universal paradigm. Gilligan explained that there are different voices that result from different experiences and that these are closely tied to the “feelings of empathy and compassion and are concerned more with the resolution of ‘real life’ as opposed to hypothetical dilemmas.”64 In her book, *In a Different Voice*, Gilligan proposed a new model, the ethic of care, which set her apart from Freud and his followers like Jean Piaget and from her own teacher Lawrence Kohlberg’s notion of the ethic of justice.65 Gilligan’s rendering of this different voice called for psychology to avoid being male-centered and using approaches traditionally associated with men (which women should envy or to which women should aspire).

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Her reason was that the outdated model for psychology is “an unfair paradox that the very traits that have traditionally defined the ‘goodness’ of women are those that mark them as deficient in moral development.”\footnote{Ibid. 484; quoted in Emory Griffin, A First Look at Communication Theory 1st edition (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1991) chap 8, especially 86-87.} Hence, her theory challenges her predecessors who claimed that “women show less sense of justice than men … that they are often more influenced in their judgments by feelings of affection or hostility”\footnote{Sigmund Freud, “Some Psychical Consequences of the Anatomical Distinction Between the Sexes,” in James Strachey trans. and ed., The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud, vol. 19. (London: Hogarth, 1961) (1925), 257-258 quoted in Emory Griffin, A First Look, 86.} and that “the most superficial observation is sufficient to show that in the main, the legal sense is far less developed in little girls than in boys.”\footnote{Piaget, The Moral Judgment of the Child, 77 quoted in Emory Griffin, A First Look, 86.}

Contrary to the interpretations of her work by many scholars, Gilligan does not support the notion that women and men are fundamentally different and, thus, people should listen to women more closely.\footnote{Kimmel, for example, claims that the idea of honoring and respecting differences in sex was the very method used by men who argued against woman suffrage. For more examples, see Kimmel, The Gendered Society, 83-84; Cf. books by Deborah Tannen, especially You Just Don’t Understand: Women and Men in Conversation (New York: Quill, Harper Collins Pub, 1990); See also Daniel C. Maguire, “The Feminization of God and Ethics,” 7, for his interpretation of Gilligan as claiming “the moral judgments of women differ from those of men.” Cf., my discussion of Maguire’s “feminine advantage” in chapter three of this dissertation.} Instead, her psychological findings are based on the different nature of people’s experiences within their social structures, not on inherent or essential differences between the sexes.

The title of my book was deliberate; it reads, “In a different voice,” not “in a woman’s voice.” … Thus, the care perspective in my rendition is neither biologically determined nor unique to women. It is, however, a moral perspective different from that currently embedded in psychological
theories and measures, and it is a perspective that was defined by listening to both women and men describe their own experience.\textsuperscript{70}

Thus, notwithstanding Freud and his followers’ shortcomings and male-centered research, the vast majority of the scholars agree that the environment and experiences resulting from that environment play a crucial role in determining who we are as human beings, especially concerning gender.

Socio–Anthropological History

Margaret Mead, an anthropologist, is among many scholars who have taken seriously the “primitive” \textit{sic} world. In her pioneering book \textit{Sex and Temperament in Three Primitive Societies}, Mead found that people think about gender difference differently depending on their social norms and experiences in their environments.\textsuperscript{71} However, she did not always find egalitarian results for sex in the groups she observed. Of the three tribes she studied, she found two in which women and men were seen as similar. In the other community, the sexes were seen as opposites, but in the reverse way that women and men are typically seen in the United States.\textsuperscript{72} Also, studies of North American tribes demonstrate more diversity in the construction of gender than is found in the collective consciousness of the West.\textsuperscript{73} These studies paved a way for some scholars


to find communities where diverse sexual expressions are not only more accepted, but also admired, honored, and thought of as special.\textsuperscript{74}

In fact, research on Native American and other cultures revealed that there are groups in which gender expression is not simply bipolar or dimorphic, but fluid.\textsuperscript{75} Furthermore, studies of gender diversity must be read in the context of research on sexual diversity. The diversity to which I refer can include homosexuality and bisexuality, as well as intersexuality and ambiguous sexuality.

Anthropologists have discovered that homosexuality and bisexuality, far from being “abnormal,” are omnipresent in the animal and human world.\textsuperscript{76} Evidence of sexual diversity in the animal world is not only overwhelming, but “downright bizarre by even the most liberal human standards.”\textsuperscript{77} Thus, “What varies is not the presence or absence of homosexuality—that’s pretty much a constant—but the ways in which homosexuals are treated in those cultures.”\textsuperscript{78} In other words, if one wants to make an argument from the

\textsuperscript{74} Gilbert Herdt, \textit{Same Sex, Different Cultures} (Boulder: Westview, 1997) in Gudorf E. Gudorf, “The Erosion of Sexual Dimorphism,” 869-870.


\textsuperscript{76} For a careful analysis of this fact, see Joan Roughgarden, \textit{Evolution’s Rainbow}, chapter 8, 127-158, 345-261.


\textsuperscript{78} Kimmel, \textit{The Gendered Society}, 66.
standpoint of nature, the kinds of sexuality in nature that do not fit in the traditional bipolar model are so common, they may just as easily be taken as normal or natural.

Scholars have also discovered that physical diversity, including intersexuals and what Anne Fausto-Sterling called “herms, mersms and fermes” also exists among us in a number that is no longer esoteric or insignificant.\textsuperscript{79} Depending on whom one asks and how one defines these “diverse” groups, the actual number varies greatly—ranging from 0.07 percent to 4 percent.\textsuperscript{80} Some scholars have found a more significant number.\textsuperscript{81} Fausto-Sterling and her colleagues provided an overview of estimates (see Table 2).

Table 2. Occurrence of Physical Diversity Chart

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sexual characteristic</th>
<th>Rate of occurrence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not XX and not XY</td>
<td>1 in 1,666 births</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Klinefelter’s syndrome (XXY)</td>
<td>1 in 1,000 births</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Androgen insensitivity syndrome</td>
<td>1 in 13,000 births</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partial androgen insensitivity syndrome</td>
<td>1 in 130,000 births</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classical congenital adrenal hyperplasia</td>
<td>1 in 13,000 births</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Late onset adrenal hyperplasia</td>
<td>1 in 66 individuals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vaginal agenesis</td>
<td>1 in 6,000 births</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ovotestes</td>
<td>1 in 83,000 births</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Idiopathic (no discernable medical cause)</td>
<td>1 in 110,000 births</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iatrogenic (caused by medical treatment)</td>
<td>No estimate</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


\textsuperscript{81} “Anthropologist William O. Beeman has suggested that in the United States alone ‘between 3 million and 10 million Americans are neither male nor female at birth’” see William O. Beeman, “What Are You? Male, Merm, Herm, Ferm or Female?” Baltimore Sun (March 17, 1996) in Patricia Beattie Jung, “Christianity and Human Sexual Polymorphism” 295; Anne Fausto-Sterling suggested that there maybe 240 intersexuals on (Brown University) campus, see Anne Fausto-Sterling, “The Five Sexes,” 21.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Condition</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5 alpha reductase deficiency</td>
<td>No estimate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mixed gonadal dysgenesis</td>
<td>No estimate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Complete gonadal dysgenesis</td>
<td>1 in 150,000 births</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hypospadias (urethral opening in perineum or along penile shaft)</td>
<td>1 in 2,000 births</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hypospadias (urethral opening between corona and tip of glans penis)</td>
<td>1 in 770 births</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total number of people whose bodies differ from standard male or female</td>
<td>1 in 100 births</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total number of people receiving surgery to “normalize” genital appearance</td>
<td>1 or 2 in 1,000 births</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Consistent with these results, some postmodern views claim that not only gender, but sex also, is socially constructed. According to Monique Wittig, women are identified with sex, needing descriptions (i.e. wo-men). This identification alters the category of women such that in some ways they lose their freedom and autonomy insofar as they are known only in relation to men. Men, on the other hand, are simply people and do not need further description. In this sense, Wittig claimed, there is no gender but the feminine gender, as men are just men.

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84 Ibid. 26; Sociolinguistics investigates an asymmetrical relationship between the dominant “unmarked” terms and secondary “marked” terms. In the English language, for example, the unmarked term “man” represents dominant, generic, or normative term referring to humankind generally while marked term “woman” represents secondary, specific, and atypical term never referring to humankind generally. The marked terms “all imply… that the person is not really generic (“typical”) form… By making a compound form for a special type we also passively construct the normative case or *generic type* by its absence of any linguistic qualifiers.” Wayne Brekus “A Sociology of the Unmarked: Redirecting our Focus,” *Sociological Theory* 16.1 (March, 1998): 34-51, especially 34-35.
Gender is the linguistic index of the political opposition between the sexes. Gender is used here in the singular because indeed there are not two genders. There is only one: the feminine, the “masculine” not being a gender. For the masculine is not the masculine, but the general.  

There is, then, no reason to divide human bodies into male and female “except that such a division suits the economic needs of heterosexuality,” creating a semblance of order. Such process of differentiation via compulsory heterosexualization “restricts the production of identities along the axis of heterosexual desires” and maintains male domination. Similarly, Wittig considers sex a gendered category, stating that there is no distinction between sex and gender; both are constructed because of compulsory heterosexuality and are “naturalized but not natural.” Sex is not simply a given, a prima facie from which gender characteristics flow, nor an a priori reality. Sex is “a political and cultural interpretation of the body,” and it has been “gender from the start.”

After realizing such a social construction, my next step is deconstruction of sex, gender, and identity so as to see their density. This process calls for destabilization and subverting of sex, gender, desire, pleasure, and identity. However, it is not a process that

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85 Monique Wittig, “The Point of View: Universal or Particular?” Feminist Issues 3.2 (Fall 1983): 64 quoted in Ibid., 27.


87 Ibid., 35, 150; Also, see a sociological concept called “differentiation” through which the dominant group maintains the status quo over the subordinates in Barbara Reskin, “Bringing the Men Back In: Sex Differentiation and the Devaluation of Women's Work,” Gender and Society 2.1 (March 1988): 58-81, especially 62-64; Wittig finds this differentiation to be especially oppressive to women, gays, and lesbians. Ibid., 144; We shall see a similar pejorative effects on men later in this chapter.

88 Ibid., 143, 10-11.

89 Ibid., 144; See Judith Butler’s discussion of Foucault’s suggest that the category of sex is constructed through a historically specific mode of sexuality, referring to the story of a 19th century hermaphrodite named Herculine Barbin in Ibid., 31-32, 123-135.
leads to nothingness, a hypothetical “third gender,” or a transcendence of the binary.\textsuperscript{90}

The task is not to celebrate every possibility but to redescribe those possibilities that already exist and are hindered and made unintelligible by the construction. That is, what is considered “natural” must be denaturalized in order to see the actual complexity and diversity of gender, sex, desire, and identity.\textsuperscript{91}

No matter how remarkable the number, the current acknowledgments of sexual diversity are not enough to necessarily abandon the dual-sex model that is commonly accepted. Rather, there is a great variety in the sexual spectrum that renders one-size-fits-all claims, rules, or roles about each of the sexes, at least, inelegant and, probably, unjust. Based on the evidence thus far, it \textit{could} be claimed that male and female as categories are quite diverse; thus, in order to embrace the dimorphic model for sex and gender as a general category, one must be aware and accommodate the reality of diversity.

Sociological History

Neither the postmodern social constructionist approach nor the essentialist naturalist approach ought to be taken wholly and without scrutiny by a responsible scholar. Sociology is no different. Hence, to discuss sociology with regard to gender, one must acknowledge both the constructed and non-constructed self.\textsuperscript{92} Humans are not born as \textit{tabulae rasae}, but are actively and interactively affected by influences from without. Thus, for its part, sociology must contribute to the study of sex and gender where issues concerning gender difference, power, relationality, and environment (including

\textsuperscript{90} Ibid., 162.

\textsuperscript{91} Ibid., 144, 185-187.

\textsuperscript{92} Anne Fausto-Sterling \textit{Myths of Gender: Biological Theories about Men and Women} (New York: Basic Books, 1992), 8.
situational, cultural, experiential, and institutional influence) affect, or even exaggerate, some innate biological realities.

The first place where the seeds of gender difference are planted and humans learn to define and redefine gender is the family. In the early years of childhood, children are exposed to the system or structure of their families, which has a lasting effect on their lives. Nancy Chodorow observes that most childcare in the early years is provided by women. Thus, daughters identify with and imitate motherly intimacy, while sons, in the absence of their father, disassociate from mother-related intimacy and rely on the impersonal and the cognitive. Children also begin to associate non-motherly, impersonal cognitive learning, breadwinning, and earning a paycheck with power; consequently devaluing mothers and motherhood.

In her book *Intimate Strangers*, Lillian B. Rubin writes of the inaccessibility of men’s inner thoughts and feelings:

> Partly, that’s a result of the ways in which boys are trained to camouflage their feelings under cover of an exterior of calm, strength, and rationality. Fears are not manly. Fantasies are not rational. Emotions, above all, are not for the strong, the sane, the adult. Women suffer them, not men—women, who are more like children with what seems like their never-ending preoccupation with their emotional life. But the training takes so well because of their early childhood experience when, as very young boys, they had to shift their identification from mother to father and sever themselves from their earliest emotional connection. Put the two together and it does seem like

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93 Of course, now, many women contribute their share to the family economy, often, unfortunately, without reciprocal contribution to domestic labor by men. See Lillian Rubin, “The Transformation of Family Life,” in Kimmel with Amy Aronson, *The Gendered Society Reader*, 218.

94 Nancy Chodorow, *The Reproduction of Mothering*.

suffering to men to have to experience that emotional side of themselves, to have to give it a voice.\textsuperscript{96}

Also, as children grow older, parents, teachers, and classmates continue to reinforce proper roles by choosing, labeling, and encouraging children in terms of how and what to play and accept.\textsuperscript{97} As pressure mounts to keep these roles intact, the exaggerated expression of femininity and masculinity begins to surface.\textsuperscript{98}

Such a phenomenon pervades human surroundings and permeates social institutions.\textsuperscript{99} When individuals marry, and perhaps have children, the sequence makes a full circle and returns to the family, where the appropriation of roles is reinforced.\textsuperscript{100}

However, the “traditional family” is not inevitable, traditional, or natural.\textsuperscript{101} Take the American family, for example. One can imagine the days when the traditional family restricted women to the home and sent men to the workplace. However, such a phenomenon is associated with postindustrialization, when “paid work shifted from home and farm to mill and factory, shop and office” and much of what men used to do around the house—such as making furniture, clothing, and beddings—became obsolete as heavy


\textsuperscript{97} See Michael S. Kimmel, Gendered Society especially chapters entitled, “The Gendered Family,” and “the Gendered Classrooms,” 117-179.

\textsuperscript{98} See for example how the “Sea Monster” boys react to their “opposite” group, “Barbie Girls,” and how parents encourage, approve, and perpetuate them in Michael A. Messner, “Barbie girls versus Sea Monsters: Children Constructing Gender,” in Kimmel and Messner Men’s Lives, 87-102.

\textsuperscript{99} Kimmel, Gendered Society especially “the Gendered Workplace,” 180-209.

\textsuperscript{100} More specifically, how this sequence continues on in the institutions for men will be discussed a little later in this dissertation.

\textsuperscript{101} It seems as though that every generation calls for a “return to the family” because it judges the contemporary family to be “in crisis” unlike the good old days. But often such justifications of “when I was young” come without thorough reflections on what the core problems and needs were and still are. See Margaret A. Farley, “The Church and the Family: An Ethical Task,” Horizons 10.1 (1983): 50-71.
machines did the job. Preindustrial America was quite different. Much of the work around the house was germane to providing for the family. Hence, both women and men participated in the work of the family, either by producing and making goods or by farming. Similarly, both men and women participated in domestic duties (including childrearing) because the family revolved around the home. The family continued to demarcate separate spheres for men and women as a form of strategic adaptation to the industrialized environment. When this kind of industrialized life became the normal way of life, the separation of the two spheres began to be exaggerated.

American family history is but a single example. There are other places in history where a sequence of events resulted in the production of social norms. For example, I explore how such a phenomenon occurred in at least one other country in the next chapter: South Korea.

**Masculinity**

If gender is exaggerated from biological givens via social construction and upbringing, then the pertinent question to this project is, how are men brought up, affected, and constructed? Lillian Rubin stated that many men at a young age learn to


camouflage their feelings and define themselves in opposition to women,\textsuperscript{105} often resulting in hypermasculinity.\textsuperscript{106} As the discovery of the connection between destructive behavior and hypermasculinity has taken place, the dimorphic sexual model has been challenged. Socio-biological findings are beginning to acknowledge that a traditional model for gender may be harmful not only for women, but also for men.\textsuperscript{107}

The reason is at least twofold. Many men do not find the traditional male model to be something with which they can identify. Also, many men do not have a model from which they can work because certain models—such as the Catholic idea of gender complementarity\textsuperscript{108}—do not spell out what masculinity means. When masculinity is not acknowledged in name, individuals cannot deal with it. When men find themselves not being able to identify, define, or meet the expectations of success, power, and restricted emotionality, some feel anxious about their masculine identity and develop psychological

\textsuperscript{105} This opposition occurs by stressing the importance on independence, rationality, aggression, the exercise of emotional control, the overt externalization of interiority, and glorification of strength and violence, see Andrea G. Philaretou and Katherine R. Allen, “Reconstructing Masculinity and Sexuality,” \textit{The Journal of Men’s Studies} 9.3, (Spring 2001): 310; Cf. Kathleen Gerson, \textit{No Man’s Land: Men’s Changing Commitments to Family and Work} (New York: Basic, 1993) and Michael Kaufman, “The Construction of Masculinity and the Triad of Men’s Violence,” in Michael S. Kimmel and Michael A. Messner \textit{Men’s Lives} 4\textsuperscript{th} ed. (Boston: Pearson Education Inc.[Allyn and Bacon] , 1997), 4-17.


\textsuperscript{108} See the section entitled “Gender Complementarity” in Chapter 2 of this dissertation.
strain (i.e., gender role conflict) and feel less prepared for being strong and capable men and/or fathers.\footnote{109}

Adding to these constraints, “men often have a difficult time relating to children because of the inflexible nature of their masculine personalities … assuming superior, reasoned male logic, a child’s emotional needs seem frustrating and annoying.”\footnote{110} Unable to show a loving and gentle side to their sons or daughters, men often end up handing down one instruction: to be aggressive.\footnote{111} While many fathers claim that aggressiveness and competitiveness in sports build character, some empirical data show, in fact, that activity such as athletic competition “obstructed maturity and growth in some situations.”\footnote{112} Sons, like their fathers, often develop “depression, anxiety, anger, substance abuse, loneliness, and other interpersonal problems” as a result.\footnote{113} The reason is that they see themselves as failures (known as “masculine deprivation”), where men,


\footnote{110} Joe L. Dubbert, \textit{A Man’s Place}, 4; For a more recent study on some of the constraints from rigid notions of masculinities or fatherhood, see Svend Aage Madsen, “Men’s Mental Health Fatherhood and Psychotherapy,” \textit{Journal of Men’s Studies} v. 17.1 (Winter 2009): 15-30 especially 27.

\footnote{111} Partly due to such inculcation, professional athletes often become “the nation’s most powerful symbol of masculinity.” They have the aggressiveness, competitiveness, size, skill, and salary to back up this place of admiration. Men who are not athletes, while not actively and directly involved, claim their place in the realm of sports even as spectators, by verbalizing their continual analysis, intelligent observations, and plots for counter-strategy. Dubbert, \textit{A Man’s Place}, 4, 270.

\footnote{112} Dubbert, \textit{A Man’s Place}, 273.

not living up to the masculine (essentialist) expectations become as a result “engrossed in a state of perpetual male sexual anxiety with clinical or non-clinical consequences.”

Because of repressed emotions to fit the masculine norm or of not living up to the masculine expectations, many men deal with their depression with alcohol and/or violence. Such a cycle can lead to a number of social problems.

In his groundbreaking work *The Myth of Masculinity*, Joseph Pleck challenged notions of masculinity in a completely different way. Before Pleck, many scholars saw the fact that men were having trouble fitting into the norms of masculine roles as the problem. Pleck, however, claimed that the role itself was problematic. That is, Pleck concluded, the claim that men ought to play a certain role is based on the Male Sex Role Identity (MSRI), which is virtually empirically false because it is contradictory and inconsistent. Not only is MSRI false, but the male sex role stemming from such an identity “was also the source of strain, anxiety, and male problems” for men. Pleck proposed a new model, the Sex-Role Strain (SRS), which makes the shift from locating

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115 See Korean Woman Institute ed., *New Lecture in Feminist Studies* [Sae Yǒsŏnhakkangŭl] (DongNyuk: Seoul, Korea, 1999) especially 121-312. Also, when the economic crisis hit Korea (known as the “IMF crisis” because the Korean government sought an IMF bailout) in 1997, many lost their jobs. Many men could not face up to the fact that they could not meet the demand of the masculine image—of being the breadwinner, and economically able/responsible—and many chose to live in the streets (or even commit suicide) rather than going back to his family and live as “powerless men.” See Masanori Sasaki et al, *Men Studies and Men Movement about Feminism* (in Korean) (WonMiSa: Seoul, Korea, 2007) especially 293-298. See chapter 5 for further discussions.


117 Ibid. 15-27.

118 For a fuller discussion, see Ibid, 29-132.

the problem in men who cannot fit the role, to suggesting that the roles that they are forced to play as the problem. In other words, men are not the problem; their role expectations are.

Many other scholars followed Pleck by further investigating the problems of the role assigned to men and the problem of lack of male involvement in the family stemming from that role. In *The Gendered Society*, Kimmel provides a postmodern criticism of Pleck’s new male SRS model. Kimmel finds that Pleck’s work was restricted to roles, which did not account for the diversity among men and among women as separate groups. Furthermore, Kimmel argues that Pleck’s sex role theory treats men and women in a roughly similar way so that men are seen as having not more power in society, but a different power and role in society. Kimmel’s criticism will become important for later discussions of the Roman Catholic family’s complementary model.

Finally, Kimmel criticizes the inability of outdated sex-role models to treat institutions as gendered, not just as individuals. That is, he thinks that these sex-role models made criticisms on an individual, instead of on an institutional, basis. Kimmel does not dismiss many cases as isolated or idiosyncratic problems; rather, he says that a discussion about sex roles is a social (structural) issue.

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123 Ibid. 91.
124 Ibid. 91-92.
Gendered Institutions

Kimmel first attempts to account for the diversity, admits unbalanced power among men and women, and then claims that these problems must be addressed on an institutional and social level. Humans are not only hardwired in some sense at birth, but also born into a world that is conditioned, influenced, and gendered. The first place where this occurs is the family. Beyond the family are other gendered institutions, including, but not limited to, classrooms, workplaces, media, and religion. These gendered institutions have profound effects on society. For the purpose of this project, I focus mostly on the effects this has on men.

