Overseeing the peer review process is almost certainly the most challenging aspect of editing an academic journal. The real dark art is not just the whip-cracking that is necessary in order to get reviews back within (hopefully) a couple of months, but selecting the right reviewers in the first place. In my time in academic publishing I have seen some startlingly inappropriate decisions by editors when selecting reviewers, who are often wildly unqualified for the article in question (a certain breed of editor is too timid to aim for the very best reviewers, opting instead to mine their personal network, which is a one-way ticket to mediocre reviews, and also eventually alienating colleagues). I’m sure, too, anyone who regularly submits journal articles has received reviews from one of these folks: I remember receiving a rejection from one religious studies journal where a review started with the words, “As an urban designer I am not ideally suited to reviewing this paper, but…” I kid you not. The skill in selecting the right reviewer comes down to finding somebody who is at once knowledgeable of the subject matter, sympathetic to the worldview and methodologies of the author, yet also capable of suggesting improvements appropriate to the aims of the article.

This is no easy task at the best of times, but sometimes submissions come along that make things that bit more challenging, such as this issue’s first paper from Roland Boer, The Patriarch’s Nuts: Concerning the Testicular Logic of Biblical Hebrew. I knew about this article before it crossed my desk because Roland was having a fun time with it, and others, on his blog. Roland was sending salaciously entertaining articles with titles such as the bestiality- and necrophilia-inspired Hittites, Horses and Corpses to conservative journals in order to see how they went about rejecting them: he would then report back to his readers the content of the reviews and his sometimes amusing—sometimes cutting replies to the editors. Now I enjoy Roland’s writing, and have published two of his previous papers in JMMS, Skin Gods: Circumcising the Built Male Body (which brings a surprising amount of visitors to the journal via “body builder penis” Google searches) and Of Fine Wine, Incense and Spices: The Unstable Masculine Hegemony of the Books of Chronicles. But as these amusing posts were unfolding I knew the inevitable conclusion: I’m eventually going to get one of these tricky articles as a JMMS submission and have to deal with it fairly, and hopefully not be exposed in a blog post along the way as having—in the spirit of the article—no balls.

And so it was that I found myself trying to find reviewers that would be sympathetic to the article, yet offer some rigorous analysis. The first challenge was the pretense of anonymity: most people qualified to comment on the article knew about Roland’s pranks; so the concept of double blind review had to go out of the
window, even if one reviewer preferred to entertain a little game of anonymity, suggesting, “let’s call the author Roland Barthes.” But careful choice of reviewers results in orthodox reviews for even the most unorthodox of articles. The first reviewer, for example, started her review with:

I like it, it is fascinating material, a new view and it’s humorous. The author sets out the lines of thoughts clearly, as well as the semantic scope, and the words themselves. The yarekh part I found most convincing.

This comment highlights a particular challenge for some reviewers: humor. From previous JMMS reviews, it seems most reviewers will accommodate all manner of positions communicated in the text—the more horrific or marginalized the better—but having a chuckle is most definitely frowned upon. Humor, it seems, is one of the last transgressive academic tools left to us. The second reviewer saw the value of this at the beginning of his review:

The article is clearly humorous but there is a serious point underlying it. I think at the very least the case has been made to re-evaluate the conventional translations which, as is pointed out, are quaint and at times just ludicrous. Time will tell if there needs to be a wholesale change in translation but I think the case needs to be taken seriously.

And so too the third reviewer who, despite offering extensive critical queries in the original manuscript via the Track Changes function, saw the humor to be its most redeeming aspect, concluding:

I think you have a clear choice. On the one hand, the submission is lively, provocative and well-written. On the other, it is not going to convince any biblical scholars, and certainly did not convince me. The sole argument for identifying halatsayim and motnayim with the testicles is the dual form, which could equally apply to hips or to the abs (also plural), or be idiomatic, referring to the symmetry of the body. On this something of a mountain is built ... So, publish it as a lively contribution to the discourse of the Bible, masculinity and sexuality, but don’t expect anyone to agree with it.

The serious point is not just that it is tricky to find genuinely suitable reviewers, but that unorthodox articles swiftly expose the knowledge regulation that goes on within journal publishing, specifically the self-regulation of journal editors. It doesn’t take too much deviance from the norm for people to throw their hands up in the air and claim, “this is not academic writing!” And even when one does not hold this opinion personally, one feels the pressure to conform to the norm—to play the game—in order not to be expelled from the academic club. It is the peer review process that is usually leveraged to provide the regulatory function: editors who succumb to such pressures usually refrain from the honest reply to the author of “I don’t want to publish this kind of article” and will instead select reviewers they know will reject the article without meeting it fairly on its own terms (wasting everyone’s time in the process).
It is rather depressing that I perceive it necessary to be ballsy in order to publish articles that are academically-rigorous-yet-transgressive, as one would think/hope that is the very business of a certain type of academic writing (in the humanities–social sciences space, at least). And, furthermore, if we cannot do this in an open access journal that does not answer to subscribers or advertisers, we are truly lost.

So to all authors of academically-rigorous-yet-transgressive articles: JMMS is the place for you. I promise that if you send me your work I will find reviewers that will give it a fair go. I will send you reviews that offer constructive comments, and will listen carefully if you provide a compelling argument to counter those comments. And together we’ll publish some interesting work, and modestly change the world for the better.

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The Patriarch’s Nuts: Concerning the Testicular Logic of Biblical Hebrew

Roland Boer

This is a study of the testicular logic or worldview (ideology) of the Hebrew Bible, with a specific focus on halatsayim, motnayim and yarekh. While the first two form a curious double pair, being both dual terms and two words for the same sense—testicles—the word yarekh has a far more complex semantic cluster, one that includes thigh, hip, hip joint, side, base and of course balls. In dealing with the first two terms, I seek to uncover the way a gonad linguistic economy stretches out to include courage, strength, fear and trembling, active participation in their own right, and the pressing need for males to bind them up and protect them from harm (usually rendered with the innocent “girding one’s loins”). From there I pass to the subtleties of yarekh, exploring the way this semantic cluster gives voice to the inner workings of a complex spunk economy. In particular, this section deals with the “yarekh shake” (Gen 24:2 and 9; 47:29); the excruciating knee in the nads experienced by Jacob in Genesis 32; the prairie oyster stew of Ez 24:3-4; the globular base of the lamp stand in Ex 25:31; and the vivid and active sense that attends yatsa’ halatsayim (Gen 35:11; 1 Kgs 8:19 and 2 Chr 6:9) and yots’e yerekh (Gen 46:26; Ex 1:5; Judg 8:30), which is really the burst of sperm from the end of a man’s cock as a designator of his offspring. Throughout, a consistent effort has been made to use a term for testicles no more than once.

The intention of every male eater [of testicles] is quite clear: to increase his potency. The best thing of course is to use the testicles of the most potent animal. In Spain these are regarded as the fighting bulls from the bullring, and of these the fiercest fighting bulls from the most renowned bullrings. Consequently, in the famous Florian restaurant in Barcelona you are served a bull’s testicles, accompanied not only by garlic and parsley, but by the name of the bull, its weight, a brief history, the pedigree, the place and time of its death and the name of the matador responsible. (Dekkers, 2000, p. 108)
The Hebrew Bible is full of balls. And given that those of us of Middle Eastern background are among God's hairier creatures, the Bible is full of some shaggy baubles indeed. It is all very well in the polite circles of (usually religiously driven) academia to speak of the dominant patriarchies of the Bible or of the masculinities that saturate many of its texts, but these are convenient abstractions, a relieved stride towards the euphemisms that enable us to avoid the earthiness of those texts. So I prefer to speak of nuts, onions, oysters, apples, footballs, call them what you will.2

This essay is a simple exercise in linguistic terminology, or rather, it investigates the words used in Hebrew to designate testes. I undertake this assignment with two basic assumptions concerning language. The first is that words never operate in isolation; they are part of semantic clusters that produce both the richness of language and difficulties for translators (at a micro-level). The second is that the mechanisms of language are like architecture, for that machinery provides a direct window onto the zeitgeist (or, as I prefer, the ideologies) and thereby the social formation of its users.

Clusters and Ideologies
Let me say a little more concerning these theoretical points before fondling a few biblical bangers. The idea of semantic clusters works in two directions. A semantic cluster may be described as a clan of meaning, in which a word sharing the same root belongs to the same clan. This is particularly true of Hebrew, where often verb, noun and adjective may share the same consonantal root and thereby belong to the same clan. Secondly, semantic clusters operate in a situation where the same word may be used for a range of (although not always clearly) related meanings. For example, the word yarekh may mean genitals, thigh, hip, hip joint, side, base, deepest hollow, or recess. In this case, these various senses are obviously connected, but one applies—or so goes the advice to budding translators—the most appropriate sense depending on the literary context. In what follows I operate with a somewhat different assumption, namely that whenever a word is used it evokes, however implicitly and contextually, the other senses of its semantic cluster. That is, I am interested not in the sparseness of meaning but in its richness and fullness. At least a couple of implications flow from these points: the idea of semantic clusters illuminates the perpetual problem of lack of fit in translations, for what we have so often is a partial overlap between two semantic clusters rather than a tight fit.3

Further, semantic clusters also lead to the delectable uncertainty of translation, the sense that one can never be absolutely sure that this word is the best one for a translation.