Schools

Historical experiences play a major role in determining social norms. Those norms linger and become so prevalent that individuals start to see what they believe, instead of believing what they see. One example of this phenomenon is an experiment in which half of the observers were told that a 9-month-old child they were watching was a boy and the other half were told the child was a girl. The observers, depending on their preconceived notions, interpreted the child’s behavior differently. When the child expressed agitation and cried, the observers either thought that “he” was angry or that “she” was afraid. If humans are susceptible to these kinds of conditioning, indentifying other places of influence becomes very important. Many sociologists have investigated these influences, so I will briefly highlight the results of these studies.

From nursery school and kindergarten classes to college and university classrooms, gender-specific assumptions and inequalities, whether implicit or explicit, are

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prevalent. Teachers at all levels encourage or discourage certain behaviors among boys and girls due to gender assumptions or expectations. Some examples are: assuming girls love reading and hate math and science, paying closer attention to boys because they cannot focus when studying math, reading, or writing, and allowing boys to shout out while instructing girls to raise hands. 126 These assumptions encourage students to yell out or draw back from class proceedings, because of the established atmosphere and not necessarily because students are hardwired to do so. 127 However, institutional assumptions have infiltrated so deeply into society that even the most observant often do not realize the influence of such conditioning.

T.V. Shows

Not long ago, former Harvard University President Lawrence H. Summers stated that gender roles are innate and significant and that one of the reasons women lag behind men in science and math careers is due to inborn differences. This sparked scholarly, and nonscholarly, outrage, which contributed to his resignation. Summers failed to acknowledge the role that social constructions play in producing such results. 128 The media, for example, play a significant role in reinforcing what children learn in school. At a young and impressionable age, children are exposed to many forms of media,


including TV shows, movies, and commercials. Often in these avenues of communication, boys play a central and valued role and girls “serve as backdrop.”\textsuperscript{129} While presenting a more diverse depiction of women (single, divorced, or widowed), the female characters are continually portrayed as domestic, superficial, and overly-emotional.\textsuperscript{130}

Many changes have occurred over the years to counter sex typing.\textsuperscript{131} In children’s books, for example, female characters are much more visible now. However, their portrayal is still reminiscent of the past. Often they are portrayed as passive and submissive; one depicts a female Nobel Prize winner, Marie Curie, as a great helpmate to her husband.\textsuperscript{132} As women are less often depicted as passive, submissive, and helpless domestic helpmates, a comparable depiction of men (i.e., as nurturing and caring) does not occur.\textsuperscript{133} Kimmel describes this resistance: “As in real life, women in our storybooks have left home and gone off to work, but men still have enormous trouble coming back home.”\textsuperscript{134}

\textsuperscript{129} Kimmel, \textit{The Gendered Society}, 165.

\textsuperscript{130} Ibid., 165; contemporary t.v. shows portray women as (desperate) housewives, gossip girls, superficial bachelorettes, and “madder, badder” brides.

\textsuperscript{131} For example, by the 1970’s, many female characters represented non-traditional jobs, personalities, and attitudes; less subservient to men (Rhoda and Cagney and Lacey), more assertive (Roseanne), and sometimes not especially “nice” (Murphy Brown); Ibid., 165.


\textsuperscript{134} Ibid., 164.
Workplace

The way workplaces are structured adds to the perpetuation of what individuals learn in their families, schools, and the media. Gender discrimination and sex segregation at workplaces are no longer as obvious or prevalent as they once were. For example, more women are in the labor force, more men and women are starting to work in fields not formerly assigned to them, and dual-earning couples have become the norm in the postmodern world. However, many of the old norms still linger, although they are less apparent and better disguised.

In today’s society, “womanly” characteristics are somehow perceived as the cause of the wage gap between the sexes. That is, women are not seen as needing money or work or as having the same aptitudes or capabilities as men to do a certain job. As such, “Of the nearly 60 million women in the labor force in the United States,” about “30 percent worked in just ten of the 503 occupations listed by the U.S. Census.” Whereas occupations dominated by women generally pay much less, the lower pay does not appear to correspond to the nature of the jobs. In reality, women are not paid less because the nature of their jobs requires less work.

Ibid., 181-184; Men often have reported that they felt threatened and opportunity is exhausted by the increasing numbers of women in the workforce. A similar phenomenon took place when women intruded and invaded men’s domain, like the WACS (Women’s Army Corps) and the labor force. Joe L. Dubbert, A Man’s Place: Masculinity in Transition (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1979), 1-3, 250-251.

Ibid., 187.

For example, when clerical work was considered to be a man’s job, clerks were paid reasonably well. However, when the gender composition of the work changed in the United States and Great Britain, and women were doing most of the clerical work, clerks’ wages fell. According to Cohn, “This is a result, not a cause, of the changing gender composition of the work force.” In fact, it is often the case that organizations do not pay different amounts for different jobs but pay differently for different genders. Even when women enter high-paying fields, they are prevented from moving “up the ladder” by the ”glass ceiling.” One recent study showed that a male-dominated environment makes women who break through the glass ceiling more likely to give mentoring and support and promotional assistance to male subordinates than female ones (reaffirming the Queen Bee syndrome).

The reality of the gendered workplace, however, is not necessarily all good news for men. One of the negative outcomes for men is that they occupy the worst and most dangerous jobs: what the South Koreans call 3-D jobs: dirty, dangerous, and difficult. According to Warren Farrell, men are also victims in the current structure: while women suffer from the glass ceiling, men suffer from the “glass cellar.” Of the 250 occupations

138 Ibid., 190.
140 The acknowledgment of and the proposal to improve upon such discrepancies in pay, President Obama called for a “National Equal Pay Enforcement Task Force,” in his State of the Union Address on January 27th 2010. “He said, “We’re going to crack down on violations of equal pay laws—so that women get equal pay for an equal day’s work.” For a full text version of the address, [http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/remarks-president-state-union-address](http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/remarks-president-state-union-address)
141 Ibid., 192-197.
ranked by the *Job Related Almanac*, “All the hazardous occupations are virtually all-male,” and “the twenty-five jobs often conceived as dangerous or ‘worst’ jobs (such as truck driver, roofer, boilermaker, construction workers, welder, and football player) are almost all men…” and “More than “90 percent of all occupational deaths happen to men.”¹⁴³ Men’s insistence on the traditional notion of masculinity allowed them to create this link between the worst jobs and men but “men are not very happy with the world they have created.”¹⁴⁴

Despite these statistics and the obvious dissatisfaction that comes with these jobs, men fiercely fight to prevent women from entering these fields. There are at least two reasons for this resistance: Notwithstanding these dangers—or because of these dangers—men’s jobs pay better than those almost exclusively occupied by women. Thus, it is hardly reasonable to claim that men are the real victims.¹⁴⁵ Also, deeply rooted gender ideology plays a significant role. Men often relate to each other through obsessive competitiveness, for example, because they identify competition as part of the masculine domain.¹⁴⁶ Thus, men may want to keep the male “club,” or realm, exclusive.¹⁴⁷

¹⁴³ Warren Farrell, *The Myth of Male Power* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1993), 105-106; While I strongly disagree with his anti-feminist approach and with his conclusion that men are the real victims of discrimination, not women, I do think that there are negative consequences for men from the gendered structure of the workplace. Quote from Ibid., 197.


¹⁴⁵ Ibid., 197.

¹⁴⁶ Dubbert, *A Man’s Place*, 4.

Whatever the reason, and no matter how dangerous, difficult, dirty, and harmful the job, men continue to fiercely protect their territory.

**Persistent Masculinity**

The way humans think about maleness is socially constructed within certain parameters of biological givens. In that sense, even if men have the dominant social power, most do not feel that they have this power. Men, only insofar as the social power is socially maintained and controlled by men, indirectly reap benefits of it. Hence, men struggle to maintain a self-image that is powerful because most do not have much power. In the process of maintaining a powerful image—whether it be restricting emotionality, trying to be successful, being physically and financially powerful—men tend to hurt themselves by blocking their access to vital social support networks, withholding their nurturing and giving support to others, and limiting and perverting the various forms of their sexual expression, through, primarily, the inducement of sexual anxiety and the perpetration of sexual abuse.¹⁴⁸

This process, often inherited from one’s father, begins at an early age. Fathers do not want their children to have problems. Well-intentioned fathers and mothers “admonish their sons for feminine behavior because they … believe they are assisting their sons … to go it alone … without realizing some of the emotional costs such as ‘relational dread’ … or feeling emotionally adrift. In the same vein many well-intended sons trust their parents’ guidance.”¹⁴⁹ The aim of allowing or encouraging men to succeed, to be powerful, to do it alone, and to restrict their emotions, though well-intended, is to

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¹⁴⁹ Christopher Blazina, “Gender-role-conflicted Men’s Poor Parental Attachment,” 262.
make men tough. However, “in reality it may actually leave them with a sense of psychic fragileness due to relational disconnection and the prescription of overly restricted gender roles.”

The consequences for men are persistent worries about success, power, and competition, restrictive emotionality, restricted affectionate behavior among men, and conflict between work and family relations, all of which yield a number of damaging results. These can include “maladaptive behavior, beliefs, and attitudes, … anxiety, depression, difficulty with intimate relationships, stress, negative attitudes toward help seeking, well-being, substance use, self-esteem, and poor attachment with parents.”

Philaretou and Allen also noted some harmful results, such as

relative inability to experience intimacy, closeness, and emotional connectedness with their significant others, … general inclination to resort to anger and violence when faced with frustrating situations, … consistent and persistent refraining from house-care and childcare work and … tendency to consider sexuality and emotionality as two separate and distinct entities to be pursued for their own sake.

Ibid., 262.


Thus, attaining the masculine image is, on the one hand, a place where men feel like men, prove their manhood, and reinforce their identity. On the other hand, it is also where men ultimately feel unsuccessful and unable to live up to the masculine image and where they are left to deal with damaging effects as a consequence of the resulting anxiety.\textsuperscript{153}

\textbf{Refutation: Mythopoetic Men’s Movement}

Some have responded negatively to these scientific responses. One example of a movement that opposes these findings is the Mythopoetic Men’s Movement (MMM hereafter).\textsuperscript{154} Due to his work \textit{Iron John}, Robert Bly is often credited with launching or leading the movement.\textsuperscript{155} Generally speaking, MMM engages in healing for damaged men. Proponents for the movement often see themselves as victims and consider such a situation a “crisis.”\textsuperscript{156} They became victims due to challenges in traditional and

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\textsuperscript{154} Eric Magnuson, “Creating Culture in the Mythopoetic Men's Movement: An Ethnographic Study of Micro-Level Leadership and Socialization,” \textit{Journal of Men's Studies} 15.1 (Winter 2007): 31-56; There are many movements and articles, albeit in varying degrees in the conservative spectrum, which share similar philosophical viewpoints with that of MMM: including the “Male Studies Movement” supported by scholars like Lionel Tiger, along with male ministry advocates like Brandon J. O’Brien, and authors such as Brett McKay, and W. Bradford Wilcox and David Blankenhorn (from Institute for American Values).
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\textsuperscript{156} Michael S. Kimmel and Michael Kaufman, “Weekend Warrior: The New Men’s Movement” in Kimmel ed. \textit{The Politics of Manhood}, 16; Aaron Kipnis says, “After decades of unrestrained male-bashing, men have good cause for anger toward the women’s movement. This is not a backlash; it is a legitimate response to abuse of academic, social, media, and literary power.” Aaron Kipnis, “The Postfeminist Men’s Movement” in the same book, 280; Also note that there are organizations that take up the antifeminist agenda, including Coalition for Free Men; the National Congress for Men; Men’s Rights Inc.; and Men Achieving Liberation and Equality; See Michael S. Kimmel and Amy Aronson eds, \textit{Men and Masculinities: A Social, Cultural, and Historical Encyclopedia} (Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, Inc., 2004), 37.
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fundamental beliefs about men and men’s place in society.\textsuperscript{157} The challenge, in part, comes from changes in their economic situation, as economic autonomy has been the hallmark of traditional definitions of masculinity (e.g., control over one’s labor, the product of that labor, manly self-reliance in the workplace, etc.).\textsuperscript{158} Perhaps, however, no group is more responsible, according to MMM, than the perpetrators: women (and the women’s movement) and homosexuals (and their movements). Because MMM centers on the belief of that men and women are essentially different, groups that feminize, or make “wimps,” out of men must be contested and the solution lies in retrieving a deep, essential manhood called “Deep Masculine”.\textsuperscript{159}

Harvey C. Mansfield, a Harvard University political philosopher, has stated that active and assertive manliness is widespread, and people still find it attractive today.\textsuperscript{160} In his initial effort to define manliness, Mansfield identifies two elements of the term manliness that society finds attractive: confidence and the ability to command competently. Both of these characteristics are exemplified by characters like John Wayne\textsuperscript{161} and lead men to be assertive.\textsuperscript{162} Mansfield acknowledges that not everyone finds manliness and assertiveness attractive, and certain characteristics of manliness can be negative.\textsuperscript{163} Notwithstanding these possible flaws, manliness, with its confidence in

\textsuperscript{157} Ibid., 17.
\textsuperscript{158} Ibid., 17.
\textsuperscript{159} Ibid., 21; Cf. Ibid., 17.
\textsuperscript{160} Harvey C. Mansfield, \textit{Manliness} (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2006), 16.
\textsuperscript{161} Ibid., 16-17.
\textsuperscript{162} Ibid., 51-81.
\textsuperscript{163} Ibid., 225, 239.
the face of risk, leadership in governing, admiration for heroes, and aggressiveness in wars, is seen to be ultimately what leads to a successful and stable society.\textsuperscript{164} This is why men have always been in power and women have not.\textsuperscript{165} What hinders the progress of societies, then, is that which makes society lack manliness: feminism, the example par excellence.

Mansfield concluded, “Feminism is the culmination of rational control yet at the same time radically opposed to it. It culminates [sic] rational control by abolishing the sex difference, facilitating the management of human beings by removing the grand source of irrational insistence, manliness.”\textsuperscript{166} Sex difference, however, is a clearly observable fact, according to Mansfield, “of plain biology showing that nature seems to put the equipment of aggression in the hands of males rather than females. Men have more strength, size, and agility than females.”\textsuperscript{167}

Bly and his followers, however, do not believe that men inherit this masculinity through a biological process. While maintaining that masculinity is an “inner essence,” Bly and others hold that it must be earned or achieved, the success of which depends solely on validation by other men.\textsuperscript{168} The consequence of such a view is the persistence

\textsuperscript{164} Ibid., 23, 211, 233 and passim.

\textsuperscript{165} Mansfield thinks that Margaret Thatcher and Elizabeth I are “manly women” but these are rare. For the most part women are “less active politically, less interested in politics, less well informed about politics than men. Just as women are less likely to know the names of players in the National Football League (or even the names of the teams!), so too in politics they know less because they care less than men do.” Ibid., 79-80, 151-152; Cf. Kierski and Blazina, “The Male Fear of the Feminine and Its Effects on Counseling and Psychotherapy,” 155-72.

\textsuperscript{166} Ibid., 238.

\textsuperscript{167} Ibid., 42; For a critical review of this book, see Martha C. Nussbaum, “Man Overboard,” \textit{The New Republic} (June 22, 2006). \url{http://www.tnr.com/article/books-and-arts/man-overboard}

of such images of masculinity in today’s society. What is puzzling is why so much effort is needed to activate and maintain this form of masculinity, especially if men are supposed to have already obtained it. The answer, as MMM proponents would probably say, is that much energy is required to achieve manhood because the larger society has feminized and made wimps out of men. If left alone, the Deep Masculine would work itself out—although MMM proponents would continue to insist that it takes the work of a man to achieve masculinity and obtain validation from fellow men.

The highlights of MMM are as follows:

- the loss of true manliness, in modern culture; the need for men to be ‘initiated’ into manliness by other men, their symbolic or actual fathers; the need to separate from women, and revive ancient masculine rituals; the need to reclaim and celebrate the lost elements of masculinity such as the Warrior, the King, the Magician, and of course the Wild Man.

According to Kimmel and Kaufman, the men who inherited a prescription for manhood “that included economic autonomy, public patriarchy, and the frontier safety valve” are the ones affected most psychologically: “middle-class, straight, white men from their late twenties through their early forties.” That is, men are continually told that they are entitled to partake in manly virtue and power (and most privileged groups are, in fact, from that group), yet individually, they feel powerless. In other words, many men simply do not feel that they reap the benefits of male, or white, privilege. They feel

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169 Some parts of the media, including commercials, continue to tell us many ways in which men can become manly. Programs on “Spike Channel,” the numerous episodes of “Married with Children,” and many beer commercials, including and especially the “Men Should Act like Men” series from Milwaukee’s Best commercials, are all examples of such portrayals by the media. They often tell us that men should not express our emotions nor watch what we eat, be a perfectly capable handyman, put men related activities before the family, love skinny women, and deem marriage as hell on earth.


defensive and stand accused. Much of that, MMM advocates often feel, is the result of the infiltration of women into their privileged space.\textsuperscript{172} However, Kimmel and Kaufman concludes that MMM is “the cry of anguish of privileged American men” and that it is not surprising that the “overwhelming majority of the men who are currently involved in the new men’s movement are precisely middle class, middle-aged, white and heterosexual.”\textsuperscript{173}

Notwithstanding the simplistic thinking and anxiety over losing the homo-social milieu that men once enjoyed, there may be some helpful insights to be drawn from MMM. I acknowledge that there are some general biological differences between men and women, although not to the extent that MMM presents. Also, as an Asian man, I empathize with socially marginalized men who feel powerless and who do not feel the overwhelming male advantage. Finally, I acknowledge that it is generally true that much of history highlights the fact that men have been in charge of leading much of the world. However, I would remind the proponents of MMM that this phenomenon does not prove men’s natural ability to lead or women’s instinct to follow. Rather, such a result stems from the differentiation that society constructed.

**Explaining the Omnipresence of Sexual Differentiation**

According to Barbara F. Reskin, no matter the group or society, dominant groups have a tendency to remain privileged because they write the rules.\textsuperscript{174} The maintenance of the status quo happens by a process called differentiation, or separating one’s self from

\textsuperscript{172} Ibid., 18; Cf. Kierski and Blazina, “The Male Fear of the Feminine and Its Effects on Counseling and Psychotherapy,” 155-72.

\textsuperscript{173} Ibid., 18.

\textsuperscript{174} Reskin, “Bringing the Men Back In,” 60.
one’s subordinates. The differentiation “assumes, amplifies, and even creates psychological and behavioral differences in order to ensure that the subordinate group differs from the dominant group.” This phenomenon is not specific to issues of gender, but is true of any dominant or subdominant relationships (e.g., white/black, Western/Far Eastern, upper class/lower class, clergy/lay, etc.).

Moreover, the difference is often hierarchal. That is, not only are differences presented as limited and specific to a certain sex, but male characteristics are viewed as superior. Table 3 shows a highly generalized list of conspicuous descriptors that generally follow common attributions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rational</td>
<td>Emotional</td>
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<td>Weak</td>
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<td>Independent</td>
<td>Dependent</td>
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<td>Vigorous</td>
<td>Frail</td>
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<td>Hard</td>
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<td>Aggressive</td>
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<td>Adventurous</td>
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<td>Abstract</td>
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<td>Public</td>
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<td>Doing</td>
<td>Being</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mechanical</td>
<td>Organic</td>
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<td>Conquering</td>
<td>Nurturing</td>
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Table 3. Conspicuous Descriptors of Gender Attributions

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175 Ibid., 62.
177 Welch, Macho Isn’t Enough, 16.
178 Ibid., 16.
Society usually favors “hegemonic masculinity” according to the admittedly biased list in Table 3. Sometimes definitions for each sex vary depending on history, geography, time, race, ethnicity, and culture. However different the definitions are the dominant group often exaggeratedly differentiates itself to maintain the status quo by attributing itself with favorable characteristics.

Such a phenomenon is less visible in modern society—either because the dominant groups claim that they value subordinates’ work or because they allow subordinates into the dominant realm, using other forms of differentiation within that realm (i.e., physical and behavioral or social differentiation). Of course, there is nothing wrong with valuing others’ work, but the valuing becomes suspect if it is used to justify the inevitability of differentiation as the *sine qua non* of dominance.

Such an invisible hand of extreme differentiation is sometimes made visible by scholars who look at high-paying jobs, less popular jobs, how workers are evaluated, and

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180 Note for example, the intercultural diversity in defining masculinity in Fred Jandt and Heather Hundley, “Intercultural Dimensions of Communicating Masculinities.” *Journal of Men's Studies* 15.2 (Spring 2007): 216-31.

181 For example, JPII insists that while the Church “justifies women's access to public functions… the true advancement of women requires that clear recognition be given to the value of their maternal and family role… Therefore the Church can and should help modern society by tirelessly insisting that the work of women in the home be recognized and respected by all in its irreplaceable value… [and] …society must be structured in such a way that wives and mothers are not in practice compelled to work outside the home,” *Familiaris consortio*, 23; Cf. Lisa Sowle Cahill, *Family: A Christian Social Perspective* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2000), 91.


183 Ibid., 63-64.
who is in charge of performance evaluations.\textsuperscript{184} When differentiation is made visible, it often looms large.\textsuperscript{185} Hence, the notion of sex difference is perpetuated by the dominant group (e.g., Whites, Westerns, upper classes, clergy, managers, etc.) using the same method, i.e. extreme differentiation, to maintain power.

**Conclusion**

In this chapter, I have shown that sex difference exists but pales in comparison to differences among men and women as separate groups. The dissimilarities are exaggerated in an effort to keep the status quo via gendered institutions. This practice becomes embedded in ideologies, causing the problem that I am addressing here. Some, including Mansfield and Bly, find men’s disempowerment (by feminism) the source of what is damaging to men, which is seeing this problem according to what sociologists call a “causal model.”\textsuperscript{186} To see the bigger picture and go beyond superficial causes, one must locate the foundational cause, or what sociologists call the “basic cause.”\textsuperscript{187} The basic cause of the norm of exaggerated sex difference is not men as such, or Whites or the upper class. The basic cause of such social constructions is any dominant group’s attempt to maintain its power by using differentiation. Barbara Reskin calls for the structure of dominance, from which other causes flow, to be changed.\textsuperscript{188} The dominant

\textsuperscript{184} Ibid., 69-71; Kimmel, The Gendered Society, 193-197.

\textsuperscript{185} Ibid., 71-73.

\textsuperscript{186} Ibid., 59; Cf. Kierski and Blazina, “The Male Fear of the Feminine and Its Effects on Counseling and Psychotherapy,” 155-72.

\textsuperscript{187} Ibid., 59-60.

\textsuperscript{188} Ibid., 73-75.
group, she suggests, must pay for keeping the status quo and there must be incentives to divide resources equitably.\textsuperscript{189}

The most basic cause of the problem mentioned above is in the ideology and its complex interaction with other ideas, rewards, social structures, and cultures. Fundamentally, the ideology and the social structure flowing from it are at the root of many problems, and until this base can be uprooted, the most basic cause will linger. If the only way to a true solution is to improve upon the basic cause, then the ideological structure must change alongside, or perhaps prior to, socio-structural change. Gender hierarchy and differentiation, like racial hierarchy and differentiation, must be rethought and reconstructed as a small step in the right direction. Minimally, then, false difference must be made visible, and the notion of gender must be reconstructed.

It would make sense, then, that the dominant masculine groups try to maintain the status quo by exaggeratedly differentiating themselves from their feminine counterparts. Not surprisingly, when such a polarized and differentiated masculine image is threatened, men often overreact.\textsuperscript{190} Such was the case in the United States during the period after the military defeat in Vietnam, when a hypermasculine paramilitary culture emerged.\textsuperscript{191}

However, the result of attempting to maintain dominance by such differentiation is either the emergence of the notion that masculinity is in crisis (as in MMM) or a

\textsuperscript{189} Ibid., 74.

\textsuperscript{190} In the name of self-defense from the threat of femininity, for example, some men have become “classic chauvinists.” Dubbert, \textit{A Man’s Place}, 3.

hypermasculinity. In order to avoid such reactionary results, one must explore what true masculinity means, not how to maintain the status quo.

There is nothing inherently wrong with being active, desiring to succeed, and working hard to climb the ladder. Nevertheless, these characteristics are neither something specific to men, nor are they necessarily healthy or helpful for all men. According to Joe L. Dubbert,

There was nothing wrong with physical activity, or being aggressive, or winning, but problems arose when men discovered that these qualities did not make them more manly. Such behavior did not enhance their value to a company, alleviate marriage tensions, turn them into adequate lovers, or raise their status in any substantial way. So called masculine activity simply did not create an attitude or style that could make any man successful.

Hence, not only is the traditional hegemonic masculine mystique false, unjust, and unhealthy, it also is not practical or effective.

Although this reality is largely true in Western culture, it is not limited to the West. The concepts and trends developed in this chapter are applicable in non-Western countries and cultures as well. As a demonstration of this, I explore their applicability to non-Western examples. Thus, before reconstructing masculinity, I examine another culture as an illustration: that of South Korea.

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CHAPTER FIVE

MASCULINITY IN SOUTH KOREA

Like the Roman Catholic tradition, Korean culture is multifaceted and a product of myriad influences. Hence, it would be impossible—and misleading—to point out a single cause for Koreans’ attitudes toward masculinity. The current norms of Korean masculinity are the result of a longstanding tradition of customs, ideology, and inculcation. While it is impossible to find one cause for these assumptions, it is possible to point out the major factors that influence them.

In this chapter, I aim to show that the Korean notion of gender is deeply rooted, starting in the mythic stories about the genesis of the nation. While some matrilocal practices existed between 1392–1910 CE, patricentric Neo-Confucian ideologies were received in an unequivocal and ubiquitous manner by the late 19th Century. However, as the nation went through a kind of a militarization resulting from being attacked and colonized (1895-1945), and forced to accept the US military policies (1945-1948), the military culture would have a greater influence on constructions of Korea, including gender constructions. I would argue that the example par excellence of such a phenomenon occurring today is the training process for the mandatory military service in Korea. I will show the correlation of this kind of gendering institution to another male-dominated institution, the Roman Catholic Church in Korea, since seminarians must also serve in the military. By the end of the chapter, I will make visible the nearly linear
relationship between the two institutions and suggest further implications and possibilities for improvement.

**Gender Roles in Korea**

When Koreans refer to the “old ways” (*gusik*) or to something “traditional” (*jeontongjeokin*),¹ they often use the terms that allude to the ways of the Chosŏn (Yi) Dynasty (1392–1910). The founder of the dynasty adopted neo-Confucianism as an official political ideology, which eventually found its way to the core of Korean culture. The lasting impact of this ideology is very much present today. However, because there are many assumptions about and misunderstandings of the Chosŏn period and Confucianism, an overview of these subjects is necessary.²

Korea’s history goes back nearly 4,000 years³ before the Chosŏn period. Attitudes about gender fluctuated during this time, and women sometimes ruled. The mythology surrounding early Korean history, namely the Tan’gun myth, also reveals Koreans’ attitudes about men and women.⁴ According to the Tan’gun myth,

illegitimate Hwanung [literally “heavenly male”] was interested in ruling the human world, and his father [Hwanin] allowed him to descend to earth

¹For the Romanization of Korean I will make use of both Revised Romanization and the McCune-Reischauer Romanization. I will only use the Revised Romanization for most of the modern and commonly used Korean terms and the McCune-Reischauer Romanization for the historical/scholarly terms and names.

²In contemporary Korea, people often mistakenly refer to Chosŏn period or Confucianism as if there were only a monolithic attitude or policy during the 500+ year period or only one version of Confucianism.

³Of course this is an inaccurate number. The traditional date given for the foundation of the oldest Korean state “Kochosŏn” is 2333 BCE. “5,000 years of history” of Korea is a common saying in Korea. However, these dates are merely traditional dates and one should use these dates with an understanding that there is a great historical ambiguity. Note the bibliography of contestation over the longer history of Korea in Elaine H. Kim and Chungmoo Choi eds. Dangerous Women: Gender and Korean Nationalism (New York: Routledge, 1998), 61.

⁴That is not to say that such attitudes were the existing viewpoints at the time of Tan’gun. The story is found in books from Koryŏ Dynasty (918-1392) and hence it reflects attitudes of the authors from the Koryŏ period.
with his entourage and magical power. One day, a bear and a tiger anxious to become humans asked Hwanung to fulfill their wish. He ordered them to stay in a cave without sunlight and to eat garlic for one hundred days. While the tiger failed to observe this command, the bear patiently followed it and became a woman. Then Hwanung married the bear-woman and begot Tan’gun.\(^5\)

In this story, “The woman is merely depicted as the bearer of the heir, thereby suggesting that woman’s only contribution to the creation of the Korean nation was the provision of a proto-nationalist womb.”\(^6\)

There are many stories like this one, as well as different stories. There are so many different influences on gender roles prior to the Chosŏn period that I cannot explore them all here. Thus, I will give a brief overview of the period with which Koreans are very familiar; that is, the period to which many refer when talking about the gender attitudes Korean have today and which had a powerful impact on modern Korean attitudes toward gender: the Chosŏn Dynasty.

It is difficult to make an accurate overarching claim about the Chosŏn Period (1392-1910) or Confucianism because such a claim could take on different meanings depending on which aspect is being discussed. Much can change during a period of over 500 years. The early stages of the dynasty have clear historical differences from the late Chosŏn period. In the early Chosŏn period, for example, women enjoyed some benefits, many of which were lost in the later period. According to books of genealogy from the early Chosŏn Dynasty, offspring were recorded in the order of birth, instead of recording all male offspring first, and the details about women’s descendants were recorded in the same way as men’s. Sons were not adopted, even when women were unable to bear a son,  

\(^5\) Kim and Choi, 40-41.  
\(^6\) Ibid., 41.
and women were allowed to remarry just as men were. Moreover, there is also evidence of newly married men, and newborn babies, living in the mother/wife’s side of the household. Although it is inaccurate to say that the early Chosŏn period was egalitarian, these policies were quite different from those of the late Chosŏn period.

As mentioned in chapter 4, the “traditional” American family (gender role) is highly misunderstood. Similarly, the notion of the traditional Korean family is often misconstrued. Later in the Chosŏn period, jus sanguinis, which was centered on men, became much stronger and absolute due to the emphasis on the family line stressed by neo-Confucian ideology. This philosophy became a statewide ideology in the late Chosŏn period. In his article, “Pre-Confucian Korean Society as the Role Model for Today’s Society,” Mark Peterson argued that the traditional Korean family, defined by the predominance of the eldest son (in ritual and primogeniture), absolute agnatic adoption, patri-local marriage, and single surname villages were inventions after the Confucianized system (i.e., after 1650). In pre-Confucianized Korea, “the true Korean family system was characterized by equal inheritance for sons and daughters, equal access to ritual by

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7 Hye Jung Cho, Korean Woman and Man [hankookoe yŏsŏngwa namsŏng ] (Seoul: Munhakgwa Jiseongsa, 1988), 70-71. See also Edward W. Wagner, “Two early Genealogies and Women’s Status in Early Yi Dynasty Korea,” and Mark Peterson, “Women without Sons: A Measure of Social Change in Yi Dynasty Korea,” both in L. Kendall and M. Peterson eds., Korean Women: View from the Inner Room, (New Haven: Little Rock, 1983). Often, modern Koreans assume that women had no rights or that newly married couples always moved to, and always went about their business in, the paternal households. However, there is enough evidence from the early Chosŏn that shows births and the livelihood of newlyweds taking place in the maternal households. The most famous example of this fact is of Sin Saimdang and Yi-i (YulGok). SaimDang used to represent, again because of modern assumptions about Chosŏn, the ideal women according to the Neo-Confucian ideals: patient, obedient, passive, child-rearing, domestic, etc. However, recent researches show that that simply was not the case. See Cho, Korean Woman and Man, 71.

8 This is a rule by which a person’s citizenship and social class is determined by that of his or her parents (by “blood”).

9 Mark Peterson, “Pre-Confucian Korean Society as the Role Model for Today’s Society,” in Gender, Experience, and History: POSCO International Symposium on Korean History [Chetŏ, Kyŏnghŏm, Yŏksa] (Seoul: Sogang University Press, 2004), 91-105 especially 96.
men and women, no need for agnatic adoption if a daughter was born and various styles of adoption were possible for the childless, and marriage was ambilocal … and kinship was reckoned multilaterally.”^10

Just as policies varied from the early to late Chosŏn period, the application of neo-Confucian ideology varied. Neo-Confucianism refers to the Confucian thought that thrived on the emphasis of the Four Books (Analects of Confucius, Mencius, the Great Learning, and Centrality and Commonality, commonly known as the Doctrine of the Mean) by Chu Hsi (1130–1200) from the Song Dynasty period of China.^11 For the purposes of this dissertation, the difference between neo-Confucianism and ancient Confucianism is not significantly important. What are most relevant to this project is how neo-Confucianism was manifested in Chosŏn, what was emphasized, and what the focal points became for Koreans.^12

Sŏnglihak

The main ideas of neo-Confucianism in Korea (called sŏnglihak) are as follows. Neo-Confucianism has two main branches: a political ideology and a vast system of social norms and values. All involve cultivating oneself. Individuals involved in politics cultivate and accumulate virtues through moral self-mastery; thus, when they serve the people, they do so morally and rightly. The system of social norms and values, which

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^10 Ibid., 96.

^11 For the following information see Yang Jong-Hoe’s “Changing Values Cause Ideological Confusion,” in Kim Kyong-Dong and the Korea Herald eds. Social Change in Korea vol 2 (Gyeonggi-do, Korea: Jimoondang, 2008), 86-98.

^12 In fact, there were differences of opinion from the prominent Neo-Confucian scholars at the time. For more on this conflict, see YongDŏk Lee, The Great Encyclopedia of Korean National Culture 12 [Hankookminjokmunhwa Daebaekwasajŏn] (Gyeonggi-do, Korea: WooingJin, 1991, 1996), 431-438.
directly relates to self-cultivation, should come before a discussion of political ideology.\(^{13}\)

As a system of social norms and values, neo-Confucianism has six ethical principles: (a) cultivating oneself and making others comfortable; (b) sincerity and reverence; (c) three cardinal virtues and five moral imperatives (samkang o-ryun); (d) loyalty and filial piety; (e) forgiveness; and (f) faithfulness and righteousness. The three cardinal virtues state that there is an obligation between ruler and subject, parent and child (son), and husband and wife to which all must adhere. The five moral imperatives, or guides, for interpersonal relationships are “righteousness between sovereign and subject, proper rapport between father and son, separate functions between husband and wife, proper recognition of the sequence of birth between elder and younger brothers, and faithfulness [among] friends.” These five imperatives, along with loyalty and filial piety, are essential for individuals and social institutions.\(^{14}\)

As these principles gained power and became accepted as the philosophy of ruling by “cultivated,” or educated, scholars, and as the practice eventually trickled beyond centralized administrative bureaucracy to the common folk, major social institutions began to be transformed. The family and kinship system began to change from that of the early Chosŏn period, which was greatly influenced by the previous Koryŏ (918-1392). The Koryŏ system, which was bilateral, somewhat egalitarian, and endogamous, began to

\(^{13}\) Dong and the Korea Herald eds., Social Change, 88.

\(^{14}\) Ibid., 89. It is noteworthy that in any Confucian system, certainly including SŏngLiHak, the domestic sphere extends directly to the political/public realm. Hence, loyalty and filial piety was inseparable and should be observed strictly in both realms equally.
shift to a neo-Confucian patrilineal, patriarchal, and exogamous system. Furthermore, agnatic kinship and the patriarchal and patrilineal system were implemented through ancestral worship. The oldest legitimate son inherited ritual-related privileges, along with his parents’ land and slaves. Moreover, because individualism was overlooked for the sake of the collective, individuals often were evaluated not according to their individual characteristics, but according to their specific relationships within the social network.

Remnants of hierarchal, patricentral, authoritarian, orthodoxical, and network-centered attitudes and privileges, which result in obsession about the social network and power and the silencing and submission of women for the sake of the collective, are alive today and have serious implications for gender relations in contemporary Korea.

One aspect of neo-Confucianism in Korea is its claims about cosmology and human nature. At the foundation of these claims is the principle of ŭm-yang (commonly known as yin-yang). The cosmos is in harmonious ŭm-yang (or darkness and light, respectively), a principle that is clearly visible in women and men. Men (yang/light) represent the origins of the universe, the heavens, movement and activity, and strength. Women (ŭm/darkness) are created, the earthly preservers of the created, quiet, and soft.

15 Ibid., 90.

16 Ibid., 90-91. See also, Cho, Korean Woman and Man, 71-72. In this sense, I disagree with Professor Yang Jong-Hoe. He is quite positive about the possibility of the old Confucian value system disappearing. Also, he asserts that the family structure has changed “from consanguine to conjugal and from patriarchal to egalitarian.” Ibid., 92, 98. While I agree that Koreans have made great strides, the value system is far from disappearing and egalitarian families are rare. According to Professors Eun Ki-Soo, Lee On-Jook, and Lee Mi-Jeong, researches show that the value system are still quite “conservative,” women are still held back, and women suffer greatly from the double burden of the “second-shift.” Ibid., 146-156; 167-183. I will make this case more extensively, and the implications for men, later on in this chapter.

17 Note the consistency of man/heavenly, woman/earthly theme in the earlier mythical story of Tan’gun about the creation of the first Koreans. Also, the custom of referring to men in terms of yang and women ŭm, is still widely practiced without much criticisms or reflections from the general populace.
This cosmology became systematically predominant in Korean society and eventually became the ideology of *namjonyôbi* (man is respected and woman is lowly) and *samjongjido* (“three subordinations” of women).

Thus, the cosmological and biological realities of sex are considered destiny, and women must be satisfied with playing a role as helpers. Such attitudes were so strong that even in the poorest of houses there was strict separation of inner rooms (*naesil*, the women’s realm) and outer rooms (*sarang*, the men’s realm).¹⁸ Thus, boundaries existed that Korean women could not cross, either ideologically or physically.

In sum, during the Chosôn Dynasty, neo-Confucianism took on a form that the ruling elites preferred and that later manifested itself on a national scale, emphasizing certain ideals about orthodoxy and a network of androcentrically hierarchal and authoritative viewpoints. The ideology also incorporated a cosmology of active men and receptive women. Consequently, corresponding norms and expectations about men and women were set.

Even after drastic changes that occurred after the last years of the Chosôn period—such as the fall of the Yi dynasty, the annexation and colonization by Japan (1910–45), and the Korean War (1950–53)—Confucian values and norms remained strong. Despite outside influences and national modernization, general attitudes toward masculinity and femininity remained intact. Men continued to be in the outer, valued realms (e.g., the public, the workplace, etc.) and women remained in the inner, less-valued realms (e.g., private spaces, the home, etc.).

Korean Masculinity—*Taejangbu*

The fact that general attitudes toward gender remained intact does not necessarily mean that there is a monolithic definition for each gender. Outside influences and modernization heavily influenced Korean gendered thinking, according to the realities of the period and class divisions. As in many societies, Korean sexual mores were continuously shifting. For example, Vladimir Tikhonov compared and found similarities between Chinese and Korean shifts in definitions of masculinity.\(^{19}\) A Chinese person may associate traditional, archetypical masculinity with a handsome man with a beard and muscles who practices boxing and fencing. However, during a different time, the Chinese favored scholarly men who were delicate, hypersensitive bookworms.\(^{20}\) Similarly, historical socio-political developments in Korea also caused great shifts in gender thinking, including the dominant masculine image.

Tikhonov found somewhat dichotomous images of masculinity in Korea, similar to the shift he found in China. On one hand, fighting prowess and respect for fierce, tough manliness, associated with the lower, common class (*ch’ŏn* or *paeksŏng*),\(^{21}\) was accepted as part of being masculine.\(^{22}\) On the other hand, having exemplary study skills

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\(^{21}\) *Paeksŏng* usually denotes the “subjects” or the people in general. However, according to James B. Palais, it, along with *ch’ŏn*, is used to designate the lower class in opposition to the term designated for the higher class *yangban*. See his *Confucian Statecraft and Korean Institutions: YuHyŏngWŏn and the late Chŏsun Dynasty 27* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1996), 1023; One may also bifurcate them in terms of “sangkôr” and “sŏnbi,” respectively.

\(^{22}\) Ibid., 1029, 1037-1040; The limits of this chapter does not allow me to discuss many related stories from *Samguk sagi* (*Historical Records of the Three Kingdoms*) that exemplifies some of the Koreans notions of heroes (*yŏngung*) or good fellows (*hohan*), mirroring Chinese notions of *yingxiong* and *haohan*. 
and self-control, along with learning free from passion, balance, restraint, and, especially, adherence to moral and ritual norms, associated with the higher classes (yangban, or even wealthy chungin, “middle people”), meant a man was taegangbu (i.e., a manly person) or a true kunja (a lofty gentleman or a sage).\(^{23}\) Even in these dichotomous definitions of masculinity was the common patriarchal belief that men had the birthright to command the family.\(^{24}\) Filial piety toward parents was demanded from offspring, and was required of wives to their husbands. The state (which was the family writ large) had the same kind of absolute authority, demanding the same kind of obedience and loyalty from its subjects.\(^{25}\)

Tikhonov stated that these different images merged to form a syncretistic archetypical male. The old kunja paradigm of masculinity was “being appropriated for the new aims,” whereby physical strength became a prerequisite for mental strength.\(^{26}\) Because it resulted from a falling dynasty and the annexation and colonization of Korea by Japan, this new appropriation started to define not just masculinity, but also a new “patriotic masculinity.”\(^{27}\) That is, there was a kind of urgency that if a “regenerative masculinity” was not created, then “the race (injong) will gradually become weakened and degraded”; because of the “diminishing physical strength,” an “extinction of the race” respectively. For more on this, see Ibid., 38-39 or more extensive and Korean version of Vladimir Tikhonov’s article above, see Park Noja, *Making a Valiant Men [Ssikssikhan namja mandülki]* (Seoul: Purûnyŏksa, 2009).

\(^{23}\) For more examples and discussions, see Ibid., 1029, 1041-1046 and Park Noja, *Making a Valiant Men*.

\(^{24}\) Ibid., 1045.

\(^{25}\) Ibid., 1045-1046.

\(^{26}\) Ibid., 1056.

\(^{27}\) Ibid., 1058-1059.
was now imaginable.\textsuperscript{28} Thus, the masculinity that stemmed from this ideology was built on a “national emergency and the painful anticipation of the downfall of the state.”\textsuperscript{29} The character of such a man entailed not only being a \textit{kunja}, with his “‘lofty aims,’ self-discipline, and moral rectitude,” but also required the “heroic” masculine toughness “in which ‘patriotism and loyalty’ were upheld by bravery, self-sacrificial attitudes, and bodily and spiritual ‘vigor.’”\textsuperscript{30} One’s manly worth would be measured, then, both in “ideally disciplined, docile modern male body and souls … [and] in terms of regular training and precise execution of orders.”\textsuperscript{31} As I show later in this chapter, the corollary effects of the new masculine ethos on many aspects of later Korea are quite profound.

**Korean Femininity**

While this dissertation is not about femininity per se, masculinity obviously is not exclusively about men. According to Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick and Elaine H. Kim, “women as well as men are consumers, producers, and performers of masculinities”; thus, a few words about Korean femininity are necessary.\textsuperscript{32}

Certain notions that were important to men have also been considered important for women. The notion of patriotism, for example, was so important that certain acts of patriotism, normally considered non-feminine, were deemed honorable. Whereas the


\textsuperscript{29} Ibid., 1059.

\textsuperscript{30} Ibid., 1058, 1060.

\textsuperscript{31} Ibid., 1060.

passive Korean woman was often not justified in taking any active, let alone violent, actions, there are documented cases of Korean women’s violent responses, which were sometimes lethal, to defend their chastity or their nation against barbarians. Inasmuch as these acts were used for some honorable situations, they were considered acceptable.\textsuperscript{33} However, these were exceptional cases and not commonly practiced customs.

Because of the expectation that they remain in the inner realm, Korean women are considered mild, gentle, weak, tender, sensitive, and susceptible.\textsuperscript{34} Korean womanhood, then, is measured by fulfilling duties as a mother and wife (known as hyŏnmoyangchŏ, or wise mother and good wife). Korean women are judged not directly by their performance as such, but by the performance of their husbands and their sons.\textsuperscript{35} In fact, by the late Chosŏn period, a common Korean woman had to do everything she wanted to do through the success of her husband and/or sons.\textsuperscript{36} Autonomy was a foreign concept to women, as was justice.

Women, ranked lowest in the family, also suffered the demands of their in-laws.\textsuperscript{37} Only through the success of their husband or sons—usually measured by passing the civil

\textsuperscript{33} Ibid., 1044-1045.

\textsuperscript{34} Cho, 106.

\textsuperscript{35} Cho, 78-86; For a discussion on the Five Relations of Mencius (father-son, old-young, husband-wife, between friends, and ruler-subject), Sok K. Lee, MD, “East Asian Attitudes toward Death— A Search for the Ways to Help East Asian Elderly Dying in Contemporary America,” The Permanente Journal 13.3 (Summer 2009) and a forthcoming article by Sung Hyun Yun, “An analysis of Confucianism’s yin-yang harmony with nature and the traditional oppression of women: Implications for social work practice,” Journal of Social Work.

\textsuperscript{36} In many ways, mothers are still valued by the success of their husbands and sons. Although the obsession in today’s Korea over their children’s success has sometimes transferred over to fathers and is over their daughters too, these phenomena are very much alive. For example, see Choe, Sang-Hun, “Mother’s Love Becomes Obsession for Some South Koreans,” New York Times (Asia Pacific Section: June 10, 2009) http://www.nytimes.com/2009/06/10/world/asia/10iht-skater.html?scp=3&sq=Korean%20mothers&st=cse
service examination—could women receive honor and be compensated for their suffering. However, even when women achieved a place of authority and power through the success of their husbands/sons, the vicious cycle repeated itself for her daughter-in-law, over whom she had control.  