My other theoretical point is that the workings of language provide an unwitting insight into ideology. In brief, I take ideology in the classic Marxist sense as unfolding in two related directions: it designates false consciousness, specific beliefs or opinion concerning a vital matter (privilege, wealth etc) that are not only mistaken but support an unjust status quo. But ideology is also—and more neutrally—a way of mediating the complex reality of the world and our places within it (Barrett, 1991, pp. 18-34; Larraín, 1983, 1983; Dupré, 1983, pp. 238-44). If the first type of ideology can be dispensed with, the second is here to stay. And if the first requires critique, the second needs description and understanding. Much more may be said on
ideology, but that is not my task here (see, for example, Žižek, 1994; Eagleton, 1991; Jameson, 2009, pp. 315-63), save to make one further point: the power of ideology increases in a direct ratio to its ability to remain hidden, to seem natural and part of the way things are.

How, then, does language provide a window into ideology? I do not mean the oft-repeated assertion that the way to understand a people and a culture is through their language. Or rather, I take this self-evident truth and give it a twist: it is not the content of the language that counts, the ideas and beliefs it seeks to express directly, but the forms and structures—or what I call the machinery and workings—of language that provide unwitting insights into the deeper patterns of ideology, precisely those that everyone assumes to be natural. This is where the analogy with architecture is illuminating: in the same way that the form—the patterns, lines and fashions—of architecture express most directly the zeitgeist of an age (Jameson, 1991, pp. 97-129; 1998, pp. 162-89), so also does the form of language give voice to the structuring ideological assumptions of those who deploy it.

The same applies to the albondigas of the Bible: three terms appear with significant frequency: *yarekh*, *halatsayim* and *motnayim*. Each in their own way shows the extraordinary pervasiveness of an erectile economy that rivaled any in the ancient world. One or two other words also occur, such as *'ashek*, as in the poor man with the crushed testicle (*meroah 'ashek*) in Lev 21:20 who is forbidden, along with anyone else who has a blemish, from approaching the altar for offerings. *'ashek* is but a solitary occurrence, although it does include within its cluster *shkhh*, which appears only as the Hiphil participle *mashkim* in Jeremiah 5:8, where the Jerusalemites are described as “horny [meyuzanim] stallions with massive clangers [mashkim]”, or perhaps “horny, well-hung stallions” (Carroll, 1986, p. 178). In what follows I begin with some brief comments on *halatsayim* and *motnayim*, after which I move onto the intriguing and many-folded *yarekh*.

**Of Loins, their Binding and So Forth**

The two more obvious terms in the lizard logic of the Hebrew Bible are *halatsayim* and *motnayim*. Strictly speaking, both terms overlap so much that they are usually translated as “loins,” a wonderful euphemism that is supposed to designate that section of the body between the ribs and the hip bones (*halatsayim*) or the muscles binding the abdomen to the lower limbs (*motnayim*)—abs, in other words. Yet there is one curious, usually unexplained feature of both terms, hinted at in the brilliant older translation as “‘loins”: both words end in the rare dual form. As any student of introductory Hebrew knows, two classes of dual forms remain, one less obvious (waters, heavens, Egypt, and occasionally Jerusalem), the other far more obvious, for they refer to natural pairs relating to the body: eyes, ears, hands, feet, lips, hands (but also shoes, horns and wings). A question springs forth: why are the terms usually rendered loins or abs in the dual form? We are, I would suggest, clearly in the territory of the little boys, of frick and frack—a suggestion that will become clearer as the argument stretches out below. In fact, one wonders whether the Bible is engaged in emphatic overkill, for not only do we have the rare dual form for *halatsayim* and *motnayim*, but we also have two terms that mean the same thing—
as the parallelism in Isa 11:5 shows all too well. Is this a case of naming each of the twins with a name that evokes its brother?

With that basic linguistic point established, it is possible and somewhat astonishing to see how extensively the sperm factory has spread itself through the terminology of human emotions, activity and life. These skittles may actually bless someone (Job 31:20), tremble (Is 15:4), have phantom pregnancies (Jer 30:6 (see Carroll, 1986, pp 574-5)), be strapped up with undies or, as it is quaintly put, a loincloth (Job 38:3; 40:7; Is 5: 27; see further below), or with the “underwear of faithfulness” (Isa 11:5), or, if one is feeling down, sackcloth (Is 32:11). And these references apply purely to the minority member of this pair—*halatsayim*.

The term that hangs lower, larger and dominates the scene is *motnayim*. I wish to stress three features of these tallywags. First, they are the seat of courage and strength (Job 40:16; Nah 2:2; Prov 30:31; 1 QH 2:7; 8:33). Perhaps the greatest assertion of this power is not the sword that may hang over the vital region, but the spermatic spluttering pen. In a rare moment of scribal self-referentiality, we find in Ez 9: 2, 3 and 11 the curious phrase *weqeseth hasofer bemotnayw*, usually rendered as something like “a writing case at his side,” or as the King James Version daringly suggests, “a writer’s inkhorn by his side.” While *qeseth* is a hapax legomenon that most assume to be a “writing-case” or perhaps “inkpot,” I would suggest a tool of the one to follow, who is none other than the *sofer*, the scribe, one who writes and numbers; it is the participle of the verb *sfr*. In other words, what we have here is “the scribal pen(is) upon his potatoes”; *qeseth hasofer* is nothing less than another term for this uber-scribe’s dong. Or, as Sir George Mansfield Cumming-Smith, the head of the British spy service (1909-26), said when he heard that semen is an excellent invisible ink, “every man his own stylo.”

Despite all this power, they may also be broken (Ezek 21:11 [ET 21:6]), loosed (Is 45:1), crushed (Deut 33:11; Sir 30:12), afflicted (Ps 66:11), filled with anguish (Isa 21:3; Nah 2:11), burn in illness (Ps 38:7), or be struck through (Deut 32:22; Sir 32:22). One may also, with due preparation, peer at God’s whirligigs (Ezek 1:27; 8:2), but you will never quite be the same again (see more below on Jacob’s nuts). More than seeing the world from the end of one’s penis, these bullets are the seat and source of a man’s strength. It is not for nothing that Rehoboam says to the Israelites who demand a relaxing of the onerous conditions of service from Solomon’s rule, “My limp cock is thicker than my father’s cubes” (1 Kgs 12:10; 2 Chr 10:10) (see especially Boer, 1996).

The second item worth emphasizing is that a man’s love apples are not merely the object of a verb, for they may also be the subject, actively setting an agenda of their own. So we find that doohickeys may well be full (Isa 21:3), arise (Deut 33:11), shake (Ps 69:24 [ET 69:23]; Ez 29:7—on emendation), stand up, (Ez 29:7), be a flood marker (Ez 47:4), and even boast (1 QH 10:33), but also—should one forget to observe due hygiene—fester away (Ps 44:20 [ET 44:21]—with emendation). We saw the same situation with *halatsayim* a little earlier, where a man’s bolivers may take on a mind of their own and bless someone, if not God himself.

At one level, these preliminary conclusions should come as no surprise, for the overlaid and often conflictual patriarchies of the Bible are well known, at least at a general, theoretical level. However, in the nitty-gritty realm of language we can see
how pervasive and entrenched that world of the willie is. The basic sense of *halatsayim* and *motnayim*—duals we must remember that refer to a man’s marbles—soon spreads to include courage, strength and weakness, so much so that they take an active role in the world apart from their owner. Their importance is indicated by the fact that they become the place where one hangs all that is vital, along with the vitals that already hang there.

Yet—and thirdly—as with any hegemony, this one of the boobos is not always as swaggering as one might expect. Those squishy, wrinkled pouches also show some vulnerability, susceptible to crushing, trembling and even unwelcome burning feelings and the odd festering. Hence the overwhelming concern with “girding one’s loins” in the Hebrew Bible. As we might expect by now, “girding” is a euphemism for a much more specific act. What a man actually did was strap up or bind (*hgr* and the noun *hagor*) his punching bag as part of getting dressed and preparing to head off somewhere (Ex 12:10; 2 Sam 20:8; 1 Kgs 2:5; 20:32; 2 Kgs 4:29: 9:1; Dan 10:5; so also the *hapax legomenon* of *shns* in 1 Kgs 28:42), or more strongly capture and imprison them (*’sr*) as one does enemies (Job 12:18). Even more specifically, a man puts on the close-fitting loincloth (*’zr* and the noun *’ezur*), a term that should really be rendered the “egg bag” (2 Kgs 1:8; Isa 11:5; Jer 1:17; Ez 23:15). Or, in Jeremiah’s words, “the egg bag [ha’ezur] clings to [dhavaq] a man’s eggs” (Jer 13:11). As Eilberg-Schwartz points out (1993, pp. 101-2), albeit without the specific reading of *motnayim*, this reference comes from Jeremiah’s parable of the “loincloth,” in which the closeness of the cloth to a man’s balls is a somewhat erotic image of the closeness of God to the men of Israel.

Precisely how a man strapped himself up said much about his toughness and/or importance. For instance, to wear a leather cock sack (*’ezur ‘or*, 2 Kgs 1:8) was obviously a sign of the rugged wilderness and thereby the ruggedness of its wearer—as we find with Elijah (2 Kgs 1:8). On the other hand, if a man had done wrong and feared divine wrath, then rough and scratchy sackcloth would take the place of the loincloth (1 Kgs 20:31-2; Jer 48:37; Am 8:10), which suggests that the biblical mark of repentance was the act of scratching one’s crotch, obsessively. And of course one longed to take it off at the first opportunity (Isa 20:2).