Korean Gender

If a good Korean woman is measured by her mildness, gentleness, weakness, tenderness, sensitivity, and susceptibility, as well as by the success of the men in her family, then Korean man are measured by controlling, ruling, and dominating, as well as being forcible, strong, smart, rational, cold, and selfish. Their worth is often measured through their ability to succeed, which was defined in the Chosŏn period as passing the civil service examinations and in modern Korea as earning money. These fundamental beliefs are consistent with those of any patriarchal group or society. Additional beliefs are as follows:

- Women and men are intrinsically and unalterably different from one another.
- These presumably natural differences explain why women and men (rightly) play distinctly different roles in society.
- Men are natural—superior—income earners … public authorities, and heads of households because of their (allegedly) distinguished traits …

37 This is true of many Confucian societies. Similarities can be drawn from China at the time. It is interesting to note that there is very high suicide rate among the women there. Margery Wolf, “Women and Suicide in China,” in Women in Chinese Society, (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1974).

38 Cho, 78-80.

Women’s allegedly natural inclinations … make them valuable in home life and in comforting men, who, it is patriarchally believed, shoulder the heavy burdens of public life. A woman gives this comfort willingly and gratefully … because women are so thankful for … men.

The repercussions of such attitudes are vast. Showing vulnerability, for example, is a sign of weakness; hence, men cannot talk about difficulties and apprehensions and must choose an unhealthy path of silence about their privations. The pressure of being the one responsible for providing economically for the entire family adds to the stress. Confusion about one’s masculine identity due to lack of wealth, power, or success compounds the situation. Thus, what is meant to empower and privilege men—i.e. being the leader, the breadwinner, the provider, public, strong, rational, aggressive, conquering, independent, etc.—often has the opposite effect—i.e. feeling inadequate, stressed, vulnerable, defeated, lonely, etc. Other negative effects are investigated in detail later in this chapter.

However, it would be inaccurate to place the blame solely, or even mostly, on sŏnglihak, the Korean system of social norms and values, for the unjust, unfair, and uneven attitudes toward gender in modern Korean society. One must consider not only where such ideologies and practices originated, but also what or who is perpetuating them. Because families, companies, and many other institutions function under old ways of thinking about gender, the source of the ideology is not immediately clear. For example,


41 Kim and Choi, 82-89.

42 See chapter 4 and chapter 6 for similar claims and results.
only when I fulfilled my compulsory military duty did I realize that one of the major reasons for the maintenance of such norms is the relentless encouragement of gender ideology of young Korean men in the military. To understand this phenomenon, providing a background of the hegemonic construction of compulsory military service in Korea and its culture and effects is in order.

**Militarization of a Nation**

There are multiple ways in which the militarization of the nation has developed. First, the Japanese colonization (1895-1945) had a profound effect on lifting the status of martial warriors. Second, the admittance of Western (weapons) technology fed into such an admiration. Third, the policies of the U.S. interim government (1945-1948) after the Korea’s independence and the turmoil leading to and following the Korean War compelled the nation to long for a militarily strong country. Fourth, the dictator’s rule of the nation and the militaristic control of the populace contributed to the militarism of the nation. Finally, and most importantly, the ongoing compulsory military service of all men in Korea has had the greatest impact on the military mindset of the nation and its subsequent thinking about gender. It will become evident that one can easily invoke neo-Confucian notions to achieve a military agenda, and vice versa. Indeed, one will see that favoring either militarism or neo-Confucianism may ultimately be about relying on and maintaining power, including interpretive power.

**Korean Military Culture**

Military culture has a profound influence on many facets of Korean life as a whole. The enormity of the military influence that upholds the traditional neo-Confucian attitude toward men is a curious reality. The reason is that neo-Confucianism, which was
a philosophy of ruling by cultivated scholars, claimed “men of the pen enjoyed political dominance over men of the sword,” and “it was a gentleman scholar (sŏnbī), not a martial warrior, who represented ‘hegemonic masculinity’ under the Confucian order.”

However, after years of colonization by Japan, the model of the patriotic man eventually combined with these ideas. How, then, did military culture infiltrate so deeply into Korean culture and also become the dominant influence on gender?

In the late Chosŏn period, around the late nineteenth century, there were a series of challenges from foreign powers and native peasants that forced the ruling elite to adopt ideas by kaehwap’a or the reformist Confucian group. One of the factions from this group thought that whereas the East had the superior mentality, the West was much more materially advanced. Eventually, they adopted the notion of tongdosŏgi (Eastern way, Western technology). The legacy of this adoption was that Koreans remained critical of, or downright opposed to, the notion of democracy and its institutions while adopting the materials of democracy, namely technology, arsenals, and weapons manufacturing, to combat the challenges from neighboring countries and uprisings within the country. The acceptance of Western technology gave more weight to the military prowess. Pre- and post-colonial Korea continued to adopt and embrace tongdosŏgi, blaming colonization on

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44 The key figure for this movement was Kim Yun-sik (1835-1922). Of course, his faction had an opposition, the radicals of the kaehwap’a. These oppositions claimed that the broader social and political reform must be implemented, instead of this quick fix method. They were ignored. See Moon, 20; also Kang Man-gil, *Rethinking the Theory of Eastern Morality and Western Technology* [Tongdosŏgironŭ chaeŭmmi] in *A History of the Korean People’s Movement* [Han’guk minjokundongsaron] (Seoul: Han’gilsa, 1985).
effeminate Koreans and praising and glorifying the military tradition of honor and patriotism.45

Another contributing factor to the militarization of the nation was Japanese disciplinary control during the colonial period. The Japanese colonial state campaigned for short hair for men, colored clothes (as opposed to traditional white clothes), saving money, and the prohibition of organized movements for public meetings and associations. The Japanese controlled not only the actions but also the minds of their subjects.46 This systemization of surveillance, monitoring, and use of physical force resulted in a fierce and violent rule, which added to the strong militaristic framework of postcolonial Korea. Although colonial rule left an extensive infrastructure for industrialization during the postcolonial era, it also left many who were deeply affected by, and willing to accept as a norm, its repressive and brutal militarism.47 Moreover, the interim US military government in Korea (1945–8) utilized the same people who served in the Japanese colonial government.48 Hence, the militaristic culture was prolonged.

Hegemonic sentiments may grow after times of national turmoil. When a country is attacked or controlled, its citizens long for a stronger nation. Thus, the Korean War also had a profound impact on the populace for “the paramountcy of militarized national


46 Moon, 22.


security and therefore the need for a strong military for decades to come.\textsuperscript{49} Such a demand was met, starting with the junta led by Park Chung Hee, who ruled from 1961 to 1979. Park formerly served in the Japanese military and was aware of the effects of dominant militarism. He enacted into law the current system of resident registration (\textit{chumindŭngnokchedo}). That registration enabled him to control the populace by assigning each citizen an unchallengeable number at birth and using it to store records about individuals regarding military service, taxation, and criminal investigations. In the meantime, Park continued to galvanize the nation with anticommunist posters, mottoes, and sentiments to fortify his military rule and to put down any detractors as suspicious communists.\textsuperscript{50} He and his successor, Chun Doo Hwan, who ruled 1980–7, continued militaristic rule and monitoring with the use of residential meetings by regions (\textit{pansanghoe}), propaganda and anticommunist education and contests in schools, and in the mass media.\textsuperscript{51}

Well before the Korean War, however, the dominant vehicle for instilling military ideals in the nation was and remains men’s compulsory military service. At the end of WWII and the Japanese occupation of Korea, the US military government inaugurated a new military system in Korea. However, because this newly US-established military consisted of elite officers who were trained by, and had served in, the Japanese Imperial Army, the final product was a curious mixture of US military structures and Japanese

\textsuperscript{49} Ibid., 25.

\textsuperscript{50} Ibid., 28-31.

\textsuperscript{51} Ibid., 31-37.
Imperial Army culture and routines. Members of the military endured daily subjection to harsh bodily discipline that was justified by the collective ethos of “sacrifice of the individual for the sake of a larger goal, that is, the military security of a nation.”

With national security as a justification, the military exploited its soldiers into complete obedience and required them to carry out orders without critical thinking. Although disobedience can be fatal during war, using wartime scenarios to instill a culture of complete obedience in non-combat-related situations, without opportunity for reflection, resulted in much abuse within the military. A number of books written by former officers, as well as countless articles that have been published in recent years and my own experience in the military, testify to the fact that much mental and physical abuse is still going on in the military. Such a culture continues to reinforce “macho” mores, justifying the abuse and forcing soldiers to endure like “real” men.

See Sŏ Hyo-il, Military reform must be done this way 2 [Kungae hyŏk irŏke haeyahanda, sang/ha] (Seoul: Paek’am, 1995), 72; Yi Tong-hŭ, “Change in the defense Corp System” [Pungwuisojip chedoŭ pyŏnch’ŏn] Pyungma 32 (Winter, 77-79, 1982): 264-5, 317; and Ibid., 49. It should be noted that the citizens of Korea had already established their own versions of temporary governmental commissions, right after their independence in August 15, 1045. Hence, ironically, when the US military decided to appoint the ‘experienced’ people for infrastructural ‘order,’ the Korean people were ruled by the same people against whom the nation had just fought and gained independence.


It is not uncommon to come across nightly news coverage of yet another soldier committing suicide or killing fellow soldiers in revenge resulting from these abuses. See for example, Park, Si-soo, “Junior Marines Fall Victim to Abuse,” The Korea Times (National Section: March 24, 2011). http://www.koreatimes.co.kr/www/news/nation/2011/03/113_83801.html See also an article in Korean about the increase in suicide rate in the ROK military in the last 6 years, despite the reform efforts of the military. http://biz.heraldm.com/common/Detail.jsp?newsMLLId=20110711000633. To be sure, some good and benefit resulted from my having compulsorily served in the Republic of Korea (ROK) Army. Since the service, for example, I regularly exercise and stick to my daily plans much more strictly. However, the negative experiences I had, some of which is described in this dissertation, significantly outweighed the positive.
These general features of military culture were accentuated in the South Korean military as shaped, to a great extent, by the fascistic culture of the Japanese Imperial Army. Before the recent gradual change in the military subculture began, strenuous discipline often took the form of repeated physical assault and psychological abuse to break down an individual conscript’s will and subject him to the orders of his superiors. For instance, habitual practices of abuse ranged from verbal humiliation and severe beating to depriving subordinate soldiers of meals and sleep. Absolute obedience and the performance of personal services such as washing and ironing clothes or running errands governed the relationship between subordinates and superiors. These routine aspects of the military subculture indicate that popular acceptance of military services as men’s national duty was not grounded in any genetic inclination of males to violence but stemmed rather from a “cultural inclination to obedience that would permit integration into the highly hierarchical military system.”

This process of bodily subjection, though it is designed to promote obedience, is likely to generate resistance toward military service, instead, if it is not accompanied by substantial rewards, a sense of entitlement, or a sense of fairness in bearing this burden.

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56 Moon, 50; Moon is correct to point out that “the recent gradual change in the military subculture” took place and is taking place. However, the reality of these changes is at least questionable. Being in the ROK army for two years, from March 2006 until March 2008, I saw these “changes” as ineffectual or sometimes as just simple lip services. Officers are encouraged to put a stop to the physical, sexual, and mental abuses by the superiors to the subordinates, and the soldiers do shout the new “code of conduct” every morning so as to eliminate mental, physical, verbal, and sexual abuse and harassments. However, what has changed are a few words usage and posters encouraging better and fair environments for the soldiers. In reality, what has gone on in the past continues to go on behind closed doors. At times, defectors among them who report these incidences of abuse only to find out that the punishments do not end with the perpetrators but extend to the victim along with the whole squad, platoon, company, battalion, regiment, and even division. The lesson learned is that it is better not to report since the whole will suffer because of one individual. Accordingly, suicides and revenge killing continues to go on in the ROK military (of 134 deaths, 75 as a result from suicides in 2008). For the data on it in Korean, see Maeil Business Newspaper article: http://news.mk.co.kr/outside/view.php?year=2009&no=417253 Also, some examples of works that deal with the negative aspects of military culture are as follows: Kim Tŏk-han, “How is the New Generation Transformed into Soldiers?” [Sinseadaenin ŏtŏke kuminiru mandŭrŏjina?] Monthly Chosŏn [Wŏlganjosŏn] 196 (July 1996); Sŏ Hyo-il, Military reform must be done this way [Kunngaeuyŏk irŏke haeyahanda, sang/ha] (Seoul: Paek’am, 1995); Kim Hwan-t’a’e A Sixth Dup’um Major’s Military Story 2 [Yukdup’um soryŏngui kundaeiyagi, sang/ha] (Seoul: Chaenggi, 1993); Kim Nam-guk, People’s Army, Their Army [Kungminŭi Kundae Kŭndae Kŭd] (Seoul: P’ulbit, 1995); Lee Yŏngga, “Korean Military life and the Formation of Man’s Foundation” 3 [Hankukkundae saenghwalkwa Namsŏngjuhe Hyŏngsŏng] Hyŏnsangkwa insky (Fall 2005) 81-108, 231-2; Kwŏn Insook, “Hegemonic Masculinity and the Compulsory Military Service,” 2.21 [Hegamonejŏk Namsŏngsŏngkwai Byŏngyok’iimu] HanKuk Yŏsŏnghak (2005) 223-251; Cho, Sŏngsuk, “Military and Man” [Kundaeawia Namsŏng] Hankuk Sahoehak Nonmunchip. (Dec. 1996): 220-5.
Nevertheless, such a proliferation of abuse, and consequent male gender identity formation, continue to burgeon within and beyond the military—notwithstanding the “few good men” who exemplify a “good” soldier and commander who rules without absoluteness and ruthlessness and does not expect unexamined acceptance. The result of these practices is a culture that defines masculinity in a very peculiar and specific way. By studying numerous documents, Cho Sŏng-suk observed three common aspects of the ideal military man: The real man (*chinija sanai*), (a) via common expressions and indoctrination of male supremacy, endures everything with superhuman toughness and fortitude; (b) via the rationalization of power, he accepts authoritarianism and strives for that power for himself; and (c) via sex as amusement or entertainment, he relieves stress by belittling women or by using demeaning sexual words, gestures, and actions. There are efforts from high up in the military to eliminate these practices, but they are so prevalent and ingrained that they remain common in the ROK Army.

Soldiers who do not fit neatly into, and/or do not adhere to these expectations, are often treated abusively. The English equivalents of commonly used phrases in the military are, “At least a real man should …” “Why don’t you act like a man?” and “If you were born with something between your legs, act like it!” The greatest insult of all is,

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“Are you a girl?”\textsuperscript{58} Another pressure tactic used in the military to maintain these expectations is guilt. Superiors constantly remind subordinates, “Your parents believe in you,” “Do it for your parents,” and “Think of your parents and endure!” These statements put tremendous pressure on soldiers to obey without question.\textsuperscript{59} Moreover, what is not said is just as powerful as what is. That is, without actually saying that men are superior, these comments reinforce the notion that men “at least” are not like lowly women.\textsuperscript{60}

Those who do bear the painful experiences are eventually rewarded when they are promoted to positions of power. Officers, mostly men in their early twenties, get to experience power, enabling them to move a great number of men with a flick of a finger or a phrase. Wielding great power at such an early age leaves a lasting impression, and many continue to seek that power post-service in the workplace and in their households.\textsuperscript{61}

Non-officers are also rewarded the freedom and power, which is frequently manifested in vulgar forms, by the time they become sergeants (the final rank before being discharged as compulsory soldiers). Sergeants freely share often-fabricated stories of their sexual life and make subordinates share their stories. Through this process, manhood is measured by how many women a man has slept with, and the stories

\textsuperscript{58} The threat of or not appearing “feminine” may have played a big part, according to Enloe, in much of the immoral decisions in the military, government, and foreign policies. She suggests that Presidents Lyndon Johnson and Richard Nixon’s insistence on military engagements in Vietnam may have been in effort, at least in part, to appear masculine, or not appear feminine. She also sees that only “manly” policy makers are rational enough to keep top, inner secretes and so they make conscious effort to project that image. Enloe, \textit{Globalization and Militarism}, passim especially 48, 61.

\textsuperscript{59} Ibid., 160-166; Lee Yŏngja, 89-92, Cho, Sŏngsuk, “Military and Man” 221-222.

\textsuperscript{60} Much of the reinforcement comes by way of military songs—which are sung repeatedly anytime soldiers are in formation or in locomotion—depicting men as strong, patriotic, and doing the really important work for the country and for their families.

\textsuperscript{61} Ibid., 166-170; Cho, Sŏngsuk, “Military and Man,” 223.
encourage other soldiers to imagine engaging in similar exploitive sexual situations. As a result, women are often seen and talked about as objects of sex to be dominated and used at will.  

These experiences do not end as soldiers leave the guardhouse of their unit and are discharged. Most are discharged while they are in their early twenties and bring what they learned in the military into society. Because all able Korean men serve in the military and are conscripted at a still impressionable age, most bring the gender ideology they acquired during their military service to their schools, families, and workplaces. Further, given that most power positions are occupied by men, their gender ideology permeates all parts of Korean society.

**Masculinity in Contemporary Korean Society**

Practices in Korean workplaces are prime examples of a hegemonic masculinity that centers on resilient toughness, hierarchy, obedience, and “brotherhood.” Despite recent efforts by a few conglomerates and small companies to jettison some harmful old practices, the need to have a performance-centered attitude to reach a position of power has remained intact. In order to earn their rightful place of power as a man, men in the workforce do what it takes to improve their performance. A 2009 study by UBS, a Swiss bank, is a telling example. The study concluded that the workforce in Seoul has the second highest number of working hours per year in the world, approaching 2,312 hours.

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62 Ibid., 172-175; Cho, Sŏngsuk, “Military and Man,” 223-224.

63 Or the phrase often used is “normal” men, putting women and those who escaped the service in the abnormal and unable category. See Ibid., 161.

per year, which is 61 hours short of Cairo’s workforce who has the highest number of working hours per year.65

In order to reduce disorder and complaints about pressure to increase production, companies often apply the Confucian ideology of family to the workplace. For example, the Confucian notion of filial piety (hyo) may be applied in the workplace to encourage subordinates to show their absolute loyalty (chung) toward their superiors—an important Confucian idea and one of the most important in the Korean military.66 This absolute obedience may lead to subordinates engaging in activities (often involving alcohol and women) that they do not desire.

By applying the Confucian virtue of loyalty between male friends, males bond through sul munhwa, or a drinking-culture. Sul munhwa is “an essential element for men’s work and role in the public sphere” and is, hence, part of brotherhood “in critical business dealings or in stress-relieving pleasure.”67 The following quote exemplifies what sul munhwa entails:

There’s a saying, work plus liquor plus women equals business. To do well, you have to go along with this. It’s not like you say, “Hey! Let’s have sex with hostesses tonight.” That just happens, depending on the atmosphere and how you feel.68

Thus, by participating in activities in “room salons,” bars, and cafés, sul munhwa is not simply a drinking culture, but a culture of men that perpetuates military culture by

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65 See the press release in full: http://www.ubs.com/1/e/media_overview/media_global/releases.html?newsId=170250
66 Son Sungyoung., 191-193.
68 Elaine H. Kim, “Men’s Talk,” 77.
seeing and using women as objects of sex and by bonding through expression of disdain for women. Men often refer to women in terms of “food, sport, toys, flowers, decorations, atmosphere, or a temporarily invigorating bath.”\(^69\) Two implications of such a culture are that men who reject these norms and criticize such a culture are not seen as macho, tough, and manly—or may be ineligible for promotions\(^70\)—and women, who cannot partake in these activities even if they wanted to, have additional barriers to being promoted. By being excluded from the army, *sul munhwa*, and other male bonding activities for the most part, women, because of their nature, complementary biology, and “inabilities,” cannot meet the prerequisites for promotions and economic success.\(^71\)

Even when women were given opportunities to overcome these barriers in the past, institutions kept them in their “proper” place. According to Seung-Kyung Kim,\(^72\) President Park allowed women to work outside the home (sewing in a Nike factory, for example) and linked their work with national security, necessity, respectability, and patriotism, even presenting them as “marriageable.” However, this calculated move was not to claim their autonomy or rightful citizenship but—seeing that their cheap labor availability was economically advantageous—to exploit their abilities and to keep them in check. Hence, women may still be deemed to have a respectable femininity if, instead of being under their parents’ careful supervision, they are under the supervision of a foreman in a factory.

\(^{69}\) Elaine H. Kim, “Men’s Talk,” 78.

\(^{70}\) Son Sungyoung,, 195-7.

\(^{71}\) Elaine H. Kim, “Men’s Talk,” especially, 72-76, 90.

Also, female laborers are seen as doing the work that women are supposed to be good at (e.g., sewing) and, hence, do not lose their femininity by working in the public sphere.\footnote{Similarly, Pope John Paul II also argued that while all public work should be open to women, their first priority is in their feminine, domestic, and maternal roles; See his \textit{Familiaris consortio} 23; Cf. Julie Hanlon Rubio, \textit{A Christian Theology of Marriage and Family} (New York: Paulist Press, 2003), chapter 6, especially 112-115.} Finally, women were seen more as respectable (i.e., as obedient, dutiful daughters, not as citizens), thinking first about the needs of their family and second about saving money for a future husband. This respectability was predicated upon continuing to be silent about the institutional justification of their low wages.\footnote{For further discussion of the book, see Enloe, \textit{Globalization and Militarism}, 26-34. This is not to say that all women stayed passive through this period. Slowly, “They began to believe that they—as low-paid factory workers—were not just “dutiful daughter,” they were not just future wives; they were \textit{citizens}.” Some developed “a new consciousness” about “who they were...” in the same book, 30-31.} Thus, relentless patriarchal inculcation limited woman’s advancement and pressured men to participate in unjust social structures and ideologies in order to climb the socio-economic ladder.

In a sense, military modernity seems to be a stronger influence than neo-Confucianism as far as systematic dissemination of ideas of gender, sex, race, class, etc. Similarly, the influence of the military at the time of the military coup in 1961 demonstrated its power over Confucian ideologies. For example, immediately after the 1961 coup d’état, the military junta employed a new way of living by simplifying family rituals and slowly doing away with the Confucian notion of many children as good luck. To alter this deeply rooted Confucian understanding and practice, the state “made
extensive use of hierarchical organizations in administering the family planning policies.”

Simultaneously, however, the state used the deeply rooted neo-Confucian gender ideology to its advantage when implementing the practice of contraception. This implementation was done by highlighting women’s domesticity, putting them in charge of childbirth and controlling of it, and by portraying them as being “dutiful” and willing nationals in practicing family planning. It is fair to say, then, that it was not neo-Confucian ideology per se that controlled the populace but the institutions that had the interpretive power of that ideology. The military is one such institution, the state is another. With this power, the militaristic approach has infiltrated all corners of the society from which “the military mindset can translate into non-warring forms of aggression” in the family, marriage, workplaces, government, and other social institutions. When a man enters a social institution, for example, it becomes a war zone, the circumstances become war situations, and competitors become enemies. “When the warrior male goes into business, business becomes war… The market place is a heartless zone.”

Just as the culprit of this masculinity cannot simply be Korean neo-Confucianism, the indictment for an unhealthy notion of gender in Korea cannot lie solely with military

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75 Moon, 81, 91; the state used aggressive public relations, economic incentives for the practice of contraception, monitoring of local women, the media to disseminate messages and images linking the idea of having a small number of children with modernity, affluence, and a happy nuclear family. Moon, 94.

76 Ibid., 88.


78 Ibid., 11.
The military is not the only institution of power and influence. Hence, although military modernity is a stronger influence than neo-Confucianism in indoctrinating specific notions of gender, there are other influential institutions that perpetuate gender norms, including the workplace, media, family, politics, church, schools, and textbooks.  

**The Roman Catholic Church in Korea**

I do not cover all of these institutions in Korea here. Rather, I consider the Korean Roman Catholic Church. Catholic missions had positive influences on the Korean peninsula. The missionaries’ transmission of Catholic teachings brought the nation new ideas and opportunities. Missions proclaimed radical ideas of equality before God, which was unimaginable in the neo-Confucian Chosŏn society. Korean Catholic women learned the Korean alphabet for the purpose of reading Catechism and prayer books, they became active in the early stages of the Catholic Church in Korea (starting in the late 18th century), and benefited from the Catholic marriage/divorce system; some were even considered “companions and partners rather than submissive wives.”

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80 Jong-rye Gratia Song S.P.C. *Listening with the Heart to the Echo of Silenced Voice* (Cambridge, Mass: Weston Jesuit School of Theology PhD dissertation, May 2002), 87-91; While Catholic missionary teachings were “conservative” by modern standards, as compared to the Neo-Confucianism of the time, it was considered dangerously progressive, to the point of governmental persecution of Korean Catholics later on. An important book for the history of Korean Catholics is Claude Charles Dallet, *History of the Korean Catholic Church [Han’guk Ch’ŏnch’u Kyohoesa]* Trans. Ŭng-yŏl An and Ch’oe Sŏk-u, vol.1-3. (Weagwan: Pundo Chulpansa, 1980); See also Yŏngok Kang, “Korean Catholic Woman’s Movement” [Hankuk Gatolik yŏsŏngundongguĩ hŭrŭm] in *Catholic Church in 100 years of Modern Korea [Hankuk Kŭn/Hyŏndae 100nyŏn sŏkŭi Gatolikkyohoe]* vol 1 (Seoul, Korea: Gatolik chulpansa [Catholic Publishers], 2003), 363-373. According to Kang, Korean women were introduced to a number of new ideas from Catholics including gender equality, monogamy, the possibility of more autonomous life as virgins, and the possibility of a more active public life.
Notwithstanding these positive influences, I cannot overlook the kinds of repression brought about by the Catholic Church. Many setbacks from positive influences of Catholic missions were in the form of gender ideologies, especially those that appealed to Confucian concepts of chastity and womanly virtues. For example, instead of focusing on Mary as the mother of Jesus, the focus was on Mary as a silent and submissive virgin. The consequence of this approach was repetition of the old ways, whereby women’s obedience was more important than justice.\footnote{Song, \textit{Listening with the Heart}, 92.}

Consider the Korean women who often were beaten by their anti-Catholic husbands and who ran away. The missionaries told them to go back home and respect the Catholic way by submitting to and obeying their husbands. The French missionary priests, who were men, did not help the situation by demanding strict obedience from the faithful; instead, they reinforced neo-Confucian notions that made Korean women more willing to be silent and to obey men.\footnote{Ibid., 92-93.} Thus, what was an active group in the church at its foundation in Korea became a passive group and becoming more restricted upon returning home. Conversely, men became compassionate partners with their counterparts in the early church in Korea, only to return to their authoritative and commanding masculinity at home.\footnote{There were more possibilities of growth about gender understanding in the early church in Korea largely due to the method of inculturation employed by the Beijing Jesuit missionaries led by Matteo Ricci. However, the French missionaries, after the suspension of the Jesuit missions in Korea, took over and were much less sensitive about the longstanding and differentiated culture. They would eventually find ancestral rites idolatrous, which were seen as a challenge to the Korean authorities, ultimately leading to a massive governmental persecution of Catholics. For more on this, see Anselm Hee Sun Byun, S.J., \textit{The Reality of God is the Subject-Matter of Theology: A Study of Bernard Lonergan’s Position} (Chestnut Hill, MA: Boston College PhD dissertation, May 1995), 235-241.}
Since then, a hegemonic and authoritarian approach has been the overarching method chosen by many priests in Korea.\textsuperscript{84} Because Koreans were accustomed to ideas of hierarchal cosmology and obedience to superiors, priests (former conscripts themselves) had no problems implementing a traditional approach.\textsuperscript{85} In an emblematic representation of such reality, Korea remains one of the very few parts of the world that still requires the practice of head covering (using *misabo* or Mass veils) by its women.

Nevertheless, small but powerful voices of discontent have begun to emerge. Some Catholic scholars, women for the most part, have published their dissatisfaction with the authoritarianism of Korean Catholic priests and called for a less authoritative and more loving approach.\textsuperscript{86} Books have also been published, calling for reforms that did away with authoritarianism and gave more opportunities to the laity, especially women.\textsuperscript{87} Many articles called for more lay and women’s participation to eradicate the


\textsuperscript{85} The same method is used in seminaries. The approach is that of transmitting information, not of questions and inquiries. In my opinion, such a style of a theological education for seminarians is not distinguishable from a Sunday school (CCD) education by catechists. According to an interview that I conducted with a diocesan seminarian in Korea, he said, “The grass must be even. As soon as there is a leaf of grass longer than the rest, it is cut off right away!” One Korean Catholic theologian finds this situation very frustrating and claims that he can hardly find a priest who can carry on a theologically inquisitive and stimulating conversation. He also calls for women to speak up and have their voices heard for they have been silenced long enough. See the product of the symposiums held in Korea on the subject-matter, Kongsŏk Seo and Yangmo Chŏng, *Korean Catholic Church: Is it OK the way it is?* [*HanKuk Catholic Kyohoe Idaero Johūnka?*] (Seoul, Korea: Bundo Books [*Bundo Chulpansa*], 1998, 1999).


subserviently obedient and passive images of women and Mary and to replace such models with more inquisitive, conversational, and active images.  

Although never directly acknowledging the Church’s gender ideology as problematic, the Roman Catholic Church in Korea has taken steps to respond to a growing number of dissenting voices concerning women’s issues. In a letter commemorating 200 years of Catholicism in Korea (1984), the Pastoral Council in Korea included a “separate issue” section in which it admitted that the role of women in the church had been diminished from what it was when the Church was just beginning to take shape in Korea. The council also stated that it is problematic for the Church’s future that women could only participate as helpers and that more education is needed for and about women and more opportunities must be given to them.

Unfortunately, few improvements have been made in practice. Continuing with an authoritarian methodology and refusing to listen to the voices of the oppressed within the Church will be detrimental for the future of the Church in Korea. Though not identical, the Roman Catholic Church in Korea, I argue, is using an authoritarian approach dangerously similar to that used in the military. Many priests demand complete

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90 It is significant, I think, that these concerns were discussed in a “separate issue” section as if it should not be included in the main discussions.
loyalty from their parishioners and do so in a hegemonic fashion.\textsuperscript{91} There is an expectation of sacrifice on the part of the parishioners while very little theological explanation is given for this demand. Priests are comfortable demanding material gifts, and many followers follow and bow to them in the same way they do to the altar.

While priests’ attitudes toward women are and gendered cosmology is not always visible, enforcing the wearing of the \textit{misabo} and the insistence on women’s role as helpers for the church, their family, and their husbands are indicative of where they stand. Consequently, men are on the receiving end of women’s help, and the priests benefit most of all.\textsuperscript{92} It is difficult not to think of the alarming similarities with militaristic ordering: obedience to absolute authority, expectations of sacrifice for the whole, and differentiated gender expectations.

Unlike the U.S. seminarians and clerics who are exempt from military service, all able priests in Korea have fulfilled compulsory military duties, and they return to the male-dominated hierarchal society of the seminaries. It is almost inevitable that they continue to practice what they became familiar with and were taught to think in the military. There are already countless studies of the negative effects these norms have on women.\textsuperscript{93} In what follows, I explore the dangers of these Korean (neo-Confucian and militaristic) ideologies for men.

\textsuperscript{91} Anselm Kyongsuk Min, \textit{The Korean Church 2000}, 239-268

\textsuperscript{92} Seo and Chŏng, \textit{Korean Catholic Church: Is it OK the way it is?}; See also Yŏngok Kang, \textit{Dreaming of an Open Church} [\textit{Yŏllin Kyohoeil\l\l\l Kkumkkumy\\\l}] (Seoul, Korea: Paulist Press [Paorouittal], 2004).

The Dangers

When the economic crisis hit Korea (known as the “IMF crisis” because of the Korean government’s acceptance of an International Monetary Fund bailout) in 1997, and again in recent years, many lost their jobs. Living in a country where masculinity is defined by one’s performance, the ability to have ordering power over inferiors according to that performance, and status as the breadwinner, many men found themselves in a dire situation. Suddenly, they were not “man enough,” and their identities were in jeopardy. For many, it was better to live in the streets (or even to commit suicide) rather than return to their families to live as powerless men. Many are stressed from the pressure to keep their productivity and performance high, the prospect of losing their jobs, the demands of superiors, and their not fulfilling familial duties. As a result, many rely on alcohol, cigarettes, and even sexual services to relieve these stresses. Not being able to talk about their feelings (for that would not be “manly”) only adds to their anxiety.

The ramifications of the hegemonic masculine ideology go beyond men’s reaction to it. Korean women, like other members of the society, also respond in a pejorative fashion when these expectations are not met. Often, when men are not fulfilling their role as breadwinner, it is acceptable for women to leave the home. One of the lawful reasons

94 Masanori Sasaki et al, Men Studies and Men Movement about Feminism [Peminijũme Taehan Namsŏnghakwa Namsŏngundong] (WonMiSa: Seoul, Korea, 2007), 293-298; I am very aware of how some parts of this book are filled with assumptions and preconceived notions too. However, I do find facts in this book helpful. See also a more recent article in Korean illustrating (1) the increase in suicide rate among baby-boomers (four-times that of same age group twenty years ago) and (2) the reason (44.9 %) for suicidal thoughts among men: economic hardship.

95 Cho Chŏngmoon et al., Men’s Studies & Men’s Movement [Namsŏnghakwa Namsŏngundong] (Seoul, Korea: Tongmoonsa, 2000), 415-460; Again, I am aware of certain biased comments in this book resulting from their preconceptions.
for divorce in Korea is a husband’s economic incompetence.\textsuperscript{96} Faced with possible divorce, men often choose to accommodate their wives in any way they can, sometimes even to the point of allowing their wives to commit adultery.\textsuperscript{97} And, at times, incidence of domestic violence and battered husbands reach news and media outlets.\textsuperscript{98}

Also, as more Korean women find employment outside the home, more power is allocated to them in the family. Used properly, their economic power brings opportunities for shared power in the family. Used improperly, however, it serves as a tool of revenge for years of being ordered and controlled and even as a way to win money in divorce suits.\textsuperscript{99} Men sometimes react by tolerating abuse or even by committing suicide (Koreans are ranked number one in the world for suicide among men in their forties).\textsuperscript{100} However, men also react violently. Struggling with abandonment by society and neglect from the

\textsuperscript{96} Masanori Sasaki et al, 298-9. Before 1986, men outnumbered women in initiating the divorce process. Since 1986, there are more women initiating the process. In a relatively recent survey took during January to June 2009 from a hotline organization called “Korean Men’s transformation [HanKuk Namsŏngŭi Chŏnhwa],” of 1790 received calls, most calls (over 900 calls-about 51%) were about women demanding divorce from their husbands. Of those calls, about 17% concern men’s economic incompetence and 24% are due to women’s unfaithfulness/adultery (see this footnote -2) often as a result of men’s economic incompetence. On a positive note, many of these (about 34%) are due to women not accepting domestic violence. However, it is also true that many of these cases are due to men not being able to fulfill their economic expectations. See Chŏngmoon Cho et al., 443; Saemi Park, Chosun Weekly [ChuKan Chosŏn] “Crying Men in their 40’s [Ulbo 40dae Namsŏng]”(Sept. 15th2009): 13.29 http://news.chosun.com/site/data/html_dir/2009/09/15/2009091501032.html As the title indicates, more men in their 40’s than any other age group seek help at this counseling firm and the average age is getting younger every year. It is noteworthy that about 10% of them suffer from being battered by their wives and most feel helpless not being able to do anything for the sake of their manly reputation; Cf. Chŏngmoon Cho et al., 449-401.

\textsuperscript{97} Chŏngmoon Cho et al., 439-440, 452-4. \textsuperscript{98} Ibid., 449-451, 458-460. One must be careful, however, in a society mostly ruled by men, that these instances may well be accented much more so than the reality; a way of putting the blame on women. Nevertheless, these wrongdoings do occur and must not be dismissed as minor instances. \textsuperscript{99} Ibid., 437-439. \textsuperscript{100} Masanori Sasaki et al, 296-7.
family, men resort to verbal abuse and domestic violence to reclaim their throne as the ruler in the family.\textsuperscript{101} This way, they can recover the power and control they lost.

When all corners of society—whether the workplace, media, family, political arena, military, church, school, or textbooks—tell men they must embrace authority and power in order to be accepted, men find it difficult to think otherwise. When men cannot find a way to fulfill these expectations, the negative effects on all levels of society are almost inevitable. These “manly” expectations are unhealthy for Koreans, Catholics, and men or women, no matter where they live. The need for new models and expectations regarding men and masculinity is urgent and cannot wait another generation.

\textbf{Signs of Hope: Changes in Korea}

Despite overwhelming institutional indoctrination, voices of concern have begun to emerge among men, taking cues from earlier feminist movements and calling attention to the existence and enforcing of machismo culture in Korea. In May 1992, a group called the Good Fathers’ Gathering (my translation) set out to nurture a happy, safe, and healthy family by respecting all family members, instead of enforcing the \textit{paterfamilias} approach.\textsuperscript{102} In April 1995, Men’s Group for Cultivating a Culture of Equality, a subgroup of the all-female group Seoul Women’s Transformation, surfaced as well. This

\textsuperscript{101} Chŏngmoon Cho et al., 416; Such a phenomenon extends, at the very least, to families that are influenced by the same, or similar, cultural expectations. For examples, see Young I. Song, \textit{Battered Women in Korean Immigrant families: The Silent Scream} (New York: Garland, 1996).

\textsuperscript{102} Ibid., 206-211; [Choŏn Apŏchika Toeryŏnŭn Moim] Of course, as indicated by the name of the group, the group assumes that men are to be married and become fathers and no accommodations are made for single and/or homosexual life. Despite these shortcomings, it is of monumental importance that such a group came to be, especially given the earlier discussion about the overarching norms of Korea.
men’s group set out to cultivate a fair society, especially concerning gender equality, via profeminist approaches.  

In the same year, a hotline for men was established to provide counseling for those needing to resolve their emotional and psychological problems. Eventually, these groups would unite to form a comprehensive male movement called the National Association of Korean Fathers. Prior to the formulation of these male groups, the men’s studies programs in Korea focused only on Western scholarship. After these movements arose the men’s studies programs take on a Korean shape. Unfortunately, the voice of these movements remains small. Nevertheless, this pioneering has the possibility for growth. 

Aside from these men’s movements, there have been social changes in Korea. Increasingly fewer Koreans have a negative view of women in the workforce (8 in 10 Koreans approve of women working). More Koreans now place women who are housewives on equal ground as those who work for wages (9 out of 10). Fewer hold employment preferences for men over women. In a recent survey, only 1 in 10 Korean

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103 Ibid., 202-204 [Pyŏngdŭng Munhwalŭl Kakkunŭn Moim a subgroup of [Sŏul Yŏsŏngŭi Chŏnhwa].

104 Ibid., 204-205.

105 Masanori Sasaki et al, 48. Another group, “Fathers who love their daughters [Ttalŭl Saranghanun Apŏchidŭlŭi Moim]” established in 2001, tried to broaden the previous groups’ “neighborhood” boundaries of influence to a “social” influence but did not solve the previous limitations of fathers-only participation. 49-52.

106 Ibid., 26-27.


108 Ibid., 151.
women aged 15 to 44 felt they must have a son, compared to 4 in 10 in 1991. Women’s economic participation rate hit 50.3 percent in 2006. More policy decisions and legislative actions have been geared towards gender equality and human rights. These actions include the 1987 Equal Employment Law, the 1989 New Family Law, the 1991 Infant Protection and Care Law, the 1993 Special Law Against Sexual Violence, the 1997 Law Prohibiting Family Violence, and the 1999 Law To Prohibit and Regulate Gender Discrimination. At a glance, Korea seems to be on its way to greater gender fairness; however, this is not true in reality. 

I do not intend to detract from or belittle the fruits of the efforts of the men and women who fight for justice in Korea. However, it must be noted that the psyche and structures of Korean society have not changed greatly, and much work is yet needed to achieve gender justice for women. For instance, it is true that Koreans view women in the workforce much more positively than before, but only insofar as they also fulfill their duties as housewives and mothers. That is, a better social status combined with the same traditional gender role expectations in the family yields worse situations for women. These “improvements” often are setbacks for women because mothers are expected to be full-time career women and full-time housewives and care-givers. Progress did not redefine gender roles for women and men; it simply added to previous expectations.

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110 Ibid., 169.

111 Ibid., 171.

More women have opportunities to work than ever before. However, the economic participation rate of women in the workplace in Korea (50.3 percent) is lower than the average for men (74.8 percent) in Korea and lower than women in nations studied by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) in 2004 (60.4 percent). Also, women’s wages are about 60 percent of what men earn, and women work in service, blue-collar, clerical, and part-time jobs more often than men.113

These data mean that perspectives on male roles have stayed essentially the same as well, which is not necessarily good news for men. The more lasting and rigid the gender role expectations are, the more men feel pressured to perform, deliver, and achieve power as an authority and as a breadwinner.114 The increase of women in the workforce may be seen as a threat to men’s objective to gain control in the workplace. When women earn more money than men, or when wives are forced to work, husbands and fathers may perceive this outside employment by their womenfolk as their failure as men.115

113 Onjook Lee in Ibid., 167-174; The most recent research shows that among 38 OECD countries, South Korea had the greatest wage disparity between men and women and placed third in hiring disparity. See Kim Kitae, “Korea, the Greatest gender wage disparity in OECD Nations” Hankyoreh Daily (7.09 2009), http://www.hani.co.kr/arti/economy/economy_general/364952.html

114 Leaving out the other “usual” characteristics of men is quite intentional here. The authoritativeness and the economically successful, or “able” (nŭngnyŏkinnŭn) men—or at least potentially so, which usually means having a degree from one of the top three universities in Seoul, the so-called SKY schools: an acronym for Seoul National University, Korea University, and Yonsei University—have effectively taken over as the ruling traits of men in Korea. Being physically weak, lacking in muscles, or not having much fighting skills are “deficiencies” no longer considered problematic so long as men have the ability to earn good money and are willing to work into the night for academic and economic success. See Park Noja, Making a Valiant Men, 5-6.

115 More on Korean “normality” of the family and the anxiety caused by that normality in Hyejeong Byun’s, “Homophobia and the snail family in Korea” in Ibid., 184-193. Also CRKWS ed. 9-12; Korean Woman Institute ed., 103-312.
Increasingly, younger men are recognizing the harmful nature of these gender expectations and changes are taking place. Men can observe that their fathers, after being in the workforce for years, are feeling resentment for not being treated with respect for their years of sacrifice. As fathers retire, and/or their economic ability decreases, they may become powerless and their resentment and loneliness may grow. Mothers, in turn, may finally feel that they have some power and try to get what is owed to them for years of sacrifice as their husband’s helper, children’s assistant, and the family’s powerless passive member. Women indeed may have something owed to them and have the right to seek what they feel their labors deserve.

However, a new generation of Korean men is starting to see these relationships as unhealthy. They realize that Korean gender and gender role expectations are often harmful. Many are now requesting the jobs they want despite those jobs being considered unmanly. For example, men are choosing to become nurses, telephone customer service representatives, and weather forecasters—occupations traditionally associated with women in Korea. One TV news magazine program seated a male broadcaster on the left side of the desk and a female broadcaster on the right, positioning that was unthinkable in the past. Individually, these are not drastic changes, but they are, nonetheless, significant for the visible nature of these occupations.

The consciousness of Korean men is also changing. According to a 2006 survey of 700 Korean men, 68.7 percent approved of the so-called women’s quota system (yŏsung haldangje) in private and public workplaces. This quota system requires and

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116 Hankyoreh 21Monthly “[We] Will not Live Like our Fathers! [Abŏjich’ŏrum Salji Anketta]” 600 (March 14th, 2006) especially Sohee Kim’s articles, 42-62; unfortunately, they have since moved the anchors to the original position (as of the summer of 2011).
encourages women’s participations in the workplaces. According to the Director of Public Affairs and Regional Issues for the Korea Economic Institute, for example, the quota system in 2000 required that women “account for over 50% of proportional representation candidates for municipal and provincial councils, and political parties must make efforts to ensure that women make up at least 30% of nominated candidates for local constituencies in the general and local level elections.” As a result of the effort, women make up 13.7% in the 18th National Assembly of Korea in 2012, contrast to just one representative in the 1st Assembly from 1948 to 1950.117

Moreover, 56.9 percent of the men surveyed stated the sex of their only born child did not matter, and only 10.2 percent thought that men must buy the house and women provide the dowry (wedding and household expenses) at the beginning of a marriage, which is traditionally the case in Korea.118 In a different 2006 survey, which was compared to a 1995 survey in which 37 percent of Korean respondents (male and female) stated a university education is more important for a man than for a woman, there was a significant drop, to 23 percent.119

Unfortunately, the mindset seems somewhat inconsistent. For example, of the 700 surveyed men, only 3.2 percent preferred having a woman as their superior at work, and 70.2 percent said women could work insofar as their jobs do not interfere with their domestic duties. In other words, men permit more women in the workplace but restrict them from being their superiors and require them to do their jobs at home, too. The


118 Ibid., 48-49.

119 Kisoo Eun, 149.
conclusions of the survey were that men, overall, wanted to escape the pressure and the responsibility of a *paterfamilias* model but did not want to let go of their authority and power especially over women.\(^{120}\)

Thus, while Koreans are on the path to improvement, there is still a long way to go. The more institutions become aware of these realities, the better the Korean social situation of justice will be. Policies, organizations, and participation for equality and mutuality are on the rise but must do more. High schools universities must include awareness programs on their orientation agenda to educate students about the dangers of rigid gender norms. Other Korean institutions, including the Roman Catholic Church, must also follow suit. However, for the Korea Roman Catholic Church to improve, it needs help from the Vatican.