Under normal circumstances a careful strapping of a man’s seeds would be done with a soft cloth so that they didn’t bounce about on a long trot (Jer 13:1-4). But if one happened to be a priest, then one took extra care. The deep importance of wrapping and strapping a man’s soft marshmallows is exhibited no better than in Ex 28:42 (see also Ez 44:18). We are on Mt. Sinai with Moses and Yahweh, with the latter holding forth on the interior decoration of the tabernacle and the priests garments (Exodus 25-31) in what turns out to be the main reason Yahweh called Moses to Sinai in the first place (see Boer, 2001). In the text in question, Yahweh provides Moses with instructions as to the garments the priests are to wear in the future (George, 2009, pp. 5-6), especially the *mikhnese-vad*, which are to cover everything from *motnayim we’adh yerekhayim*. Usually one finds the first phrase rendered as “linen breeches,” which misses the soft, silky nature and high quality of what are really underpants—so “best quality linen undies.” And in the phrase *motnayim we’adh yerekhayim* we have not so much a zone of the body described—from “loins to thighs” as most would have it—but an emphatic usage that stresses the importance of the priests’ nicknacks. *Motnayim* we have met and *yarekh* we will...
meet shortly, but it is worth noting that yarekh appears here in a rare dual form, yerekhayim. In that light, I would suggest that both words really refer to the same vulnerable sacks—so let me suggest “crystals and diamonds,” to enhance their value of course. In sum, these priests are to have “the finest linen underwear to cover their flesh, especially their vital diamonds.” They must be afraid of something if they need such protection, for no matter how much a man might try to protect them by binding a loincloth around his bijoux de famille, they remain exceedingly fragile.

Yarekh: Shaken, Kneed, Stewed and Luscious

Thus far I have been interested in the obvious terms for ping and pong, noting how they form a crucial matrix for understanding the worldview of the biblical Hebrew. But now I come to my prize exhibit, a far more subtle term that evinces the full workings of semantic clusters: yarekh. The basic sense of yarekh, at least according to Koehler and Baumgartner’s lexicon, is the “fleshy part of the upper thigh” (Koehler, Baumgartner, & Stamm 2001, vol. 1, p. 439), or more generally the region between one’s hips and upper thighs. Within its semantic cluster we also find thigh, hip, hip joint, side, base, hollow or recess. But it also means couilles.

The Yarekh Shake

So let us begin our exploration of yarekh with what I would like to call the “yarekh shake” of Genesis 24:2 and 9, as well as Genesis 47:29. In these cases, one grabs another man’s genitals and makes an oath. So, in Genesis 24:2-3 we find, “Put your hand in the place of yerekhi and I will make you swear by Yahweh, the God of heaven and the earth,” while in Genesis 47:29 the text reads, “Put your hand in the place of yerekhi and promise to deal loyally and truly with me.” The implication: if you don’t abide by this oath, may Yahweh rip your bloody rocks off! Or, as Ullendorf puts it in his quaint prose, “the sacredness attributed to this organ would lend special solemnity to an oath of this character” (Ullendorf, 1979, p. 445).

The context for the first yarekh handshake is Abraham’s concern in Genesis 24 that he may well be in the grave before Isaac gets around to choosing a wife (Gunkel (1997 [1964], p. 244) indeed argues that in its initial form the story may have included Abraham’s death). So Abraham calls on his old, trusted and nameless slave to swear that he, the slave, will not procure a wife from among the Canaanite women but find one from among Abraham’s own relatives (the incest taboo notwithstanding). Eventually the slave will set out to bribe Rebekah to come and marry Isaac (Gen 24:10-61), but not before Abraham tells him to grab Abraham’s own nutmegs and swear that he will find a relative for Isaac to marry. Verse two has the instruction and verse nine its execution, although one gains the impression from the way the story is structured that the slave has taken hold of Abraham’s swingers when instructed to do so in verse two and then fondles the patriarch’s doodads during the entire exchange between the two of them (until verse eight). This is certainly the literary effect of the passage, in which the well-hung origins of the Abrahamic religions sit snugly in a servant’s hands.

The context for the other occurrence in Gen 47:29 is very similar. Here the ageing and fading Israel/Jacob calls on Joseph to grab his father’s danglers and promise not to bury him in Egypt, but to take him back to Canaan and bury him with
his fathers. Here we find the same phrase: “Put your hand in the place of my yarekhi.”

A number of features stand out in these two stories: the one who has his cojones fondled is old and close to death; only the one who swears the oath grasps the family jewels of the one to whom he swears; handling a man’s shaggy bearings has profound legal implications; the oath concerns clan matters, either finding a woman for a son among one’s own relatives or ensuring that one is buried with one’s ancestors; yarekh obviously concerns a range of very legal matters in relation to continuity and descent, in short, what issues from the patriarch’s chestnuts (on that see more below).

Jacob’s Nuts and Co.

Can the same be said for other occurrences of the term? In some cases, yes, but in other cases yarekh would need to swing a little to incorporate the sense of low hangers. Let us take the more obvious instances first, for here we find that translators—for the sake of good religious decency—are all too keen to hide these biblical jingleberries from public view, slipping on a pair of briefs if not a full cloak as soon as possible. One such case concerns the knackers of yet another patriarch in Genesis 32, which should really be called the story of Jacob’s nuts. At this moment in the narrative, Jacob is about to return to Canaan to meet his brother, Esau. Both are resplendent in clans, cattle and armed men, but Jacob is left alone at the ford of the Jabbok where he wrestles all night, desperately and alone, with a “man” who turns out to be God—that is, his demons, his past, his fears for the future, his estranged brother. Unable to prevail over Jacob, this God touches Jacob on kaf-yerekh (Gen 32:26, 33 [ET 25, 32]). Now, this phrase is usually rendered as the “hollow of the thigh” or the “socket of the hip joint” (Gunkel, 1997 [1964], p. 347; Brett, 2000, pp. 98-9), with the rabbinic commentators going so far as to identify the sciatic nerve (Jennings, 2005, p. 253). But the more basic sense of kaf is hand, which is a common euphemism for penis, so I would suggest that kaf-yerekh simply designates Jacob’s block and tackle. Picture the scene for a moment: some thug accosts Jacob at the ford but can’t prevail over him, so in the tradition of street-fighting he kneels him in the nads. Despite the excruciating pain, in which Jacob’s itchy and scratchy (kaf-yerekh Ya’aqov—verse 26/25) are turned inside out (teqa’), he hangs on for a blessing. Once granted, Jacob limps from the scene because of his excruciatingly painful yarekh (verse 31/32). At this point the Hebrew text is a little too hasty in seeking an etymological explanation for what went on, suggesting that this story explains why Israelites do not eat the schlong and stones (verse 33/32) of an animal. But the true etymology of the story shows up a little earlier, for in the blessing, Jacob has his name changed to Israel, meaning “God struggles” or “the one who struggles with God.” For most men a solid knee in the nut cups makes one feel as though you have met your maker. Make that a blow to the plums by a divine thug and it certainly does feel like one has seen the face of God (Pen’iel—verse 31/30).

The evidence for the bean bag bias of yarekh is certainly thickening. Let me be perfectly clear: I seek to give due attention to this sense of yarekh where appropriate but I do not wish to extend this meaning beyond what it can reasonably bear. For instance, in Ezekiel 24:3-4 the text reads:
Set on the pot, set it on
pour in water also;
put in it pieces of flesh,
all the good pieces,
yarekh and shoulder;
fill it with choice bones.

Now the usual translation of yarekh here is “thigh,” but given the polemical context and the semantic cluster of the term, I would suggest that “prairie oyster” is perfectly viable. So, along with the flesh, shoulder and bones, this text provides a basic recipe for a delicious stew. Further, in the summary of Samson’s slaughter (yet again) of the Philistines, “hip and thigh” (shoq al-yarekh)\(^1\) in Judg 15:8 may simply be rendered “he smote them hip and nut sack”—much like the expression “arse over tit.” And then the description of the lamp stand—that is the menorah—in the tabernacle (Ex 25:31) is more than suggestive. The text reads yarekhah weqanah, usually rendered “base and shaft,” but given the obvious nature of the arrangement, I would suggest that “globes and pole” is both a fairer translation and reveals the ideological workings of a text like this.

Out in the Cluster

What, then, of the other uses of yarekh? Before we brush over these senses of the term, let me invoke the idea of semantic cluster. I agree that it would be silly to argue that every occurrence of yarekh means the boys down under, although I stress that in some cases (those I have surveyed above) that sense has been suppressed far more than it should have been. However, even if the meaning of gooseberries is not explicit, I suggest that whenever the word is used it implicitly evokes its full semantic cluster. One sense may rise to the surface above the others, but it is structurally connected to those other senses; without them it would be orphaned. This argument has ramifications for the salami logic of Hebrew and those who used that language, for beneath a range of apparently innocent meanings we also find the charlies. So, for example, the primary meaning of yarekh is often “thigh”: one strikes a yarekh with one’s hand (Jer 31:19; Ez 21:17) and one straps a sword to one’s yarekh (Ex 32:27; Jud 3:16, 21; Ps 45:4; see also Neh 4:18 [ET 4:12]). Or the word may, metaphorically, mean a “side,” especially of the tabernacle (Ex 40:22, 24; Num 3:29, 35) and perhaps also of the altar (Lev 1:11; 2 Kgs 16:14). However, if we keep in mind my comments concerning semantic clusters, then even in these cases the buttons are never too far from the surface. You may indeed strap your sword to your thigh, but as you do so the sense of yarekh incorporates the clock weights between your legs, of which the sword is but a prosthetic addition. Or when you refer to the tabernacle, you may also be invoking the tabernacle’s orchestra stalls, or indeed the altar’s clappers.