*Veritatis splendor*

The militaristic hegemonic approach employed by Korean Catholic priests—which, as I have stated earlier, stems from the neo-Confucian-influenced and militarily galvanized gender ideology of Korea—is not a problem specific to Korean Catholics. Such an approach is justified not only within Korean culture, but also within the Roman Catholic tradition as a whole. To show this, I turn to *Veritatis splendor* (*Vs*). Through it, I demonstrate that the Church takes a hegemonic and authoritative approach to theology and its implementation, and is, therefore, perpetuating an unhealthy relationship between the clergy and the laity. Hence, I claim that Catholics, laity and/or theologians alike, must

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\(^{120}\) *Hankyoreh 21Monthly*, 48-49; It is noteworthy that Korean men in their late 40’s showed the highest percentage of affirmation to the statement “Men should not show their weakness in any situations” yet the study found the highest rate of men that cried recently because of hardship or sadness in those same group of men. This result may be an indication that men who do not fit the norm are more likely to be adamant about that same norm.
continue to call for the discontinuation of this approach and ask for a better model from and with which they can work. My task has been to uncover, reveal, and spell out implications so that others may also see the need for such a call.

Pope John Paul II (JPII hereafter) takes up many issues in Vs. The main theme of the encyclical is a concern about methods in moral theology stemming from the crisis of truth, or disappearance of truth—which is not defined in the document—due to the individualistic, relativistic, and nihilistic tendencies of modern society.\textsuperscript{121} The proper method for moral theologians is to “instruct the faithful… about all those commandments and practical norms authoritatively declared by the Church.”\textsuperscript{122} As a result of not obeying the proper methodology, however, JPII sees that there is a “lack of harmony between the traditional response of the Church and certain theological positions, encountered even in Seminaries and in Faculties of Theology…”\textsuperscript{123} More specifically, JPII says, “Dissent, in the form of carefully orchestrated protests and polemics carried on in the media, is opposed to ecclesial communion and to a correct understanding of the hierarchical constitution of the People of God.”\textsuperscript{124}

Vs begins with a hopeful acknowledgement of “the splendor of the truth which shines forth deep within the human spirit.”\textsuperscript{125} JPII also acknowledges the individual

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\textsuperscript{121} Vs 32.
\textsuperscript{122} Ibid., 110.
\textsuperscript{123} Ibid., 4.
\textsuperscript{124} Ibid., 113.
\textsuperscript{125} Ibid., 1-2.
\end{flushright}
conscience as “the law of God written in the heart.” Later in Vs, there is more recognition of human moral sense, that Christians are “supported by the moral sense present in peoples and by the great religious and sapiential traditions of the East and West, from which the interior and mysterious workings of God’s Spirit are not absent.”

Ultimately, however, because of human limitations, the authority of truth claims seems to lie in the Church, which “contains the voice of Jesus Christ, the voice of truth about good and evil. In the words spoken by the Church there resounds, in people’s inmost being, the voice of God who ‘alone is good,’ who alone ‘is love.’” JPII acknowledges, following the Second Vatican Council, freedom of individual conscience. Yet, it is difficult to see in Vs the point of welcoming freedom in theory when it states that putting the authentic interpretation of the Lord’s law into practice

“…can only confirm the permanent validity of Revelation and follow in the line of the interpretation given to it by the great Tradition of the Church’s teaching and life, as witnessed by the teaching of the Fathers, the lives of the Saints, the Church’s Liturgy and the teaching of the Magisterium.”

The document also shows a certain apprehension toward exaggerated versions of autonomy, human reason, and freedom. Such a concern about exaggerated versions may be at the root of the reservations about theologians expressed in the encyclical. In Vs, JPII points out that there is a great danger in exalting human capacity to the point of

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126 Ibid., 59.
127 Ibid., 94.
128 Ibid., 117.
129 Ibid., 27.
disregarding dependence on Divine Wisdom.\textsuperscript{130} It would be detrimental to the faithful to present human freedom in a way that God, revelation, and the Church do not matter anymore. While I agree and recognize the danger of idolizing human autonomy, it is unclear which theologians the encyclical is criticizing. It seems that this extreme form of autonomy, human reason, creative conscience, fundamental option, and freedom of which Vs is speaking are hardly identifiable among the moral theologians of today. The criticism is more valuable, then, as a general guide and warning to Catholics not to veer in the direction of extreme relativism, individualism, and nihilism. Instead, the criticism generalizes all moral theologians and gives them one method of operation, namely that of transmission of the Magisterium.

Save for the extreme forms that I discuss here, many moral theologians contribute greatly to the discussion. Truth can emerge through these discussions. However, if the faithful are told they are “obliged to acknowledge and respect the specific moral precepts declared and taught by the Church in the name of God, the Creator and Lord,”\textsuperscript{131} then truth must belong solely to the Roman Catholic Magisterium and the faithful must simply take orders and obey. In fact, the encyclical calls all moral theologians “to set forth the Church’s teaching and to give, in the exercise of their ministry, the example of a loyal assent, both internal and external, to the Magisterium’s teaching in the areas of both dogma and morality.”\textsuperscript{132} In many ways, then, moral theologians’ duty resembles those of catechists.

\textsuperscript{130} Ibid., 36-37.
\textsuperscript{131} Ibid., 76.
\textsuperscript{132} Ibid., 110.
There are alarming similarities between these beliefs and those espoused by the Korean military. As the recipients of orders from an absolute authority, the Catholic faithful and Korean soldiers simply obey. This casuistic/legalistic approach poses morality primarily in terms of obedience. Such an approach

…sees morality primarily in terms of obedience…. No one can doubt that 
Veritatis Splendor employs such a model. The very first paragraph emphasizes the need for obedience to the truth, but recognizes that such obedience is not always easy.\textsuperscript{134}

It is easy for Korean priests, who are immersed in Roman Catholic, neo-Confucian, and militaristic mores, to demand complete loyalty from their parishioners in a commanding and hegemonic fashion. These attitudes often result in the unjust use of power, as in the Korean military and Korean workplaces, families, and other institutions.

It would be more helpful to guide the faithful and warn them of dangers in extreme individualistic thinking, instead of condemning a whole group of people, like moral theologians, based on misrepresentation. Similarly, like any other authorities, it would be helpful also to present the danger in extreme versions of the Church’s authority. In this light, John Paul II’s criticism of totalitarianism may prove to be a good tool for the Church’s own reflection:

\begin{quote}
to construct the renewed society and to solve the complex and weighty problems affecting it, above all the problem of overcoming the various totalitarianism, so as to make way for the authentic \textit{freedom} of the person.\textsuperscript{135}
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{133} John Paul II’s magisterial documents want to affirm that they have this kind of sole and absolute authority in the Church as derived from the Holy Spirit. Ibid.116. Some may argue that this is to tone down and alter some teachings found in \textit{Guadium et spes}. See Mary Elsbernd, “The Reinterpretation of \textit{Guadium et spes} in \textit{Veritatis splendor},” \textit{Horizons} 29.2 (Fall 2002): 225-239 especially 226, 238.

\textsuperscript{134} \textit{VS} is certainly employing such a model. See Charles E. Curran and Richard A. McCormick, S.J. eds., \textit{Readings in Moral Theology No. 11: The Historical Development of Fundamental Moral Theology in the United States} (New York: Paulist Press, 1999), 250.
Such an attempt would point out to Korean priests, and all of the Catholic faithful, the dangers of hegemonic attitudes and the causes of such attitudes, including unjust gender norms.

**Octogesima adveniens**

It would be unfair to say that top-down, absolute, militaristic, and authoritative approaches are the only Roman Catholic approaches. One can certainly find a method employed by the Church that uses a different model. I wish to point to one such example, namely *Octogesima adveniens*. Mary Elsbernd locates the impetus for *Octogesima adveniens* in a much earlier method developed in the 1920s by Joseph Cardijn, namely Observe (or See), Judge, Act. The method was designed to facilitate dialogue among the gospel, social teaching, and local situation in bringing about action.

Elsbernd found the concept applied in Pope John XXIII’s earlier encyclical *Mater et magistra*. In it, John XXIII “defends human dignity in the midst of the ever-increasing social relationships and interdependencies that characterize our modern world,” and mentions Cardijn’s method as a way of applying social principles to specific situations.

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135 Ibid., 99.

136 Admittedly, some parts of the Tradition may seem like they are. From the pontificate of Pope Leo XIII, for example, one can clearly locate advocacies for the sort of *qualis rex, talis grex* (as the king, so the herd—people) attitude—that citizens are to obey laws handed down by the *principes*, and the idea of participation and equality is anathematic. While Leo was correct in seeing the dangers of extreme liberalism and individualism, he was inaccurate to see all the developments of the modern world as those extremes. See Charles E. Curran, “Anthropological Bases of Catholic Social Teaching” in Charles E. Curran ed., *Readings in Moral Theology No. 13: Changes in Official Catholic Moral Teachings* (New York: Paulist Press, 2003), 171-194 especially 172-176.

137 Mary Elsbernd, “What Ever Happened to *Octogesima adveniens*?” in Ibid., 198.


139 *Mater et magistra*, 236.
In other words, the principles were the starting point; then the local situations were reviewed and judged accordingly.\textsuperscript{140}

In a slight, yet dramatic, shift, Paul VI in \textit{Octogesima adveniens} also uses Cardijn’s method but focuses on the local (subjective) situations first, and then asks to take part in a dialogue among the (objective) Gospel, tradition, and principles.

In the face of such widely varying situations it is difficult for us to utter a unified message and to put forward a solution which has universal validity. Such is not our ambition, nor is it our mission. It is up to the Christian communities to analyze with objectivity the situation which is proper to their own country, to shed on it the light of the Gospel's unalterable words and to draw upon principles of reflection (\textit{principia cogitandi}), norms of judgment (\textit{iudicandi normas}) and directive for action (\textit{regulas operandi}) from the social teaching (\textit{e sociali doctrina}) of the Church. This social teaching has been worked out (\textit{est confecta}) in the course of history … . It is up to these Christian communities, with the help of the Holy Spirit, in communion with the bishops who hold responsibility and in dialogue with other Christian brethren and all men of goodwill, to discern the options and commitments which are called for in order to bring about the social, political and economic changes seen in many cases to be urgently needed. In this search for the changes which should be promoted, Christians must first of all renew their confidence in the forcefulness and special character of the demands made by the Gospel.\textsuperscript{141}

This shift in focus, from objective principles as the starting point to the specific local situations, is a result of an anthropology that stresses freedom, equality, and participation,\textsuperscript{142} which in turn stems from the anthropology of \textit{Gaudium et spes}, which accentuates the dignity of the human with a conscience and human freedom at its core.\textsuperscript{143}

\textsuperscript{140} Elsbernd, “What Ever Happened to \textit{Octogesima adveniens}?” 199.

\textsuperscript{141} Ibid., 198-9; \textit{Octogesima adveniens} 4.

\textsuperscript{142} Curran, “Anthropological Bases of Catholic Social Teaching,” 180-181.

\textsuperscript{143} Ibid., 179-180; \textit{Gaudium et spes}, 12-22; For a further discussion on the preliminary and the primary focus and the participation of the local situation, see Kathryn Reyes Hamrlik, \textit{The Principle of Subsidiarity and Catholic Ecclesiology}. 
This transfer of focus, from the objective norm of the law to the subjective norm of conscience is of great methodological significance. Historically conscious Christian individuals are to examine their consciences about what to do in the midst of specific situations because “truth is found in the innermost depth of one’s existence.”\footnote{Ibid., 179-181, 185-187; Of course, one must always keep in mind of the erroneous conscience and the document does simultaneously emphasize the need for the correct conscience, albeit in a lesser degree than previous documents. Ibid., 180, \textit{Gaudium et spes}, 12-22.}

In the context of the subject matter at hand, then, the paradigm exemplified by \textit{Gaudium et spes} and \textit{Octogesima adveniens} would best serve as the guiding model for masculinity. Rather than deductively enforcing certain potentially great criteria—such as strength, high performance, activity, orthodoxy, and commanding and authoritative power—this method calls for using these criteria in conjunction with the local situation and “the ever-increasing social relationships and interdependencies that characterize our modern world.”\footnote{Curran, “Anthropological Bases of Catholic Social Teaching,” 178}

This procedure is dynamic rather than static, inductive rather than deductive, and respects individual dignity while a “careful and objective scrutiny of the present reality in the light of the gospel and of the teaching of the church” is at its core.\footnote{Ibid., 185-186.} In such a model, no longer can an institution uncritically follow a socially constructed and destructive notion of masculinity and remain blameless for the continuation of injustice. Similarly, the laity and scholars can no longer idly function as recipients/transmitter of the official teaching or condone the hegemonic, authoritative, and sometimes militaristic approach by
passively obeying the clergy. Rather, all must work mutually with the Magisterium to bring about a dialogue among the gospel, social teachings, and the local situation.

**Conclusion**

Gender role expectations in Korea stem largely from neo-Confucian ideology. The perpetuation and dissemination of this ideology stems most strongly from the militaristic hegemonic approach learned through compulsory military service. Because all able (“normal”) male citizens in Korea must fulfill this requirement, society often mirrors the ROK Army milieu. The Korean Roman Catholic clergy also is subjected to military culture and is not immune. The clergy is doubly affected because the same messages about gender role expectations are conveyed through superiors via encyclicals and the Magisterium.

The results of these detrimental gender requirements are an unsettled and anxious society, confused citizens and religious persons, and an unhealthy mental state for women and men. The solution, however, lies not solely in blaming men as such, for that approach may impinge upon the dignity of those not directly involved in the perpetuation of injustice. A new model for masculinity, then, must go beyond complementarity and inflexible canonical gender norms. It must be a model that fosters the flourishing of both sexes by way of mutuality, is fluid in its understanding of gender, and seriously considers historical consciousness and its present location.

For such a solution to come to fruition, an effort must be made at both ends: in Korea and in the hierarchy of the Roman Catholic Church. If it is a necessary strategic requirement of the military to have a system of absolute obedience, then Korea must implement an educational system whereby compulsorily enlisted men learn that military
mores should not be confused with those of society. As for the Roman Catholic Church, it must make a counter-cultural effort to ameliorate the situation for both faithful men and women, and the laity must be able to work to create a better dialogical and mutual setting in their locality. Only then can they feel that they are not bound by traditional norms and feel healthy enough to contribute positively and lovingly to others, society, and the rest of God’s creation. To help the church in this process, I dedicate the remainder of this dissertation to parsing a more just form of masculinities.
CHAPTER SIX

CONSTRUCTING A MORE JUST MODEL: MASCULINITIES

At the outset of this study, I set out to articulate the acceptable form of masculinity for Christian Theology. As I explained in earlier chapters, however, there is no one form of masculinity. For this reconstruction to function effectively, one must seek to articulate forms of masculinities that, in accordance with the nature of this project, are set within the framework of the Roman Catholic tradition and are based on Jesus of Nazareth as the model.

In this chapter, I first present models that will aid in moving beyond the unilateral power structure of the Catholic notion of gender complementarity by using the notion of mutuality and the life of Jesus Christ as standards. Next, I present what is minimally required in constructing a new model for masculinities—by drawing on the principles of medical ethics—and what may be helpful specifically for Roman Catholic men in constructing this new model—by using the notion of sacramentality, or the sacramental principle. Through these models, I aim to develop a framework for masculinities that not only avoids hierarchal or complementary notions of gender but also develops just and loving model that guides men toward seeing the imprint of God through their distinctively (Catholic) male experiences.
Mutuality

Scholars within the Roman Catholic tradition have made attempts to uncover alternative visions of the relationship—whether hierarchal or complementary—between God and human beings and among human beings. One such scholar has been Dawn M. Nothwehr. She has expanded Hugh of St. Victor’s notion of incarnation in terms of the mutual relationality of all parties involved to claim an active role for women in the birth—the virgin birth more specifically—of a child.¹ Nothwehr has also argued that St. Thomas Aquinas, while upholding Aristotelian hierarchical biology, provides a notion of charity that serves as the root of friendship with God.² Ultimately, there remains a certain distance between God and human beings, but with faith and love, the relationship between them becomes much more mutual.³ Such authors provide a framework to consider that despite the differences between men and women, a mutual relationship is possible with love.⁴

Nothwehr has also asserted that the work of John Duns Scotus provides an even stronger framework to seek the positive value of the mutual relationality of the Trinity:

First, Scotus’s affirmation of both the individual personhood of each member of the Trinity as a suppositum of divine relations makes it possible for the Trinity to also stand as a paradigm for human relations. Second, the individuality Scotus claims for each person of the Trinity provides the metaphysical basis for mutuality; the persons of the Trinity are constituted as persons through the relationship (ad intra) of mutuality. Insofar as the

² Ibid.,115-119.
³Ibid.,119-128 (especially 128).
⁴I am aware of this model’s flaw in equating men with God. Nevertheless, its advocacy of a mutual relationship can be useful if one understands this flaw.
Trinity as a communion of persons models the goal for human community, the Trinity models the relationship of mutuality as the goal of all human activity.\(^5\)

In these Roman Catholic examples, Nothwehr finds a new guiding norm for relationships, namely mutuality, and a proper understanding of power within it. For her, it is not only that one practices justice and love but how one does so that allows for the thriving of humankind\(^6\); it requires the relinquishing of power by the powerful and the taking up of power by the poor and the marginalized.\(^7\) Hence, the notion of mutuality, while distinct, is closely related to ideas of equality, reciprocity, and solidarity.

Equality is distinguished by definite boundaries, and a marked one-to-one correspondence in the relationship or the exchange between the parties of an affiliation; an exchange of like for like. In a relationship characterized by reciprocity, there are clearly defined boundaries between parties involved, and any action, influence, giving/receiving is conditioned by the expectation by the other party(ies) that what is received is of equal value to what is given. In the case of solidarity, boundary lines are distinct. Yet, there is a desire to be with the other that strains boundary lines between persons toward one another. Each person’s desire exceeds his/her ability to fully participate in the act or experience to be undergone by others. The straining toward the other, however, does not break individual boundaries. In the case of mutuality, boundaries are distinct, but the critical difference is that they are determined with the other(s) and thus, they are more flexible and fluid. The mean and the end of exchange must be geared to the common flourishing of all parties involved.\(^8\)

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\(^7\) Nothwehr, *Mutuality*, 37.

\(^8\) Ibid., 4-5. For further discussion of her four forms of mutuality as formal norms, namely cosmic, gender, generative, and social mutuality, see Ibid., 9-12, 96-97.
Nothwehr explains that as mutuality is “an animate process and not a static situation,” sustaining a mutual relationship requires praxis, a perspectival, an interpretive, and a dialogical view of truth in a dynamic sense. This notion expands the idea of the moral subject from one simply viewing the subject as a monolithic reality to “one who develops, experiences, and transforms values, and who is, in turn, developed and transformed in valuing.” Recognizing such a view of mutuality does not, however, mean that one lapses into relativism. Rather, while recognizing its animate nature, one must avoid relativistic nihilism by acknowledging one’s own presuppositions, listening attentively to views different from one’s own, and always depending on “scripture/tradition, church teachings and the sensus fidelium [to] provide additional safeguards.” This notion of mutuality also modifies our understanding of “good” as not based on individualism, exploitation, authoritarianism, or paternalism but rather a form of mutuality that “fits” the other goods in the cosmos.

In terms of sex and gender, then, mutuality means that both women and men are bearers of the imago Dei. It means biogenetic and sociocultural evidence of gender must challenge traditional dualism and physicalism. It means the “sharing of ‘power-with’ by and among women and men in a way that recognizes the full participation of each in the

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10 Ibid., 261; Nothwehr, Mutuality, 233.
11 Ibid., 262.
12 Ibid., 262.
13 Ibid., 262-264.
imago Dei, embodied in daily life and through egalitarian relationships.”¹⁴ In this understanding of relationship and the power within it, the Roman Catholic notion of gender complementarity is insufficient. The traditional notion of complementarity would only be acceptable, then, if (1) the couple to which it refers complements each other in accordance not with strict and designated roles according to gender but rather with their natural or learned talents so to maximize their potential as human beings and (2) if it did not refer strictly to a couple but could also refer to a community such that an uncoupled person’s life could be considered full and complete, allowing the condition for the possibility of “sharing of power-with” to be properly established.

Nothwehr is not alone in her quest for a better (Christian) understanding of relationship and power. James B. Nelson, as mentioned in Chapter Three, also finds fault with the unchecked, “unilateral,” self-centered, one-way, exhaustible worldly power that our institutions have traditionally bestowed upon men. Nelson claims that unlike unilateral power, relational (shared) power generates more power as one absorbs the influence of another without losing one’s own center. Unlike one-directional power, which, in accordance with the principle of conservation of energy concerning physical power, is lost when transferred to another entity, relationally shared power only grows as it is transferred and shared. The experience of non-mutual power, then, is unilateral power, the power that is conferred on the “phallus.”¹⁵ The experience of mutual power is relational power, the power that is conferred on the full reality of both the penis and phallus. Whereas the false (phallic) notion of power is alive and well only until it is spent

¹⁴ Ibid., 257-258; 233.

¹⁵ See Chapter Three of this dissertation.
(and “dies”), the true (shared) notion of power, measured by the size of the stature of one’s soul, is inexhaustible and does not die but rather transforms its life. That is, true power is mutuality.

**Jesus Christ as the Model**

Christine E. Gudorf claims that one can take cues not only from not only some thinkers within the tradition, as does Nothwehr, and from ideological and philosophical exercises, as does Nelson, but also formulate norms of masculinities from the very stories of Jesus of Nazareth. She notes that Jesus, as a life-nurturing man, may be seen as a “wimp” by today’s societal standards and/or too feminine by current Church standards. Yet the Jesus of the Gospels is a male figure who ministered “in tears, in pity and tenderness, in eschewing the privileges of authority, and especially in serving others in subordinate roles as when he washed his disciples’ feet.” I believe it particularly noteworthy that a short phrase like “Jesus wept” is given a verse of its own, as it signifies awareness of the importance of this act by Jesus. Hence, in a sense, our gender

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For a historical discussion of the feminization of religion, see Ann Douglas *The Feminization of American Culture* (New York: Noonday Press, 1977). She explains how sentimentalization (or feminization) came about under capitalism and industrialism and how it has had a profound effect on women, the clergy, religion, and the American mass media and culture generally. Ultimately, the power gained by women was a kind that only perpetuated Victorian ideals, and the process of oppression forced the oppressed to be oppressive in turn.


18 Ibid., 287.

19 Regardless of how one translates ἐξάρισεν ὃ Τηροῦς the intentionality of assigning of a single verse to this short sentence remains important.
socialization not only “victimizes men in many, many ways,” but is also not true to Jesus’ way.\textsuperscript{20} Gudorf argues that we, men and women alike, must be like Jesus; that is, more than partially and peripherally involved in the basic nurturing activities of human life.\textsuperscript{21}

The call, then, is not to jettison Jesus or the tradition, but to formulate a better definition of masculinities for Catholics and genuinely to remain within and sincerely to become closer and more authentically faithful to Jesus and the Roman Catholic tradition. To that end, one must make valiant efforts to understand all that one can about Jesus of Nazareth. As I discussed in Chapter Three, if one wants to emulate Jesus, borrowing from Nelson, the central issue is not Jesus’ maleness but Jesus’ \textit{humanity!} His human sexuality is a testimony to his maleness; just as divinity and humanity are not to be understood as utterly different and essentially opposite, neither are maleness and femaleness. The divinity understood as dominating Jesus’ humanity is a “phallic” definition of the divine. Men, therefore, are not to embrace something foreign.\textsuperscript{22} Rather, men are to embrace the fullness of the revelation that comes through their male bodies, the characteristics already contained within them, and, indeed, the earthly phallus—as deep, moist, sensuous, primitive, and powerful as it may be. Equally important and equally male are good penile energy in men: a soft, vulnerable, and receptive form of peaceful power. In this model,

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{20} Ibid.,309.
\item \textsuperscript{21} Men then need to “find ways in which men can be affirmed in their own life-giving…” by performing ordinary human activities that do not belong to women alone. Women then cannot be excluded from administrating the life-giving rituals of the sacraments, especially considering that many of the activities that the sacraments imitate are clearly female activities. Ibid.,297, 299, 302, 307, 309.
\item \textsuperscript{22} Many pro-feminist men claim that men need to develop a “feminine side,” and sometimes ask men to not “act like a man.” See, for example, the description of Tony Porter’s talk, “Call to Men.” \url{http://www.ted.com/talks/tony_porter_a_call_to_men.html} I understand that, for the most part, they mean not to act like “socialized” men. Nevertheless, there is a risk that these kinds of messages will be portrayed as encouraging men to think of manhood negatively or to accept something that is not of men. My message is similar in that there is a need for profound change in men but different in that men need not be unmanly, something that they are not.
\end{itemize}
mutuality is a norm, and the integral (full) acceptance of the tradition and Jesus’ humanity and divinity is an adequate analogy. Like the Christian notion of the Trinity, such a model calls for the unity of men as a group while also recognizing the great diversity within that group. The acceptance of mutuality and diversity is the goal of male–female relationships and reflective of the very character of God.²³

The discussion thus far has been a mere first step. One must not forget that just as other (non-theological) sources have been helpful in our understanding of gender, they may also be useful in formulating a new paradigm for Catholic masculinities. Hence, moving beyond normative categories for formulating a just and loving model for masculinities for the Catholic family, one may find categories developed by Tom L. Beauchamp and James F. Childress in the contemporary medical ethics literature to be appropriate.²⁴ While not having a direct connection to medical ethics as such, the categories are helpful insofar as their normative claims can also function for the notions of masculinities. That is, the adequate theological criteria for masculinities must adhere to their principles, namely 1) respect for autonomy, 2) prohibition of maleficence, 3) valuing of beneficence, and 4) justice.²⁵

Autonomy

As the root of the word itself indicates, autonomy concerns the self and its own governance. Determining what this actually means is a complex task. Nevertheless, the


²⁵ Others, such as Margaret A. Farley, have adopted principles of medical ethics for other areas of ethics. See for example Farley, Just Love: A Framework for Christian Sexual Ethics, 207-244.
many theories of autonomy all agree that two common conditions are intrinsic to the concept: 1) liberty (independence from controlling influence) and 2) agency (capacity for intentional action).\textsuperscript{26} Beauchamp and Childress expand these two conditions to encompass the action of “with understanding,” so that consent of a patient, for example, is an “informed” consent.\textsuperscript{27} Cumulatively, then, an autonomous action entails that one intentionally chooses to act on something with understanding and without an outside controlling influence on the agent.

In this context, it is critical to recognize that intentionality is not a matter of degree; that is, one either acts intentionally or non-intentionally. Conversely, how much one understands and is influenced is a matter of degree. One can understand only to a certain degree, and one can be influenced to a greater or lesser extent. An autonomous action must entail, at the very least, “a substantial degree of understanding and freedom from constraint.”\textsuperscript{28} As is often the case in ethics, however, determining what is considered “substantial” is a difficult task. In clarification, Beauchamp and Childress maintain that a substantially autonomous decision can be carefully taken in light of specific objectives.\textsuperscript{29}

In relation to the objective at hand—to specify the principle of autonomy for constructing a better model of masculinities—one must articulate what is (at least minimally) required for men to be autonomous. Whatever one deems appropriate for a notion of masculinities, it must entail that a man intentionally chooses to judge, decide,
and act freely (i.e., without substantial constraint) with substantial knowledge. In previous chapters, I discussed how socially constructed ideologies (i.e., controlling influences) have presented men with certain obstacles to the ways that they wish to act and think. Such hindrances, however, do not necessitate that men have no freedom whatsoever to act and think with liberty, or that they are simply a product of outside/external influences. Nevertheless, as I previously explained, the process of socialization is sufficiently strong to be considered a substantial controlling influence that does not allow men to gain a clear understanding of their own manhood.

For men to acquire better self-governance, then, they are required to gain a better understanding of the kind of socialization to which (often unknowingly and unintentionally) they have been subjected and gain authentic knowledge of their selfhood. This dissertation is meant partially to serve as a tool on a journey toward fulfilling that requirement. Only by gaining such understanding can men begin to move toward relieving their lives of anxiety, stress, and depression. Only then can men throughout the world create more loving and just homes for their families and fulfill the conditions necessary for reconstructing truer, freer, and more autonomous and authentic “manly” selves.

**Nonmaleficence and Beneficence**

The principles of nonmaleficence and beneficence are so closely related that it is difficult to discuss one without simultaneously discussing the other. Closely associated with the maxim *Primum non nocere* (Above all, do no harm), nonmaleficence requires that one not intentionally inflict harm. However, one can immediately see at least two

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30 Ibid.,189.
problems with this conception: ambiguity concerning what constitutes harm and the passive nature of the principle. Not only must one define “harm” but also determine whether a harmful action is justifiable in a particular situation. This discernment requires differentiating trivial from serious harm as well as physical from emotional/mental harm, which is a very difficult but important process. Sometimes one must take a harmful yet necessary and justifiable action, as does a surgeon in performing invasive surgery, or faces a situation in which “a harmful invasion by one party of another’s interests may not be wrong or unjustified, although it is prima facie wrong.”31 Adding to these difficult concerns is the fact that the principle is passive in nature; “do no intentional harm” has more to do with inaction than action.

Because of these difficulties, the principle of nonmaleficence must be discussed in conjunction with the principle of beneficence. Along with passively avoiding evil and not inflicting harm, this methodology forces one actively to prevent and remove evil and harm and to promote good.32 This principle requires that one promotes not only what contributes to human flourishing but also remove conditions that cause harm to others.33 In a sense, beneficence is a more difficult appeal than nonmaleficence because it requires more effort. This is because it is not enough that one not be part of the problem; one should be part of the solution. One may find it more difficult to act beneficently since inactions are often not considered immoral whereas nonmaleficent inaction is immoral.34

31 Ibid., 193.
32 Ibid., 190, 192.
33 Ibid., 262.
Nevertheless, Beauchamp and Childress claim that “even though nonmaleficence requires impartial treatment, it does not necessarily override or take priority over beneficence.”

The implications of the two principles for the task at hand are vast. I have hitherto discussed the harm that the modern (Roman Catholic) norms of masculinity have caused. Because it is difficult to define what is harmful in a universally normative sense, I have attempted to parse out only what is harmful in regards to this project. My purpose has been to identify what harms one ought to avoid. I have suggested that we avoid one-sided (polar-opposite) as well as complementary notions of sex and gender. However, as the principle of beneficence teaches, one must move further to pronounce what good one can do to contribute to the flourishing of all men, and indeed all persons. I have suggested that accepting a more integral version of masculinities may be a great first step toward achieving beneficence.

One ought actively to deconstruct and construct, respectively, surrounding conditions that continue to obstruct and enable men in order to allow them to become more true to the wholeness of their being. If that means that one should actively undertake steps to promote the wholeness of the person vis-à-vis the institutions that develop norms concerning sex and gender based on misunderstandings, then one should do so. My objective, then, is to endorse and advance the kind of knowledge that awakens societies and institutions to grasp the totality of the reality of men and manhood. However ambiguous the meanings of masculinities are, these notions must avoid promoting the infliction of intentional and unnecessary harm and promote the performance of good works. This, I suggest, requires one to move beyond

35 Ibid., 263.
complementary and one-sidedness to promote a more diverse and comprehensive
definition of masculinities.

Attention to principles from medical ethics may help one to build better categories
and to describe the conditions that enable such acceptance. Taking cues from the more
developed norms stemming from medical ethics, Margaret A. Farley adds the notions of
fruitfulness and social justice.\(^{36}\) By fruitfulness, Farley does not simply refer to the form
of biological (procreative) fruitfulness that results in the production of offspring—
although this form is immensely important and powerful—but rather all forms of
interpersonal love.\(^{37}\) This kind of fruitfulness extends beyond biological children created
between “just the two” to a wider community of persons because “love brings new life to
those who love.”\(^{38}\) The new life may take different forms, including “nourishing other
relationships; providing goods, services, and beauty for others; informing the fruitful
work lives of the partners in relation; helping to raise other people’s children; and on and
on.”\(^{39}\)

**Justice**

Intimately related to fruitfulness, Farley expands the notion of relationality to the
wider community in her discussion of social justice as a norm. She explains that as her
notion “points to the kind of justice that everyone in a community or society is obligated

\(^{36}\) Farley, *Just Love*, 215-232. She presents additional norms, including free consent, equality, and
commitment.

\(^{37}\) Ibid., 227.

\(^{38}\) Ibid., 227-228. See also Mary McDermott Shideler, *The Theology of Romantic Love: A Study in the
Writings of Charles Williams* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1962), 115.

\(^{39}\) Ibid., 228.
to affirm for its members,” it requires consideration of all persons “for incorporation into the wider community, for physical safety, psychic and economic security, and basic well-being.” Within this sense of social justice, Farley identifies other issues of utmost importance, including racial, sexual, and domestic violence, as well as development, globalization, and gender bias, most of which stem from the reinforcement of “unjust construction of gender roles” and false stereotypes of religious and cultural traditions.

In light of this fruitfulness and social justice can enhance the traditional notion of masculinity in a number of ways. First, any attempts at defining masculinity ought to bring a new kind of life and energy into the realities of being a man. Unlike a notion that significantly limits men’s potential to become more fully (hu)man, and thereby restricts their process of being born again into a new life, a more informed definition of masculinities accepts multifaceted aspects of the male realities which hitherto have been deemed unacceptable. Such unacceptability stems partly from the idea that accepting all forms of masculinities may lead to the point where one can claim that there is no such reality categorized as “man” or even “sex.”

However, a man who can simultaneously accept his uniqueness and his commonality with other men is able more fully to accept his multifaceted nature without claiming that the notion of masculinity is meaningless. Doing so is important because it acknowledges that this fullness of being opens up limitless possibilities for men to

40 Ibid., 228.
41 Ibid., 291, 228.
42 Ibid., 229-230.
continue to find new ways to grow, to give themselves to God, to be born again in their own unique way, and, indeed, to be more fruitful.

Second, the new notions of masculinities include the norm of social justice, which contains the notions of psychic security and basic well-being. To ensure men’s well-being, then, one must jettison aspects of traditional notions of masculinity that cause unnecessary anxiety and superfluous stress. The first step in doing so is to “alleviate the social attitudinal consequences of maintaining a strong negative evaluation” of men who do not fit neatly into the socially constructed notion of masculinity, so that men do not feel the need to “live up” to the unrealistic expectation of being either a sole breadwinner or an emotionless stoic leader without any emotive needs. Achieving this goal requires a kind of education that “will help to demythologize popular beliefs that create false fear” regarding traditionally non-manly behavior. In accordance with the theme of social justice, such an education must be provided at the institutional level, and would therefore require institutional support.

Putting these norms together, a reconstruction of masculinities for Roman Catholic families begins to surface. Using a modified notion of masculinities, one is able to apply it to the appropriate role that men can play within the (Catholic) household. Thus

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43 Ibid., 291. Here Farley is not specifically referring to masculinity per se. Nevertheless, her development is certainly applicable to the subject matter at hand.

44 Ibid., 292; Again, Farley’s argument is not made specifically in terms of masculinity, but is appropriate and applicable here. To see how mythologizing popular beliefs creates false fear regarding anything non-manly, see the PBS program about rediscovering Alexander Hamilton, April 24, 2011. [http://www.pbs.org/programs/rediscovering-alexander-hamilton/] This program describes how the notion of calling a man a girl or a bitch was sufficient reason for killing the interlocutor, as well as that the action of backing out of a duel was so detrimental to being a man that it drove people, like Alexander Hamilton, to their death.

far, the notions that this dissertation have set forth are applicable to not only Catholics but all Christians, and indeed all people. The universal nature of this study is thus quite catholic in its approach, which is a positive outcome. Nevertheless, as this project is intended to develop a specifically Roman Catholic vision/understanding of masculinities, there remains a need to construct and explain the notions of masculinities in a distinctively Catholic language. To that end, one may find the Roman Catholic vision of sacramentality as it relates to the notions of masculinities particularly helpful.

**Men, Body, and Sacramentality**

Practicing Catholic theology or being a Catholic requires continuous participation in sacramental life, which includes ritual participation in the sacraments of the Church. However, understanding the meaning of the Catholic notion of *sacramentality* requires exploring it beyond the seven clearly defined sacraments. The basis for considering an action a sacrament is the sacramental principle that “sees” the invisible grace, that makes visible the divine presence, and that finds the spiritual in the material reality, all because the imprint of God is in all of God’s creation.\(^{46}\) According to this principle, all reality is sacred and all of creation is potentially sacramental because “everything is, in principle, capable of embodying and communicating the divine.”\(^{47}\) All of us, in fact, “have personal sacraments: people, things, places or events which speak to us deeply and richly of the love of God which we know surrounds us always but of which we are not always

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\(^{47}\) Ibid., 787.
aware.” Of all these moments, there are seven during which we commonly recognize and become aware of the creation that is grounded in grace. As such, the Catholic Church has designated these seven sacraments as special sacraments, defining them as moments of reflection, shared with one another in celebration, that bring together and deepen all our other reflections about life. They are key experiences that provide new insight into our other experiences and so deepen them.

However, just as we call Sunday “the Lord’s day” although God is available every day, sacramental experience is not limited to receiving the seven communal sacraments in the Church but is also possible individually in everyday life. Indeed, the seven sacraments draw on key experiences from the most basic of human experiences—birth, a shared meal, sin and reconciliation, maturity, spousal union, vocation, sickness and death—to inspire one “to look to others and to the wider world for more signs of God” by reference to one’s own personal key experiences. Hence, one is able to make visible what is normally invisible through sacramental moments. These moments, usually

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52 On an aside note, I find a similar concept to the idea of sacramental principles in the arts and literature. Victor Shklovsky, one of the founding fathers of Russian formalism and the theorist of estrangement (*ostranenie*), described art as “thinking in images.” Similarly, prose and poetry are, first and foremost, modes of thinking and knowing. Poetry is a special mode of thinking in images that is meant to “bring the significance of the image closer to our understanding, and since, without this, an image has no meaning, then, the image ought to be better known to us than that which is explained by it.” Similarly, Catholic sacramentality uses the human experience as a “device” to see reality in a new light and bring the significance of meaning, which is already embodied in creation, closer yet never completely as close as our
involving key experiences in one’s life, are instances of epiphany that enable one to see
the sacramental reality beyond that experience and in creation itself, and even in the
mundane experiences of everyday human life.

One may experience many of these key moments in life, depending on one’s
openness and willingness. One example of these moments that is not part of the seven
sacraments is the experience of the process of procreation: childbearing, gestation, and
giving birth. These miraculous and momentous moments give not only the mother but
also the father an opportunity to see life in a new light and invite them to see the rest of
creation in a new light. The important moments in the process of procreation can point
one toward God and make God more visible, providing moments of realization that help
one to apprehend that the more one knows about all of God’s creation, the more one can
know about God.  

Of the many possible experiences, those involving human sexuality and the body
are often vehicles to know reality immediately and directly. The human body and the
sexual experience through it can be manifestations of the sacred, “revealing to us what is
beyond our conscious rational apprehension.” In other words, being more aware of our
bodies and sexual experiences can potentially be a truly sacramental experience. The call,
then, is “not to project the ‘value of phallus … onto our experienced worlds,’ but to make


54 Mircea Eliade, Images and Symbols (New York: Sheed & Ward, 1969), 9 quoted in James B. Nelson,
the ‘fully physical, sweating, lubricating, menstruating, ejaculating, urinating, defecating bodies… the central vehicle of God’s embodiment in our experience.’”

Men, it follows, can reflect on their own bodies and sexual experiences to gain insight into sacramentality as men. While both men and women can experience momentous changes in their lives that point them toward God, there are changes experienced by men, such as certain bodily changes, that reveal them to be sacred and sacramental.

Men can experience sacramental moments of reflection early in their lives with the natural changes that occur in their bodies, which can be quite natural, uncontrollable, and unintentional but also manageable and intentional. In the developmental adolescent years, boys first notice physiological changes, including the appearance of chest and facial hair and the development of a deeper voice. Initially, these changes serve only as signs of their entry into manhood, as boys are rarely given an opportunity to discuss the changes in hindsight or to learn about the changes prior to their occurrence in preparation for them. Such lack of opportunity can be attributed to the fact that boys are encouraged to camouflge their feelings and discouraged from discussing physiologically and psychologically changing moments and experiences. Fathers also miss this opportunity to discuss the changes in their sons’ bodies because they do not know how to give voice to their sons’ experiences. Rather than addressing the situation, men often avoid it altogether, performing what Lillian B. Rubin calls the “approach–avoidance dance.”

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More mature reflection reveals that several of these changes in the male body can be recognized as sacramental. However, such recognition is possible only if men break their silence about and reflect on their experiences through their bodies. To that end, men must become aware of the vulnerabilities of their changing bodies, and “rather than building up a muscular, athletic, erect, brave, wise, protective, competitive, iron body … try to stay closer to real bodies, itching, aging, flowing, hurting, loving, dying, smelling, praying, masturbating, spilling, adorning, fathering, nurturing, growing fat, getting sick.”

Thus, a better awareness and understanding of the symbolic value of changes in the male genitalia, male circumcision, 

semenarche 

(first ejaculation, including nocturnal emissions and masturbation), deepening of the voice, growth of bodily hair (especially chest and facial), and puberty in general through open expression and conversation is essential in evoking their sacramental potential. One prominent Catholic thinker has already embarked on this process. Before calling upon his helpful work, however, a few words of caution are necessary.

Richard Rohr, O.F.M.

Richard Rohr is a Catholic priest in the Franciscan tradition and the founding director of the Center for Action and Contemplation in Albuquerque, New Mexico. Along with Patrick Arnold and Joseph Martos, his works can be categorized within the field of (Catholic) mythopoeticism (see chapter 4). Catholic mythopoeticism shares a common theme with its Christian and secular mythopoetic counterparts: a concern over


maintaining an archetypal model of masculinity. Accordingly, Catholic mythopoeticism is concerned with the themes of “fatherlessness, initiation, wildness/wilderness, male bonding and the feminization of society and the Church.”

While the latest edition of his work (*From Wild Man to Wise Man: Reflections on Male Spirituality*) omits several harsh sections contained in his previous edition (*Wildmen, Warriors and Kings: Masculine Spirituality and the Bible*) and does not directly attack women and feminization, as do Arnold and secular mythopoetic authors in their works, his basic mythopoetic beliefs remain intact.

One section that Rohr omitted was the very first page of the book, which had stated

**WARNING.** This book is not for women. Nor is it for softies, wimps or nerds who intend to stay that way for the rest of their lives… if you are open to being changed, strengthened and deepened, read-on—even if you are a woman, but especially if you want to be a man.

Such a warning comes from his belief that there are decisive masculine and feminine dimensions. Hence, his Center for Action and Contemplation is “geared toward action, which is on the masculine side of spirituality, but it is also a place for contemplation, which is on the feminine side.” Unlike other mythopoetic counterparts, however, his Catholic mythopoeticism encourages men to develop their feminine side and vice versa based on his belief that

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60 For example, the newest edition (2005), omits many definitive sounding claims contained in the 1992 edition of *The Wild Man’s Journey*.


62 Ibid., 5.
the spiritually whole person integrates within himself or herself both the masculine and the feminine dimensions of the human spirit. She or he is androgynous...[having] the ability to be masculine in a womanly way and to be feminine in a manly way. The androgynous person distinguishes the masculine from the feminine, which is a male gift, but also unites the masculine and the feminine, which is the female gift.  

Like the “New Catholic Feminism” discussed in chapter 2, in this (male) quasi-version of a (misguided) pro-feminism, he recognizes the negative consequences of gender stereotypes (i.e., a supposed “natural” male tendency toward violence and dominance) and the good that came out of liberal ideas (i.e., individual worth, freedom, rights, and equality). However, by relentlessly invoking polarity in femaleness and maleness, he is, as another critic says, “perpetuating simplistic gender roles.” Although he never makes outright statements of masculine superiority or feminine inferiority, he claims that the “feminine” virtues, such as “humility, obedience, openness, receptivity, trust, forgiveness, patience and long-suffering... [i]n and of themselves... have no power to move in any outward direction,” but if a woman develops her masculine side, she “will have these strengths and they will make her a more dynamic and integrated person.”  

Moreover, despite speaking out against patriarchy and claiming that some characterizations of masculinity and femininity are false, Rohr simultaneously polarizes the two conceptions, as he does in the following passages:

63 Ibid.,16.  
64 Gelfer, “Identifying the Catholic Men’s Movement,” 44.  
65 Rohr, OFM, The Wild Man’s Journey (1992), 312. I find the definitions of these virtues very limited. Also, according to Gelfer, along with one-dimensional gender characteristics, a discussion of mythopoetic themes, such as the king archetype, father-wound, and the need for initiation, contributes to the “allowing” of relatively diverse masculinities but never actively contributes to “promoting” diverse masculinities. Gelfer, 44, 54; Cf. Ibid., 33-39, 49-54, and 79-90.  
66 Ibid.,140.
We know instinctively that masculinity cannot be the same as patriarchy… it is the other side of feminine energy. It is the other pole, the complement, the balance, the counterpoise…. I am not saying that males are characterized by exclusively masculine energy and that females hold only feminine….

For starters, a masculine spirituality would emphasize movement over stillness, action over theory, service to the world over religious discussions, speaking the truth over social niceties and doing justice instead of any self-serving “charity.” Without a complementary masculine, spirituality becomes overly feminine (which is really false feminine) and is characterized by too much inwardness, preoccupation with relationships, a morass of unclarified feeling and religion itself as a security blanket.

Some believe, as I do too, that biology is also destiny. Our meaning is partly encoded in our body, our genes, our shape and physicality… [F]or men, it has something to do with both carrying and planting seeds. For women, it means receiving protecting and nurturing what is planted. I know some will not agree with me here, particularly some braches of feminism, but I ask you to indulge me.67

Hence, Rohr encourages men to move away from the cultural stereotypes while paradoxically reifying the very gender stereotypes that he encourages them to relinquish.