Nevertheless, an astute reader of the Hebrew Bible will object that on two occasions—Numbers 5 and Song of Songs 7—yarekh actually refers a woman’s
equipment. The appearance in Numbers 5—where we have the ludicrous and magical procedure for a man to verify or falsify his vague jealousies concerning his wife’s possible infidelities (see further Boer, 2006)—refers quite clearly to a woman’s yarekh. The magic potion (“waters of bitterness”) concocted by the priest-cum-witch-doctor is supposed to cause her yarekh to fall away, at least if she is guilty (Num 5:21, 22, 27). Is yarekh a thigh in this case? Is it a womb and thereby parallel with beten? Or is it her cunt that must, if she is guilty, sag like that of old woman? The last sense (without the sagging) is supported by the Song of Songs 7:2, where we read: “Your curved cunt (yerekhayik) is like ornaments, handwork of an artisan.” But perhaps yarekh in both these cases refers only in a secondary manner to the vagina. Let me put it this way: if we keep in mind the title of that old AC/DC song, She’s Got Balls, then the use of yarekh in these situations may refer to the fact that she does in fact have cannon balls, as in she won’t take no shit.15 Or it may be a more earthy reference to what are variously known as meaty flaps or luscious lips.

Conclusion
I have been engaged primarily in an exploration of what may be called the gonad economy of biblical Hebrew, although I have on a couple of occasions noted the implicit fragility of these exposed and swinging bags of gristle. Throughout my argument has been the assumption that at this formal level of linguistic usage—in which halatsayim and motnayim become key terms for strength and weakness, bravery and illness, even actors in their own right and in which the semantic cluster of yarekh exercises a subtle extension into oaths, tabernacles, lamp stands, culinary delights and vital engagements with the divine—we can trace a pervasive albeit inconsistent ideology of testicular dominance that has worked its way into the sinews and fibers of the language itself.

The splattered supremacy shows up best in one usage I have kept until now, namely, the two phrases yatsa’ halatsayim and yots’e yerekh. The first of these (found in Gen 35:11; 1 Kgs 8:19 and 2 Chr 6:9) was once translated with a phrase that I still use in reference to my children, “fruit of one’s loins,” but the second (Gen 46:26; Ex 1:5; Judg 8:30) usually makes do with “offspring.”16 We can do much better than that, for yatsa’ halatsayim really means “the issue of his spunk holders,” while yots’e yerekh should be “those going out of ye olde creamery.” For these terms evoke a very earthy, active image, much like the money shot in porn, the spermatic spurt in which a male can already see his descendants leaping forth from the end of his dick.17 Actually, we can come even closer to the Hebrew, keeping mind the alliteration of both yatsa’ halatsayim and yots’e yerekh: ball burst, or perhaps baby blast, or rather, given the linguistic logic, father lava.

References

——. (2010). Too many dicks at the writing desk, or, how to organise a prophetic sausage-fest. Theology and Sexuality 16(1), 95-108.


**Notes**

1 Transliteration of Hebrew follows the General-Purpose style as per the Society of Biblical Literature Style Guide.

2 A non-exhaustive list includes albondigas, apples, bangers, baubles, beechnum’s pills, bean bag, bearings, berries, bijoux de famille, bird’s eggs, bolivers, boobooos, boys down under, bullets, bum balls, buttons, cannon balls, charlies, chestnuts, clangers, clappers, clock weights, coffee stalls, coin purse, couilles, cojones, crystals, cubes, danglers, diamonds, doodads, doohickeys, eggs, family jewels, footballs, frick and frack, globes, gonads, gooseberries, grapes, itchy and scratchy, jingleberries, Johnny bench nut cups, knackers, knockers, little boys, love apples, low hangers, male mules, marbles, marshmallows, mountain oysters, mud flaps, nads, niagara falls, nicknacks, nutmegs, nuts, nut sack, orchestra stalls, oysters, pebbles, pee-nuts, pills, ping and pong, plums, potatoes, punching bag, rocks, seeds, skittles, sperm factory, spunk holders, stones, swingers, tallywags, testimonials, the twins, vitals, ye olde creamery, and whirligigs. In what follows I seek to repeat not one term for testicles. As for the penis, I can only bow to the comprehensive list at [http://www.gregology.net/Entertainment/Dicktionary](http://www.gregology.net/Entertainment/Dicktionary). For a more serious study, albeit not without its own attractions, see Cornog (1986).

3 As one example, the Danish word *køre* refers to both driving a car (or truck or bus) and riding a bicycle. Danes will often speak of driving a bicycle, or simply “driving” to somewhere when they mean riding a bicycle. To an English speaker it sounds odd, since the semantic cluster of “drive” does not include bicycles. (The same thing can happen even within the same language: For example, in Canadian English to “visit” may mean to spend time with a person, whereas in British English it can only mean to pay a visit, or visit retribution, or to examine.)

4 For a full discussion of this text, see the companion piece to this article, “Too Many Dicks at the Writing Desk, or, How to Organise a Prophetic Sausage-Fest” (Boer, 2010).

5 We should not be surprised at the frequency of the term in Ezekiel, given the graphic sexual nature of much of his imagery—the source for more than one exploration of the text’s or even the reputed author’s psychological state (Halperin, 1993; Schmitt, 2004; Garber, 2004; Jobling, 2004).

6 *Dhvq* also has the sense of sticking to something, which is always a risk with a soiled and smelly egg bag.
In a brilliant circumlocution, Gunkel calls it the “oath by the reproductive member” (Gunkel, 1997[1964], p. 248).

*Tahat* may also have the sense of “in the place of” apart from its more usual “underneath.”

Edwardes (1965, p. 65; 1967, p. 59) points out that in Latin one also finds a distinctly legal sense, since the words “testicle” and “testis” are derived from the roots *testiculi* and *testes*, meaning “the (two) witnesses.”

Eilberg-Schwartz (1993, pp. 152-3), following Smith (1990), argues that *yarekh* does indeed refer to the genitals—Eilberg-Schwartz’s obsession is the penis—but only as a euphemism. Obviously, I go a step further.

Gunkel makes the intriguing suggestion that—given the indeterminateness of the pronouns in verse 26—it may well have been Jacob who kneed the god in the divine bum balls (Gunkel, 1997[1964], pp. 349-50). By verse 33 we find a later and more “acceptable” interpretation.

Rashkow (2000, pp. 133-9) comes closest to my reading, interpreting the story as a dream embodying the castration anxiety. Yet she does not join the dots. In this respect *kaf* functions in a fashion similar to *regel*: with a primary sense of “feet,” it often designates the genitalia—as when Ruth lies at the “feet” of Boaz in Ruth 3:14. *Regel* is the topic of another study.

Jennings’s effort (2005, pp. 253-9) to read Genesis 32 as a paradigmatic homoerotic story (see also Carden, 2006, p. 50)—full of fury, violence, blessing and love—would have been enhanced immeasurably had he realized the import of the Hebrew.

*Shoq al yarekh* seems to me to be a rather idiomatic way of saying the same thing, with *yarekh* and *shoq* sounding much the same.

This sense also applies to *hagerah ... motneha* in Proverbs 31:17, where “gird her loins” refers to the super-woman of Proverbs 31.

In a work concerned with procreation and politics, I find it exceeding strange that Brett (2000) has completely missed the importance of these phrases.

Without even the trace of a fear of the nocturnal emissions that troubled the church fathers so. Concerning those patriarchal anxieties, see Brakke (2009).

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Calling, Devotion, and Transformation: Men Embodying Spirituality at a Protestant Seminary

Timothy D. Lincoln

Men decide to attend North American seminaries because they sense a call from God and want to discern God’s will, yet they report at the end of seminary that spiritual formation and worship were far less influential for them than the faculty or studying theology. Using qualitative methods, this study examines how men at one Protestant seminary lived their spirituality. Research questions are: How do men in seminary talk about spirituality? How does spirituality fit into the larger life world understood as a system of thought? How do men in seminary embody spirituality? The researcher discovered that call to ministry and school bureaucracy were influential in student life worlds. Participants engaged in spiritual practices such as chapel worship, meditation, group spiritual direction, and speaking in tongues. The embodied spirituality of study participants draws from several Christian traditions and is queer in the sense of allowing a variety of masculine performances.

In many Protestant churches, the clerical estate was “sacredly male” (Carroll & McMillan, 2006, p. 66) until the late twentieth century. At the same time as the barriers to the ordination of women fell in many churches, conceptions of ministerial leadership were also shifting away from the minister as a religious authority (preaching orthodox doctrine from the pulpit and rebuking straying sinners) to the minister as a humanistic professional (Kleinman, 1984) who sympathized with congregants but did not chide them for moral lapses. Such ministers “treat their clients like peers” (p. 4). By the turn of the millennium, several Protestant churches in the United States had been ordaining women as ministers for more than 20 years. Because of the partial acceptance of feminism’s claims for equality for men and women, Christian men in mainline Protestant churches now practice a range of masculinities. While some men take part in men’s movements (Gelfer, 2009) that espouse soft patriarchy (Wilcox, 2004), others do not. In 1996, a presbytery of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), upheld a transgendered pastor’s status as ordained (Swenson, 2010) when the minister began to live as a woman. In 2009, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America approved the ordination of non-celibate gays and lesbians, and in the process invented a church law category of lifelong
monogamous same-sex unions (“A vote for gay clergy,” 2009). Because of the now porous boundaries between churches, Protestant Christians embrace a wider variety of spiritual practices, as well. Presbyterian seminaries in the United States conduct spiritual formation programs that invite all comers to read scripture and spiritual classics, meditate, and acquire skills for spiritual direction (Columbia Theological Seminary, n.d.). Men in mainline Protestant churches have access to an abundance of resources suggesting how they can be faithful men, often in ways that explicitly affirm “dying to old masculine gender roles and rising again into new ways of being men” (Culbertson, 2002a, p. xii). Spirituality may be robustly material, “not grounded in abstract and airy ideas, but in elementary and concrete empirical perception—i.e., in things we hear and see, smell and taste” (Tjørhom, 2009, p. 18). Indeed, Christian spirituality can be rethought in terms other than the dichotomy of soul and body. “It is time to admit it is all dust; we are dust, flesh and blood.” The pertinent question is “what it might be for a self-conscious bag of dust and water to have something called a spiritual life” (Hughes, 2008, p. 55). Such proposals are consistent with phenomenology’s basic contention that a person “taken as a concrete being is not a psyche joined to an organism” but rather “the body is our general medium for having a world” (Merleau-Ponty, 2002, pp. 101, 169). Whether a form of spirituality appeals primarily to existing traditions like Tjørhom and Hughes, or to queer theory (Gelfer, 2009), spirituality is now frequently envisioned as embodied human experience of the divine.