I am aware that as Rohr wrote this work at a particular time period and in a popular/spiritual writing style. Thus, it is inappropriate to present his conclusions as “scientific” findings. Nevertheless, I believe that application of some of his imagery can be very helpful in constructing masculinities, and thus apply his section on male sexuality (especially that contained in the newest edition).

The Knights of Columbus and Fathers for Good

It is important to briefly discuss first the historical precedents from which authors like Rohr draw their ideas: the Knights of Columbus in general and their group Fathers for Good in particular. Founded in 1882, the Knights of Columbus has sought to mutually “benefit society for Catholic men and their families and was intended to encourage pride.

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67 Rohr, From Wild Man to Wise Man, 8, 10, and 120.
The group recognizes that one “way to illustrate the virtues of a real man of God is by reference to a good soldier,” such as by referring to the need to be “a special-ops dad” and describing “good husbands and fathers” as “true knights for God and country.” As part of its efforts to encourage men to become true fathers, the Knights of Columbus began an initiative in 2008 called Fathers for Good, whose goal “is to equip and inspire men to face the challenges of daily life at work and at home, and to bring them closer to their faith and their families.” Drawing on the existing Knights of Columbus literature, this initiative led to the compilation of the *St. Joseph Series Booklets*, whose topics “cover prayer, manly virtues, saintly models and practical advice and guidance for today’s fathers.”

Just as Rohr tries to strike a balance between secular mythopoeticism and feminism, Fathers for Good is less concerned with emphasizing certain common themes, such as male dominance, militarism, and sports, than its evangelical Protestant Christian counterpart, Dad the Family Shepherd. Fathers for Good strives to “encourage a masculinity founded on the sacraments, such as adoration of the saints and Mary and confession, which leads to a slightly less patriarchal masculinity.”

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69 Ibid., 47.

70 Ibid., 39.


72 Ibid., 40.

73 Ibid., 37, 49; Similarly, the National Conference of Catholic Bishops’ Committee on Marriage and Family attempted to recreate the success of Promise Keepers in a Catholic context by denouncing male dominance and advocating the equality and mutuality of women and men. See National Conference of
Catholic mythopoeticism and Catholic men’s ministry several common threads, particularly an antipathy to sexism and its derivatives, such as sexist language and patriarchy. Nevertheless, both continue to perpetuate a deeply rooted notion of an ontological gender complementarity from which a “soft” conception of masculinity emerges. Despite their progress, made in part by keeping their literature free from militant, chauvinistic, male-headship language, and their honest intentions, they thus continue to polarize gender. I keep this reality in mind as I proceed to apply several useful forms of imagery derived from the very source of my criticism.

**Sacramental Moments for Men**

The Catholic Church mediates the rituals of the seven sacraments in ways that allows its followers to realize that these sacraments reflect the journey of human life, which leads to understanding that sacramental moments are contained not only in ritual but all of life. Similarly, an antecedent to the sacramental moment of changes in a boy’s body is openness in conversation about these changes to allow the boy to understand that he has somehow experienced God through these changes. We can thus “help our own sons by sharing our inner lives with them, our thoughts, our feelings, dreams, and hurts” only after we first recognize our male bodies and the momentous changes that came along with them. The opportunities for this conversation can occur whenever there are changes in one’s body, which are sometimes intermittent, sometimes regular, often

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75 Rohr, *From Wild Man to Wise Man: Reflections on Male Spirituality*, 76.
unintended but certainly intended at times, and frequently dramatic yet occasionally unconscious and mundane.

After a boy first becomes conscious that his penis changes in size, for example, he quickly notices that such change is often uncontrollable. He can then realize that there are two realities of the male penis: hard and soft. While the harder reality outweighs the softer realities in rigidity, the soft outweighs the hard in actuality (as far as the actual presence is concerned). Thus, a conversation about this moment can shed light on both the ultimate control of God and the freedom that we are given by God. It can help us realize that there is “a proper place for both in our lives, vulnerability and strength, letting go and firmness. Wisdom is to know when, where, and how.”76 Through this integrity (i.e., fullness) of one’s experience, then, one can start to make visible the fact that, “The male penis… is a means of making contact, literally ‘reaching out’ for the other, not to hurt or invade, but to pleasure and delight—mutuality!”77 A more authentic knowledge of his body leads a man finally to understand the true function of his inviting body as it reaches out to the self and others and, indeed, directs him to appreciate his body as a symbol of self-gift that is God. Sometimes we do not realize such a reality of one’s penis. Yet, in the unconscious and the mundane, God is still with us, despite our unawareness of the abundant opportunities to notice that God is all around us and already in our bodies.

Perhaps because men are socialized not to exhibit weakness and vulnerability, they often neglect to reflect on their scrotum, more so than their penis, which at least has the “strong” side. The male scrotum is a delicate organ, one that many consider the most

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76 Ibid.,120.
77 Ibid.,120-121.
vulnerable part of the male anatomy; it is sensitive, weak, and defenseless. Ironically, however, Western society has derived some of the strongest sounding expressions from it, with such slang terms as “grow some balls” and “grow a pair” used as a means of commanding one to “toughen up.” The assumption in these phrases, of course, is that the scrotum somehow serves as a symbol for becoming strong(er). Male scrotal energy can certainly represent power and enormous possibilities; after all, male testicles literally carry billions of potential seeds of creation.

Simultaneously, however, the male scrotum also represents a receptacle for and a form of protection for these billions of seeds, “a place of patient ripening, a place of dark, wet mystery, that must be protected and kept warm.”

Gaining a clearer understanding of the male body that includes the testicles directs us toward a heuristic moment. That is, even at the most physical level, even when using a methodology that claims that biology is our destiny, a more authentic recognition of one’s body serves as a personal sacrament that evokes divine visibility of the reality of God and God’s creation. When a man realizes the power of his scrotal energy, he accepts his masculinity as powerful yet tender, defeated yet victorious, and confined yet open to creation. Indeed, one can similarly get a glimpse of the wholeness of God, albeit never sufficiently. Billions of opportunities for gaining this awareness have already been planted in the male body. Man only needs to be aware of and attend to his own body to realize this scrotal energy.

Not all circumstances for male sacramentality come unintentionally. In many cultures, men are initiated into their society via male circumcision. Rohr argues that because the male scrotum, or the “male birth canal,” is largely associated with pleasure,

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Ibid., 122.
“many deemed it necessary for the man to bleed and suffer pain in his penis during initiation…[so that he is] taught the inherent connection between pain and new life.”\(^79\)

Male circumcision, which often occurs in the early stages of his life, can be a traumatic experience, yet it is through such trauma that a man is able, later in his life, to make a symbolic connection with the paradox of life. A man understands that the very intentional act of male circumcision is “a sacred wounding, leading to wisdom and even ‘covenant’ with God!”\(^80\) Despite the dangers of abusing the symbolism by associating all forms of new life with the necessity of pain, it reflects the fundamentally Christian view that life cannot be conceived without somehow giving it away. The moment of pain and all the resulting effects serve as reminders that we not only see God in the pleasures of life but also in pain and hardship.

The male body is subjected to many physical changes during puberty, including the deepening of the voice and the growth of bodily hair, that all have the potential to provide insight into the reality of God, i.e., provide a sacramental experience. Perhaps no physical experience of men opens them to the sacramental potential as dramatically and directly as their initial experience of ejaculation (called, “Semenarche”).\(^81\) Boys’ semenarche, which occurs where the scrotal energy meets the phallic reaching out and

\(^{79}\) Ibid., 122.


coming forth, is a memorable, highly charged event.\textsuperscript{82} Semenarche often occurs unintentionally in the form of a nocturnal emission (commonly known as a “wet dream”) but sometimes intentionally via masturbation. When semenarche occurs during a nocturnal emission, boys often confuse semen with urine, and show surprise rather than reporting pleasure or happiness.\textsuperscript{83} Most boys, even those exposed to sex education, feel unprepared and are secretive about the experience\textsuperscript{84} for one of many reasons, the most obvious of which, as I have repeatedly pointed out, is that they are socialized to camouflage certain experiences. However, some of the secretiveness and unpreparedness come from the fact that most of their education is neither adequate nor sufficiently early, with most education provided after many boys’ experience of semenarche, for it to have a significantly positive effect.\textsuperscript{85} Moreover, as semenarche is a socially invisible event, exemplified by the fact that we do not use the name for the first ejaculation in our vocabulary,\textsuperscript{86} boys deny attaching much significance to the event despite the fact that it is indeed significant in their lives.\textsuperscript{87}

On the other hand, when boys’ semenarche results from masturbation, they are conscious of the experience of the orgasm that accompanies masturbation, and thus remember it with more pleasure and happiness than those whose semenarche occurred via

\begin{footnotes}
\item[82] Ibid., 383.
\item[83] Ibid., 377.
\item[84] Ibid., 379-380.
\item[85] Ibid., 374-382-383.
\item[86] Ibid., 382.
\item[87] Ibid., 382.
\end{footnotes}
a nocturnal emission. Moreover, “semenarche is less anxiety producing” and a more positive experience for boys who had received education prior to the event, as well as for boys with high cognitive capacity, as “a boy’s ability to understand the physical changes of puberty is limited by his cognitive abilities.” Such limitations grow exponentially when one discusses a boy’s ability to understand sacramental significance and the symbolism inherent in his physical changes. Since it helps boys consciously to experience an orgasm but most have not yet developed the cognitive skill to understand the changes occurring in the bodies, it behooves parents and religious leaders—for psychological as well as theological reasons—to discuss the experience of semenarche both prior to and after the event.

All leaders, including the leaders of a household, can help guide boys in making a scared connection to semenarche. In contrast to viewing all forms of masturbation as the same act, making a connection between the sacred and semenarche may help boys to treat this experience as a moment of reflection. Such an approach may lead boys to see that the experience of orgasm is considered “out of this world” for a reason. This moment of realization may serve all of us in realizing our insignificance in relation to the cosmic creation and its Creator, and simultaneously point to the billions of possibilities that we have to be connected to that very Infinity we cannot normally conceive. A boy may

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88 Ibid., 377.
89 Ibid., 379, 383.
91 It is difficult to imagine religious leaders and parents voluntarily having this discussion. Perhaps institutions of education, as part of the sex education for example, can include this discussion in their lesson plans. I believe this kind of education must simultaneously involve the education of the parents, too.
slowly realize that “I’m not always in control, all this is mysterious, but the change is wonderful, and my views on life and my life will never be the same.” Such a realization reflects the “seeds” planted in the boy’s mind on which he can reflect later and see that the Invisible is truly visible after all.

The experience of semenarche is but a single example of how our human experiences are meant to guide us toward God. However, such guidance cannot occur if gender-specific obstacles continue to hinder our conversations regarding our attempts to make ourselves wholly and holier Catholic Christians and citizens. Hence, the leaders of religious institutions and families must help boys to overcome these obstacles, i.e. their labeling of emotions, conversation, and cooperation as not masculine. At the same time, however, we must encourage boys to lead from what we have labeled as masculine values: rationality, intelligence, and ambition. All these characteristics can be, and often are, masculine qualities. Jesus led us from all of these qualities and Christians must follow him as our example par excellence.

Shining a new light on a truer reality of men and Catholic men more specifically—that of the sacramental experience—enables one to evaluate and call for reform of the current Catholic notions of sex and gender complementarity. While the large strides that have been made over the years concerning gender roles in the Catholic Church must be praised and acknowledged, Catholic men and women must continue to find new possibilities for a more just and loving definition of masculinities. I believe this dissertation may serve as a small step toward such a goal.
Conclusion

Ancient and Christian conceptions of sex and gender resulted in part from a long tradition of biblical and dualistic thinking that ultimately gave birth to the notion that there exists essential and irreconcilable differences between men and women. From this development came the Roman Catholic teaching of a complementary model for gender, claiming that all men and women possess qualities and characteristics specific to their sex which yields two sets of appropriate roles for each sex. When subjected to theological, scientific, and cross-cultural examination, however, it has been revealed to have major problems. These problems yield an inadequate theology of a Christian notion of God. This is because a complementary model highlights only certain aspects of God, namely the masculine qualities, and ignores the passive, vulnerable, soft, and gentle characteristics. However, Jesus of Nazareth not only embodied both of these dualistic components but also personified qualities beyond them, including mutual components. Indeed, “His uniqueness lay not in having two natures, one divine and one human, miraculously combined. Rather, he possessed the same human nature we all have, but remarkable and fully open in mutuality with God’s loving power.”92 Hence, a Christian notion of God must comprehensively include a diversity of these characteristics.

Particularly troubling is that, whether directly or indirectly, such complementary imagery continuously associates men with the image of God and women with any image but God. At the social/human level, such a model continues to be the cause of unhealthy, unchangeable, and unjust relationships in which men experience difficulty finding solutions to relationship problems, as the very model in which they live is problematic.

That is, the Catholic model places men outside of the family—the private sphere—into the public sphere when the solution requires that they return to the family. Maintaining such a clear-cut dualistic division between the public and private conceals a significant link between them. Moreover, the appropriate norms described above are neither comprehensive nor adequate because one must move beyond them to better understand the reality that is men. To that end, I will conclude by sharing how experience can contribute to an ongoing religious conversation about sex, gender, and masculinities.

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EPILOGUE

I wanted what all little boys wanted. To be a hero. To ride horses and hit home runs and kill the enemy and never die.

… the readers of history identify with the victors, the tellers of the tale who make themselves the heroes. ‘That means… there are other tales to tell. History is a construct and is created by an interested party, and the interested party is always the powerful and the rich.’

— David Mura, *Where the Body Meets Memory: An Odyssey of Race, Sexuality, and Identity*

A Case for Men’s Experience, Men’s Narrative

Men’s lived experiences appear to be unspeakable, as they are constantly told that they do not have memories other than that of traditional male heroes. There is thus a vacuum in the minds of men, of the past, of the body. The only memories that men are allowed to have, to speak about, to express, is of winning, of being in control, of being invincible, of being active. This is not reality. This is not genuine. This is not what is.

Men must be given the opportunity to claim their narratives. Being penetrated through these narratives, men can finally start to discover a truer self, a self that is filled with more melancholy, grief, and loss as they grow older and wiser. Institutions, including the religious and academic, vigorously and adamantly resist such truth-seeking. The façade that relentlessly reminds men that sharing their experience is less important, less valued, less credible, less academic, and less manly must be removed to unveil the truth. Men’s
stories must be told to make space for recognizing the loss that unyielding gender norms have caused. Men’s (expressed) experience must count. It must guide and encourage other men to reconstruct a more fair, just, loving, and true vision of themselves, one that allows them to pursue good and avoid evil.

My story cannot be fully presented in this limited space. I can, however, provide a vignette of my personal experience as a soldier, forced to play the role for two years. This revealing experience is an illumination of institutional inculcation, its ripple effects, and the kind of collateral harm that an attitude can cause to the greater society. I want to be clear, however, that I experienced several wonderful moments, encounters, and memories during my compulsory military service in Korea. My intention in telling this story is not to make an overarching claim about all persons in the military, nor is it to present the institutional problems as inherent so to conclude that they are inevitable. I do intend, however, to claim that my story is not unique, as many men share similar, if not worse, experiences, and that problems stemming from it reflect the general crisis that such an institutional milieu can and does create in our societies.

**Men Become Real Men after the Service!**

In the midst of my Ph.D. studies in the United States, I received a letter from the Republic of Korea ordering me to return for compulsory military service or face jail time, fines, and investigation of my family. As a student of theology and of an authentic form of “just war” theory, I debated whether I should disregard this order. Since practicing conscientious objection was illegal at that time,¹ I decided to submit to the order in order to avoid jail time and to appease my family. When I made this decision, I was assured by

¹There were some signs of hope for conscientious objection becoming legal for a time, but it remains illegal at the time of this writing.
my friends, who fulfilled the obligation years earlier, that the military would use me in different capacities, given my linguistic abilities and level of education, and that a “desk job” would be waiting for me. Unfortunately, I was assigned to an infantry division notorious for its physically rigorous training. Thus began my 2 years of participant-observation.

While the drill instructors taught me much regarding the military during basic troop orientation and training, I cannot explicitly describe their teachings here due to national security concerns. What I can share is their methodology of persuasion and several of the highlights of my education:

- Be proud to be in uniform and serving the country.
- You become an honorable and legitimate member of society only after serving your country.
- If you evade service, you are forgoing your normal life in Korean society.
- If you drop out during training, you become a dropout (loser) of life.
- Becoming the best soldier possible is the way to fulfill your filial obligations.
- North Korea is our main enemy but other neighboring countries may also be enemies.
- Undertaking and executing your given assignments at all cost is the first priority.
- Keeping the order of ranks is the foundation of the military.
- As such, absolute obedience to the command and commanders is indisputable.
- You live by the command and die by the command.\(^2\)

Evoking guilt (often by referring to one’s parents) and shame (telling one that he is a loser if he has any doubts or trouble meeting expectations) and repeating oft-said phrases regarding male supremacy\(^3\) are all part and parcel of a presupposed military culture that

\(^2\) These principles were not only repeatedly expressed during training and throughout the military career, but also written as “official” teachings. Military of National Defense, *The Field Manual for Basic Troop Orientation/Training* (Seoul, Korea: Ministry of National Defense, 2004) especially numbers 2, 5, 7, 17, 19, 20.

\(^3\) Sometimes the phrases are implicitly expressed by saying that only those who serve in the military are normal and legitimate. Since only physically able Korean men serve, the implication is that women and the
all recruits must simply accept. Throughout one’s life as a compulsory soldier, these notions are reiterated sometimes via “Wednesday mental trainings” or by repeatedly singing military songs inculcating these principles. The names of these songs reflect the belief that (only) men are “high and mighty”: “Fabulous Men We Are”; “True Men”; “We (men) Are the Best,” etc. Other times, these notions are simply restated in everyday conversations. During my service, a day rarely passed in which I heard neither a sentence beginning with “At least, we men…” or a derogatory reference to women or female body parts. During one educational session, I remember an officer stating that men talk all the time about their lives in the military even after they have discharged their duties because men, as a species, find combat situations to be “natural.” For this reason, women, who cannot handle being soldiers, or men who fulfill their requirements in a non-combatant capacity, are not honorable like us.

What I heard and learned was very different from my experience. I did not feel that military life was very “natural” for me. It was difficult for me to view my neighboring country as enemies. I did not consider several of the officers and superiors sufficiently competent to deserve my undivided obedience. I did not think of women as objects of desire that belonged in the home. However, as upsetting as such training tactics were, I could do nothing about them. Nevertheless, I do think that these training tactics “worked” on me, as I believed that I would feel ashamed to face my parents and my nation if I ever spoke up against any of my superiors in any way.

One recruit, however, did speak up. During orientation training, one of the highest-rated trainees among the recruits told a drill sergeant that as a Seventh Day

disabled are not. However, some commonly used phrases are quite blunt, graphic, and explicit, such as “If you are born with a dick, then don’t act like a pussy” or, if you show a sign of weakness, “Are you a girl?”
Adventist, he could not participate in training on Sundays, but offered to do extra hours of training on other days of the week in compensation. This form of speaking up was considered a form of “disobedience” that warranted sending him to the military prison. When he was given another opportunity to disavow his religious practice, he again refused, and offered to do any kind of rigorous training as an alternative. His offer was again rejected, and he was later sentenced to serve time in a civil jail. His example showed us all what would happen to us if we displayed the slightest form of resistance. Indeed, after witnessing this example, I was afraid to voice any opinion other than to yell out, “Yes, sir!”

I entered the service with critical eyes, a mind filled with the hermeneutics of suspicion, and a disapproving attitude regarding the military’s language of gender. Moreover, I entered the service as the oldest (30 years old) of nearly 2000 trainees, and thus likely much less impressionable than many of the young soldiers in their early twenties who entered with me. Despite these qualities, I found myself saying, doing, and thinking the very things that I had criticized before I had entered, especially as I neared the end of my service, a time at which I enjoyed a tremendous amount of power as a sergeant. Even with my preparation before entering, I required quite a long period to adjust to the world outside the fences of the military after my discharge. Even at my age, I had unknowingly lived in the physical and mental constructions of this military culture. I can imagine the dire consequences for many soldiers who are younger, less prepared, less informed, and less aware. For these young men, not doing anything is not an option.

On those Sundays when we were not on an assignment or in combat-situation training, we were free to attend religious services. There I met a group of young Catholic
seminarians from different parts of the regiment and division. They too had participated in the same training and practices and had lived in the same culture as the other soldiers in their division, and, before they had known it, had become “true men.” As the military provides no “adjustment education” at the end of service to prepare us for a non-military society—which I think that all men desperately need before discharge—these seminarians return to their seminaries, become priests, and function as leaders in their communities who employ the same authoritarian and commanding attitudes toward their subordinates and faithful followers that they had employed in the military. Because they had been too young for deep reflection when they had served in the military, they are often not conscious of this connection. More gravely, when they cannot regain the power that they had once enjoyed over their subordinates in the military, they often express their frustration in forms of aggression in their churches. Hence, it is extremely urgent that the Roman Catholic Church in Korea moves beyond constructed authoritarianism if it is to serve God and its neighbors in a just, loving, and Christian way.⁴

To be certain, this phenomenon is not specific to Korean Roman Catholic seminarians or to the ROK military. Anyone who has been influenced by any institution to think hierarchically or complementarily regarding gender needs to move beyond this thinking. Anyone who seeks to regain power once enjoyed during military service, in his work, school, team, government, or family can turn violent. One must actively bring about change to avoid this potential harm. Providing readjustment education when nearing the end of the service may be one means of doing so. Providing education

⁴There is no religious exemption for seminarians. While there are many social movements for more exemptions in South Korea, I am not aware of any such efforts from the authorities of the Roman Catholic Church in South Korea.
regarding gender justice in our churches may be another. Regardless of the form that they
use, we must preach the truth of gender reality to men and women and work to create a
society that is pleasing to God’s eyes. To better serve God, to better serve God’s people,
and to be better Christians, we must see such a one-sided, militaristic, hierarchal,
authoritarian male construction as problematic, acknowledge the fullness of our beings,
and accept the reality of diversity within our categories of gender.

It is clear to me that acknowledging the current problems and reforming the
Catholic Church and Korean society are difficult tasks. I cannot imagine that institutions
would readily agree to tackle these problems at this time. However, many people from
my parents’ generation never thought that they would live to see something similar to the
Second Vatican Council in their lifetimes. Likewise, I despair that a sufficient number of
the changes which I advocate, for the Korean Catholic Church and the Roman Catholic
Church as a whole, will not occur in my lifetime. I do, however, sincerely hope and
faithfully pray that I am wrong.
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326


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VITA

Hoon Choi received a Bachelor of Arts degree from Boston College, where he majored in Art History and Theology in the School of Arts and Sciences. He holds a Master of Divinity degree from Yale University, the Divinity School. Hoon has earned his Doctor of Philosophy in theology from Loyola University Chicago, where he has also taught. His professional interests include Roman Catholic moral theology, trans-cultural gender studies, and issues of race in theology. Hoon lives in Chicago, Illinois most of the time. The rest of his immediate family lives in Seoul, South Korea.