Given this multiplicity of spiritual and gender practices, what sort of spirituality do Christian men actually have? This paper explores the embodied spiritual practices of men in one Presbyterian seminary in the United States, pseudonymous New Creation Theological Seminary (NCTS), from a phenomenological point of view. Put another way, this paper explores how spirituality operates in the life world of male seminarians as one element among several. Such a study sheds light on the actual spirituality of men who will take leadership roles in churches. The research reported here benefits board members and administrators interested in making theological schools fulfill their missions to train religious leaders (Aleshire, 2008), those concerned for discovering spiritual practices that help men to fulfill their vocations “as religious beings” (Dittes, 1996, p. xiv) and those who wish to encourage men to engage in spiritual practices that do not reproduce patriarchy. Rather than make normative assertions about the kinds of spiritual practices that men in seminary ought to have, this study focuses on the lived experience of men. It is thus a descriptive study of “men and spirituality” (Gelfer, 2009, p. 160).

This paper has five sections. The first section lays out the problem statement and research questions of the study. The second section briefly reviews literature about men in seminary, the spirituality of seminarians, and embodied spirituality. The third section describes how the researcher used interactive qualitative research (IQA) to gather and analyze data at the research site. The fourth section presents results, focusing on themes of ministerial calling, spirituality, transformation, and embodiment. The fifth section interprets results as demonstrating the ecumenical sharing of practices, queerness, specific forms of embodiment, and the continued importance of transcendence in religious experience. The findings of this study
suggest that embodied spirituality minimizes differences between male bodies and female bodies.

**Problem Statement and Research Questions**

The largest body of existing data on the spirituality of men in North American seminaries is the results from the *Entering Student Questionnaire* (ESQ) and *Graduating Student Questionnaire* (GSQ) administered by The Association of Theological Schools. Table 1 reports data on factors in the decision to enroll in seminary. The data include all ATS schools, institutions of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), and the research site. The period 2004-2008 was chosen to coincide with the enrollment date of most study participants at NCTS. For men in all three groups, the source ranked as having the most importance was “experienced call from God.” Men in all three groups also ranked “to discern God’s will” as important. They ranked “promise of spiritual fulfillment” somewhat lower.

**Table 1: Importance of Factors in Decision to Pursue Theological Education**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source of Influence</th>
<th>All</th>
<th>PCUSA</th>
<th>NCTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Experienced call from God</td>
<td>4.36</td>
<td>4.44</td>
<td>4.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opportunity for study/growth</td>
<td>4.16</td>
<td>4.16</td>
<td>4.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Desire to serve others</td>
<td>4.08</td>
<td>4.10</td>
<td>4.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intellectual interest in religious/theological questions</td>
<td>4.04</td>
<td>4.14</td>
<td>4.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Desire to make a difference</td>
<td>3.98</td>
<td>4.06</td>
<td>4.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To discern God’s will</td>
<td>3.80</td>
<td>3.86</td>
<td>3.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promise of spiritual fulfillment</td>
<td>3.36</td>
<td>3.24</td>
<td>3.52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encouragement of clergy</td>
<td>3.30</td>
<td>3.48</td>
<td>3.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experience in church life</td>
<td>3.26</td>
<td>3.42</td>
<td>3.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family/spouse</td>
<td>3.14</td>
<td>3.24</td>
<td>3.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experience of pastoral counseling/spiritual direction</td>
<td>3.10</td>
<td>3.04</td>
<td>3.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Desire to contribute to the cause of social justice</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>3.34</td>
<td>3.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Search for meaning in life</td>
<td>2.72</td>
<td>2.82</td>
<td>2.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friend(s)</td>
<td>2.64</td>
<td>2.72</td>
<td>2.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Desire to preserve tradition</td>
<td>2.64</td>
<td>2.76</td>
<td>3.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Desire to administer sacraments</td>
<td>2.40</td>
<td>2.64</td>
<td>2.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experience in campus organization</td>
<td>2.28</td>
<td>2.32</td>
<td>2.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Major life event</td>
<td>1.72</td>
<td>1.84</td>
<td>1.98</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1-No importance; 2-Little importance; 3-Somewhat important; 4-Important; 5-Very important. Derived from: *Entering Student Questionnaire*, Table 15 data for all schools, PSUSA schools, and NCTS (research site), for academic years 2004-2005 through 2008-2009.

Table 2 reports data on important influences on student educational experience. The data include all ATS schools, institutions of the PCUSA, and the research site. The period 2006-2010 was chosen to be roughly contemporaneous with the experience of most study participants at NCTS. While there are some differences between the rankings of the three groups (for instance, PCUSA men and
NCTS men rate “interaction with fellow students” higher than men in all schools), the three groups consistently rated items associated with spirituality at a lower level of importance. “Spiritual formation” was selected by 4.16 percent at all schools, and by even fewer at PCUSA schools and NCTS. The item “worship/liturgy” ranked even lower.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Influence on Educational Experience</th>
<th>All %</th>
<th>PCUSA %</th>
<th>NCTS %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Faculty</td>
<td>21.52</td>
<td>19.84</td>
<td>22.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biblical studies</td>
<td>10.82</td>
<td>8.68</td>
<td>9.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interaction with fellow students</td>
<td>9.84</td>
<td>12.04</td>
<td>14.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Study of history and theology</td>
<td>8.96</td>
<td>7.90</td>
<td>7.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experiences in ministry</td>
<td>7.84</td>
<td>7.04</td>
<td>8.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Field education/internship</td>
<td>7.60</td>
<td>13.18</td>
<td>11.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal life experiences</td>
<td>6.66</td>
<td>6.76</td>
<td>6.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classroom discussion</td>
<td>5.40</td>
<td>4.52</td>
<td>4.64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Required reading</td>
<td>4.70</td>
<td>3.72</td>
<td>3.52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spiritual formation</td>
<td>4.12</td>
<td>2.26</td>
<td>1.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Differences in perspective</td>
<td>3.38</td>
<td>3.34</td>
<td>2.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community life of school</td>
<td>2.42</td>
<td>3.92</td>
<td>3.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multiethnic/cultural contacts</td>
<td>2.18</td>
<td>2.36</td>
<td>1.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Worship/liturgy</td>
<td>2.16</td>
<td>1.86</td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ecumenical interaction</td>
<td>1.42</td>
<td>1.40</td>
<td>0.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>0.88</td>
<td>1.18</td>
<td>1.12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Derived from: *Graduating Student Questionnaire*, table 15 data for all schools, PSUSA schools, and NCTS (research site), for academic years 2005-2006 through 2009-2010.

Taken together, the data from Tables 1 and 2 pose a conundrum: men decide to enter theological education because they sense of call from God and want to discern God’s will (among other reasons), yet they commonly report at the end of seminary that spiritual formation and worship were far less influential than the faculty or studying the Bible, history, and theology. This conundrum is not trivial, since one requirement of the Master of Divinity degree in North American seminaries is the provision of “opportunities through which the student may grow in personal faith, emotional maturity, moral integrity, and public witness” (Association of Theological Schools Degree Standard A.3.1.3, 2010).

At best, ESQ and GSQ results provide minimal insight into the spirituality of men in seminary. These tools do not get at lived experience, which is a crucial dimension to spirituality in its “subjective, experiential, non-rational, unverifiable and serendipitous” dimensions (Flanagan, 2007, p. 2). This study probes such lived experience using qualitative methods. Specifically, this study addresses three research questions: How do men in seminary talk about spirituality? How does spirituality fit into the larger life world understood as a system of thought or mindmap? How do men in seminary embody spirituality?
Literature Review
To provide further context for this study, this section briefly reviews recent literature about men in seminary, the spirituality of theological students, and embodied spirituality.

Men in Seminary
Kleinman (1984) and Carroll et al. (1997) produced ethnographies of seminary life that describe student experience. Kleinman studied how students were socialized into their ministerial roles at Midwest Seminary, conducting field work during the 1977-1978 academic year. She found that rhetoric about “community” was used to shape students into non-judgmental ministers. At Midwest Seminary, both men and women sought to acquire authentic identities as pastors, in keeping with a theological shift of emphasis from transcendence to immanence. Women faced more difficulties in doing this than men because “the minister’s authority rests partly in the male status” (p. 93), despite the fact that the ministerial role has been feminized (Douglas, 1977). Carroll et al. (1997) studied two seminaries, Evangelical and Mainline, conducting field work over a three-year period in the 1990s. They concluded that theological education at both schools was a contest between students and the dominant theological message promoted by each school. Students heard, resisted, and partially embraced the dominant message. Men at Evangelical were split over the propriety of women as ministers; men at Mainline generally were favorable to women in ministry and also embraced the school’s social activist message of resisting sexism, racism, and classism. Perhaps because most students at all three of these research sites were men and men historically have dominated ministerial offices, researchers frequently spoke about distinctive experiences or challenges for women, but not for men.

Spirituality of Theological Students
Kleinman (1984) reported that students at Midwest were scornful of much conventional piety, such as praying in public. Most students who said they felt “called” to ministry made it clear that they had not undergone a miraculous “struck by a bolt of lightning” (p. 44) experience to trigger their choice of ministry as a profession. Carroll et al. (1997) found that students at Evangelical practiced a variety of spiritual practices, including praying about specific life choices. They valued worship featuring praise music and personal testimonies. These forms of piety were in tension with the more somber and intellectual approach to Christianity promoted by most of the faculty. At Mainline, by contrast, student and faculty piety celebrated diversity and encouraged the confession of sexism, racism, and class privilege as sins. Worship included dance, music, and art in addition to hymns and preaching. Foster et al. (2006) studied several American seminaries, focusing on teaching practices. They surveyed a sample of divinity schools and seminaries and conducted three-day site visits at eight campuses. The researchers discovered wide variation among campuses regarding how schools trained students in spiritual practices. At some schools community worship was central but in others “worship seems to be almost tangential” (p. 274). Small groups served a variety of purposes. At Howard University, for instance, faculty-led groups provided “a safe place for faculty and students to experience each other as ‘fellow pilgrims’” (p. 282). At St. Vladimir’s
Orthodox Theological Seminary, students became bonded to each other by sharing common work in six hours of required labor per week. The researchers concluded that there was a synergism between community worship, student experiences in small groups, and individual spiritual formation (practiced most frequently in Catholic seminaries). They further concluded that when schools purposely aligned the various sites that foster spiritual practices, “the effect seemed most powerful” (p. 293).

Embodied Spirituality

This literature review concludes with brief comments on the growing literature about Christian spirituality as embodied (Fuller, 2007; Horn, et al., 2005; Hughes, 2008; Simpson, et al., 2008; Tjørhom, 2009). Gelfer’s (2009) critique of masculine spiritualities noted the evangelical and Catholic men’s movements often draw strength from neo-Jungian archetypes (e.g., the warrior). These movements often espouse such “manly” activities as hunting and sports, echoing themes of the muscular Christianity of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries (Putney, 2001). Gelfer criticizes these movements, as well as mythopoetic (Bly, 1990) and integral spirituality (Wilber, 2000), for confusing biological sex with socially constructed gender and for inattention to the diversity of masculinities exemplified by gay and straight men. Try as they might, none of these movements escape the conceptual framework of oppressive patriarchy.

Some recent authors explicitly reject sexism but celebrate embodiment. Dittes (1996) explicitly denounces gender bias as men engage in spiritual practices. He contends, nevertheless, that there are enduring differences between women and men. Such differences, however, do not presuppose “hierarchy, superiority, or control” (p. 132). He contends that men characteristically yearn and feel loss, rather than experience the thrill of conquest. This unceasing ache is embedded in male anatomy: “Phallus and ejaculation and begetting, the most defining entities of manhood, are fugitive and temporary, unreliable and uncontrollable” (p. 21). Dittes’ distinctive proposal is that men should understand themselves to be sons: “fully male though not in charge, sexually vigorous potentially but not here and now, potentially performing mighty deeds but not yet” (p. 124). Four essays (Culbertson, 2002b; Goss, 2002; Townsend & Bennett, 2002; Webb-Mitchell, 2002) specifically address issues of the physical body and men’s spirituality in Culbertson’s (2002) collection. His own reflection argues that the male heterosexual body as socially constructed is read as a text by someone else. While governments read the male body to promote citizenship and the siring of children, many straight men are unable to read their own bodies or the bodies of other men at all. This is a spiritual problem because this lack of reading ability reinforces patriarchy’s subtle ability to keep power in the hands of men. Webb-Mitchell (2002) relates how three different Christian men with disabling conditions interpret their existence in U.S. society, in which “being disabled is a fleshly, visible sign of being marked as weak, crippled, imperfect” (p. 180). He reports that each gained power as he talked about his experiences. Moreover, these men grew to understand that they are part of Christ’s metaphorical body, the church.
**Method**

To explore how men understood their spiritual lives as theological students, the researcher recoded data from a study of the life worlds of seminarians (Lincoln, 2009). The 2009 study compared experiences of first- and second-career students. The current study focuses on the experiences of men. During data recoding, the researcher analyzed interview transcripts of eight men who were M.Div. students at New Creation Theological Seminary (NCTS), a free-standing Presbyterian seminary in the United States. The interviewees were all U.S. citizens. One was a Korean American; seven were white. Table 3 shows the denominational affiliations of participants. Those interviewed ranged in age from 23 to 61.

Using the procedures of interactive qualitative analysis or IQA (Northcutt & McCoy, 2004), the researcher constructed an interview protocol of open-ended questions about 12 themes of the student life world. The themes were identified by students in two focus groups at NCTS. Table 4 lists the themes and their definitions. These themes included Call to Ministry (defined as one’s perception that God is leading a person to a particular form of Christian service), Spirituality (defined as the quest to sense of the presence of God), and Transformation (the changes that students undergo at seminary).

*Table 3: Denominational Affiliation, Male NCTS Interviewees*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Denomination</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Methodist Church</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assemblies of God</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Baptist Churches USA</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>non-denominational</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the IQA approach, the researcher invites participants to comment about their experience of each theme, with minimal probing or follow up. This restrained approach to interviewing is consistent with IQA’s phenomenological commitment to limit researcher tampering with participant ideas (a way of “bracketing” the researcher’s commitments) so that participants will reveal their perceptions of existence as reality in consciousness (Merleau-Ponty, 1967). Northcutt and McCoy (2004) drew on a variety of sources to invent IQA, including philosophical concern for power, description, and reflexivity (Foucault, 1977; Heidegger, 1962; Hughes, 1987) as well as methodological concern for building up theory based on the microculture or life world of study participants (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Lincoln & Guba, 1985).
Table 4: Themes of the NCTS Student Life World

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Community</td>
<td>The relationships that NCTS students have with other NCTS students.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotions</td>
<td>The feelings of students in school.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spirituality</td>
<td>The quest to sense the presence of God.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Life Management</td>
<td>A student’s life beyond NCTS.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic Program</td>
<td>The curriculum taught at NCTS.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Bureaucracy</td>
<td>The official administrative procedures associated with school.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Call to Ministry</td>
<td>One’s perception that God is leading a person to a particular form of Christian service.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transformation</td>
<td>Changes that students may undergo during seminary.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facilities</td>
<td>The spaces and physical resources provided by NCTS.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty and Staff</td>
<td>NCTS professors, administrators, and employees.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Church Requirements</td>
<td>Processes and expectations that church bodies have for those seeking ordination.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ministry</td>
<td>Pastoral work that seminarians do in congregations and hospitals, including Clinical Pastoral Education and Ministry Practicum.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the NCTS study, individual interviews lasted from 45 to 60 minutes. The amount of discourse about a given theme varied from a few sentences to highly polished narratives about important events (e.g., a moment of divine calling). The researcher analyzed transcripts for subthemes and *timbre*. In IQA terms, timbre is a way of characterizing discourse. Judgments about timbre parallel a beer connoisseur’s observations about a sample of beer (malty, floral, hoppy, etc.). “Elements that have the same meaning may have a different . . . ‘feel’ between [groups]” (Northcutt & McCoy 2004, p. 345). Based on interview transcripts, the researcher judged the timbre for each participant (by theme) as positive, neutral, negative, or volatile. Because one research question in this study is about how men embody spirituality, the researcher also examined interviews for discourse about bodily actions and responses associated with spiritual practices. Moving from
observation to developing an inventory of such body states is consistent with the phenomenological approach (McKenzie, 1988; Morley, 2008).

In an IQA study, the researcher also asks participants about patterns of influence between themes (for instance, does Community exert influence Transformation? Or does Transformation influence Community?). By aggregating these relationships or theoretical codes, the analyst derives a mindmap for an individual or the group (Northcutt & McCoy, 2004, pp. 147-184, 279-296). The mindmap is a graphical representation of the flow of influence among themes. In IQA terms, a theme that is highly influential is a driver; a theme that receives influence from other themes is an outcome. In this study, the group mindmap for men was derived from the theoretical codes of 18 men at NCTS, the eight interviewees plus ten others.

Results
This section reports results. First, the section displays a group mindmap in which the themes School Bureaucracy and Call to Ministry are drivers. Second, the section reports student discourse from selected themes from the student life world. Third, the section summarizes how men at NCTS embodied spirituality, as revealed in interviews. Finally, the section reports the dominant timbre for the 12 themes of student experience.

Group Mindmap
Figure 1 depicts the mindmap for men in the NCTS study. Drivers are shown in bold; outcomes in italics. The dominant timbre, if any, for each theme is shown in parentheses. The theme Call to Ministry was a driver (exerting influence over many other parts of the system), the theme Transformation was an outcome (receiving influence from other themes more than exerting influence on them), and the theme Spirituality was a mid-system element.

Figure 1: Group Mindmap, NCTS Men
IQA procedures for making mindmaps balance the complexity of the relationships between elements in a system and explanatory power. Drivers, by definition, exert influence on virtually all elements of a system. It is noteworthy, therefore, when elements that are not drivers exert influence “backwards” in the system. Figure 1 shows that the theme Spirituality exerts such influence (recursion) on the themes Church Requirements and Call to Ministry. As will be seen below, study participants frequently interwove discourse about Spirituality and Call to Ministry. For men in this study, sensing a call to ministry was not only a source of influence on the decision to begin seminary (as documented in Table 1), but also actively shaped their life worlds during seminary. For study participants, the themes Call to Ministry and School Bureaucracy were more influential than the themes Faculty and Staff, Academic Program, or relationships with other students (Community). The outcome of the conceptual system is a three-element loop comprising the themes Transformation, Ministry, and Emotions. The mindmap suggests that for these study participants, two elements not directly controlled by NCTS (Church Requirements set by various denominations and Call to Ministry) were influential throughout a student’s seminary experience.

**Discourse**

The researcher analyzed interview transcripts to determine subthemes, following IQA practice. The researcher paid special attention to language about physicality in order to address the research question about how men in seminary embody spirituality. This article focuses on the themes Call to Ministry, Transformation, and Spirituality. These themes were chosen not only because of the rich overlap of student discourse about vocational calling and spirituality, but also because the first theme is a driver, the second an outcome, and the third a mid-system element. Following IQA practice, the quotations reported here are highly edited. Sometimes words of more than one individual are combined into one synthetic quote.

**Theme: Call to Ministry.** Men at NCTS spoke about the theme Call to Ministry as an intuition. A sense of call often developed slowly, but some identified distinct triggering events. According to men in this study, one’s sense of call was affirmed by other people, and changed during seminary.

Some participants described Call to Ministry as an intuition. Two younger men said:

You have this feeling when something’s right for you. I knew I wanted to be a pastor. I began to feel called to go back to church. You get a little feeling in your head. I prayed about where God could best use my gifts and abilities. That’s when I felt called to ministry. I felt tugged to go into the church.

Some men reported that their sense of call developed slowly. Younger students said:

My call wasn’t glamorous. It was consistent throughout my life. God’s been revealing slowly where my strengths, weaknesses, and passions are. I totally
believe that God had shaped me and wired me for ministry. I was studying for a digital media degree. The further I went in my program, I didn’t feel that I was doing what God wanted me to do in life. For quite a few months, I prayed about what direction God would like me to go.

Older students said:

When I started feeling the call, it had been years since I’d been in church. We joined a Presbyterian congregation and started back to church. The longer I was in church, the more I was asked to do. I realized that I was supposed to do some form of ministry. I went on an Emmaus Walk a year after Dad passed away. Within my head I heard a voice say, “Stand up and talk for me.” The next two or three years my sponsor and I set up a lay speaker program. I kept hearing the voice as if this wasn’t enough. I was reading Luther and others. I thought that my gift was engineering. Barclay wrote that Jesus started his ministry at 30. That’s like 60 today. Jesus had a career before. After a year or two, I decided to do the ministry route.

Some students reported distinct events associated with their feeling of call:

I came to know Jesus Christ at age 19, like a lightning bolt, and was a new person in two days. Immediately after that I was called to Young Life, a high school evangelical outreach ministry. My baptism of the Holy Spirit happened at the end of this past summer. It introduced a whole new dynamic to my ministry. When I was on an Emmaus walk, I prayed to get rid of the hurt I felt. Within my head I heard a voice that said, “Stand up and talk for me.”

Men reported that their sense of call was affirmed by others. They reported:

My undergraduate work, seminary, and the Ministry Practicum reconfirmed within my heart that I’m wired for the ministry. When I first felt tugged to go into the church, I thought, “Really, God? You want me to go into ministry.” So, I talked to my pastor. We talked about it and I felt it was the right place for me. The further I get in seminary, the more I feel my call reaffirmed. When I first got involved with church, I went in and talked to the pastor about it. She hooked me up with the people at NCTS. I thought I was meant to be a good lay person. I kept getting dogged. I said “OK. The people at the local church know me. There will be enough No votes, and I’ll be done.” I went to the committee—people I’ve had battles with—and it was unanimous. Then I had to go to a church conference and it was a unanimous vote. I went before the district board and thought “They’ll say No,” but it was unanimous again. Then I said “OK, let’s do this.” Wesley always said there are two calls, one of the church and one of the heart.

According to men in this study, sense of call changed during seminary. They said:
It’s a challenge to live into my call. I explore the depth and richness of my call, consider my gifts, and ponder where they would best fit. I’ve discovered I have an affinity for pastoral care. NCTS challenged me to see call as more than plugging into a role. The seminary has broadened my sense of call to embrace what being a disciple of Christ is, as opposed to being a Baptist or a Methodist or a Presbyterian. I don’t know where God is going to take me just yet. There’s a possibility of becoming a youth pastor in a charismatic church while still leading Young Life, bridging church and parachurch ministry.

Theme: Spirituality. Men at NCTS spoke about Spirituality, the quest to sense the presence of God. They spoke about group spiritual practices, time constraints to devotion, speaking in tongues, and experiencing God in nature.

Men spoke about group spiritual practices. Some spoke about services organized by students:

People in the community are exploring several styles of praying. They’re doing the Taizé service. I got a devotional group organized. We’d read some scripture, talk about it. That’s a way outside of class work to get together with your buddies, try to stay spiritually centered, and remember that important things exist other than assigned class readings.

One man spoke about participation in group spiritual direction organized by the seminary. He said:

We had a spiritual direction group of six people. We remained together for two years. That was invaluable. It was a place where we looked for God’s presence in the midst of all that was going on. Most of us were married with children. We were challenged to look for God in the midst of our burdens. I’ve learned over the years that God’s always right there. We have to be attentive because God is attending to us.

Two men discussed the chapel services organized by the school. They said:

I don’t get very much out of chapel. When I did go, important things were happening on campus and in the world. But they weren’t addressed, as if the outside world has no relationship to the seminary. If we are not going to recognize the world’s situation in our worship services, what are we doing here?

Pentecostals have this way of worshipping God and going crazy. Before coming here, I’d never seen worship the way that it is done at seminary. At first, it made me upset. I didn’t feel anything in chapel. Our worship professor said “Give it a chance.” There’s a serene, calm, peaceful feeling about the chapel worship. Worship doesn’t have to be in your face all the time. It’s not all about music, lights, and glamour. There’s a lot to be said for sitting quietly waiting on God.
Participants reported that time constraints sometimes made it difficult to engage in individual spiritual practices. They said:

My pastor used to say, “You can’t feed a congregation unless you’re fed yourself.” I need to go to the Bible and do a daily devotional, pray, and maintain spiritual equilibrium. I enjoy getting together with friends and doing the group devotional. But I tend to do it by myself, because there’s not always time to get everybody together. When I have to write papers, I don’t have time to do daily devotions. Phyllis Tickle has prepared psalm and scripture readings for a whole year based on Benedictine tradition. The first day that I’m finished, I start back into devotions. You do your assignment rather than reading scripture devotionally. But prayer, daily devotionals, and scripture reading give a closer connection to God.

Two men reported that they spoke in tongues.

I’ve thought that people at NCTS shun the Holy Spirit and the spiritual realm. I didn’t know if I should speak in tongues loud, because the walls between rooms are thin, and this would make people uncomfortable. But the neighbors on each side said “It’s cool. We like it.” I sought baptism of the Holy Spirit. In Acts 2 at Pentecost, the Holy Spirit falls on a group of people and everyone starts speaking in strange tongues, and understanding each other and prophesying. Now my worship times will be an hour to two hours. I just want to be in the presence of God. Speaking in tongues is the most wonderful form of worship.

The man who said he did not find chapel services edifying spoke about feeling God’s presence in the natural world. He said:

I have not felt God’s presence around on campus. I live out in the country. To get home, I go through the woods on a dirt road. When I look out my window I see nature. I sit in my easy chair and watch the birds fly over the deck. When I read and meditate at home, the environment is in the midst of God’s creation.

Theme: Transformation. Men at NCTS spoke about Transformation, the changes that students undergo while in school. They discussed the acquisition of new knowledge and professional skills. They reported how they grew personally. Two participants spoke about the role played by openness to the seminary experience.

Participants spoke about acquiring new knowledge. They said:

When I started, I thought “My way is the one way you should do it.” If I got into a conversation with another seminary student, they would blow my mind. I would state my view, and then they would say “What about this, this, and that?” My theology was weak. Being in a PCUSA environment has caused me to think through what I believe, instead of saying its all about
feelings and emotions. There has been a lot of transformation to myself, my beliefs, and my preconceived notions of how church should be done. There are multiple ways. At seminary, I’ve been struggling spiritually with the notion of theodicy. I knew that there was evil, but now I’m trying to figure out why evil exists and what we can do to fight it. In my CPE I’d see certain cases and ask myself, why?

Students also reported that they learned new pastoral skills for ministry:

I’ve gained tools. My CPE was intense. I grew tremendously in how to minister to people in the hospital, in crisis or tough situations. I learned to read scripture and pray with them. I learned how big presence is. I got a better grasp of how I sometimes fail. I learned how to be more pastoral. Seminary education gives you a dose of reality about God and the church. The pastoral care classes clarified that people want to be heard, listened to seriously. That insight is changing me.

In very different ways, two participants spoke about the relationship between transformation and openness during seminary. One said, “Seminary is a time when you grow and transform as an individual. You learn what works for you and what doesn’t work. When you give it a chance, there is a difference.” By contrast, another man said:

Some people come to seminary with a well-defined faith. They get a bunch of stuff thrown at them and come out thinking differently. The opposite has happened for me. People threw all these ideas at me, and I discerned, “I’m not going to buy that. I will buy that. I’ll take this idea and piece it together with others.” I’m walking out of here with a very similar paradigm to what I came in with. Has the seminary transformed me? Not really. I got new information. But no spiritual or character transformation has come from the academic program. I’m just reading, writing essays, and taking tests.

Some participants described how attending seminary helped them grow as persons. They said:

In CPE we would meet as a group to discuss a verbatim transcript of an encounter with a patient. Sometimes the group would tear you to pieces in a hurtful way. CPE helped me figure out my weak points and try to address them in order to be a more complete person. It was tough, but overall it was good. In the required pastoral care class I realized that I had a problem listening. I learned that everybody has reasons for what they do or think. To find out their reasons, you have to hear them. I became a better listener.

One man reported that his sense of call changed at NCTS. He said:

Many of us have doubts: should I be here? All students have periods when they question an aspect of call. You learn to embrace the question. The
feeling that you are not pastoral-care-oriented teaches you that your particular call may not be in that realm. That feeling doesn’t negate your call. There is shaping and molding. I embrace doubt and challenge. That’s been my greatest transformation.

**Spirituality as Embodiment**

To address this study’s third research question, the researcher coded interview transcripts to capture discourse about the physicality or embodiment of spiritual practices or experiences. Table 5 summarizes these results. Participants in the study described the role of body in these experiences primarily under the themes Call to Ministry and Spirituality. Men at NCTS embodied spirituality by talking to others, reading, praying to God, and keeping silence. Some heard God and experienced sensations in their skin.

**Table 5: The Body and Spiritual Experience, NCTS Men**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Intentional Action</th>
<th>Body Part</th>
<th>Purpose</th>
<th>Discourse</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Talk/Listen</td>
<td>Mouth; Ears</td>
<td>Discern call</td>
<td>“I talked to the pastor about it.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>“We had a spiritual direction group.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Talk/Listen</td>
<td>Mouth; Ears</td>
<td>Worship</td>
<td>“We’d read some Scripture and talk about it.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speaking in tongues</td>
<td>Mouth; Ears</td>
<td>Worship</td>
<td>“Speaking in tongues is the most wonderful form of worship.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>Eyes</td>
<td>Worship</td>
<td>“Scripture reading gives a closer connection to God.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Silence</td>
<td>Mouth; Ears</td>
<td>Worship</td>
<td>“Being silent before God.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prayer</td>
<td>Mouth; Ears</td>
<td>Healing</td>
<td>“We pray for healing over people.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prayer</td>
<td>Connect to God</td>
<td>Discern call</td>
<td>“Prayer gives a closer connection to God.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prayer</td>
<td></td>
<td>Discern call</td>
<td>“I prayed about where God could best use my gifts.”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Uninitiated Actions</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hearing</td>
<td>Head</td>
<td></td>
<td>“Within my head I heard a voice.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>“Hearing still, small voices in my head.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>“It’s just like somebody’s in the pick up truck, talking to you.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tingling</td>
<td>Skin</td>
<td></td>
<td>“Hands tingling or warm with the Holy Spirit.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>“I get a tingle.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hair stands up</td>
<td>Skin</td>
<td></td>
<td>“The hair on the back of my neck was standing up.”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The examples of student discourse in Table 5 were reported with more context earlier in this article, with one exception. A Presbyterian student said when he came to an event at NCTS for prospective students that “it was like sitting in a church service. I usually don’t want to jump up and shout Amen, but the hair on the back of my neck started standing up. I got a little tingle—your thoughts begin to change at that point.”

For men in this study, spirituality meant speaking with others and with God (via prayer). They read devotional literature. They were quiet in God’s presence. Some reported that God spoke to them “just like somebody's in the pick-up truck with you.” Some also reported that they sensed God’s presence as warmth or tingling. In terms of McKenzie’s (1988) taxonomy of Christian practices, the bodily experiences reported by NCTS men fall under the interpretive categories of the sacred word from the deity, the sacred word to the deity, Christian sacred writings (especially the Bible), and the Christian sacred community.

Timbre
Based on timbre analysis of interview transcripts, the researcher determined that there was no dominant timbre for six of the twelve themes. For men in this study, the dominant timbre was positive for the other six themes, including the themes Call to Ministry, Spirituality, and Transformation. Table 6 summarizes these findings.

Table 6: Dominant Timbre by Theme, NCTS Men

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Positive Timbre</th>
<th>No Dominant Timbre</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School Bureaucracy</td>
<td>Call to Ministry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty and Staff</td>
<td>Spirituality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transformation</td>
<td>Ministry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Church Requirements</td>
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<td>Academic Program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Life Management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Emotions</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The researcher rated the timbre of the theme Spirituality as positive despite participant comments (reported earlier) that the press of academic work limited time for spiritual practices. While most participants also were positive about the theme Transformation, the student (quoted earlier) who fulfilled course requirements while deflecting troubling new ideas denied that going to seminary had changed him in any significant way. As reported in Table 2, NCTS men frequently reported that interaction with fellow students (the GSQ analogy to the theme Community) was an important influence on educational experience. While some men in the study spoke positively about friendships with other students, others spoke about how other obligations (employment or child care) limited their relationships with other students. Because of this range of experience, the theme Community had no dominant timbre.

Discussion
Men at NCTS have a life world in which God matters. They believe that God called them to ministry and that individual devotion and group worship provide connection to God and direction in life. Spirituality is both a matter of an individual’s relationship to God and being part of a larger community of believers. For these men, spirituality is embodied. They pray, read the Bible, and talk with others. They literally listen to
others as they discern God’s will and—in some cases—literally hear the voice of God. This section interprets the spirituality of NCTS men by drawing attention to four elements. First, the spirituality of study participants is ecumenical. Second, the embodied spirituality discovered at NCTS is queer in Gelfer’s (2009) sense of allowing a variety of masculine performances. Third, the spirituality of study participants is embodied in ways that appear equally available to men and women. Finally, the call experiences of NCTS men exhibit a combination of both transcendent and immanent poles of Christian experience.

**Spirituality as Ecumenical**

The spiritual lives of study participants demonstrate how spiritual practices once distinctive to certain traditions in Christianity are now shared across confessional lines. There was a time in North American religious life when Christian churches guarded theological borders by emphasizing distinctive doctrines and practices. The ecumenical movement, which flourished in the second half of the last century, “stresses what Christians hold in common, rather than the distinctiveness of each tradition” (Campbell, 1996, p. 5). The success of ecumenism has given permission for Protestants to engage in practices that formerly would have been considered distinctively Catholic. For instance, students at the Assemblies of God Theological Seminary (AGTS) are now regular guests of Trappist monks. AGTS has a program of spiritual formation to enable students to value inward-directed spirituality (Heffern, 2006). The results of this study reveal that Protestant men engaged in spiritual practices not considered classically Protestant or specifically Reformed. NCTS itself provided group spiritual direction. The student who reported that group spiritual direction helped him attend to God’s presence in his life was a Baptist. Relationships between believers and spiritual directors “have not been part of the Reformed tradition” until the late twentieth century (Whitlock, 2002, p. 314). Speaking in tongues is not historically a widespread practice of Presbyterians, the exercise of such charismatic gifts by Edward Irving being exceptional (Anderson, 2004). The student who gave chapel services a chance and discovered that they made him feel serene was a member of the Assemblies of God. Students at NCTS organized Taizé services, worship based on the liturgical practices of a French Protestant monastery (Santos, 2008). As experienced by these men, spirituality was not confined to traditional Protestant piety involving preaching-centered public worship and engagement with scripture. NCTS welcomed many kinds of students and many forms of piety. One study participant put it, “The dominant message of NCTS is, We’re all the body of Christ, Presbyterian, Methodist, Pentecostal, it doesn’t matter. This seminary is going to provide us the best theological education that it can.” In the life world of men in this study, denominational divisions did not create barriers to the sharing of spiritual practices.

**Spirituality as Queer**

As revealed by the interviewees in this study, men embodied spirituality by praying, speaking, listening, and hearing (Table 5). Students who spoke explicitly about being a man usually did so as part of the theme Life Management in reference to family relationships (e.g., “I don’t go to student forums any more because I have to help my wife with the babies”) rather than when discussing their spirituality. One participant
did report that he had a powerful spiritual experience at an Emmaus walk that he had attended because of his grief at the death of his father.

In his critique of several masculine spiritualities, Gelfer (2009) argues that the men’s movement in the Catholic Church allowed a wider variety of ways of being men than the evangelical men’s movement. Catholic men are queer. This queerness results in part from Catholicism’s traditional endorsement of celibacy as a superior way of life. Following Butler (1990, 1993) and others (Althaus-Reid, 2003; Sedgwick, 2008), Gelfer contends “that the categories of masculine and feminine are too problematic to be useful in any but the loosest sense” (2009, p. 160). He uses queer in two senses. First, in a weak sense queerness simply means being different. “In the West, at least, where men’s ministry is most active, to be Catholic is inherently a little strange” (2009, p. 96). In this usage, queerness is not tied to sexual orientation or a specific way of being a man; it is simply a matter of being odd by being in the minority. Second, following Sullivan (2003), queerness in a strong sense intentionally disrupts heteronormativity. Gelfer endorses this strong sense of queerness because he wants to subvert patriarchy, which surreptitiously undergirds men’s movement rhetoric. Patriarchy is opposed to the Christian Gospel that calls for “compassion, love, and justice” (Gelfer, 2009, p. 194) for both women and men. At NCTS, the tolerance for a wide variety of spiritual practices is queer in the weak sense, although it is not clear that any study participants understand their spiritual practices to be queer in the strong sense. Further research with Protestant men in seminary could explore this possibility.

**Embodying Spirituality**

Men at this research site experienced spirituality in their bodies (Table 5). The discourse of men at NCTS was not a celebration of muscles or testosterone. Prayer was not “sexual prayer” based on sexuality as part of God’s good creation (Nelson, 2009, p. 39). The accounts of speaking in tongues that men described in this study are consistent with tongue-speaking experiences of women in Pentecostalism (Alexander, 2005; Chapman, 2004). At this study site, women as well as men reported that they participated in spiritual direction, read the Bible and devotional literature, meditated and prayed. Thus, for those interviewed at this research site, there was a large degree of sameness between the bodily experiences and expressions of spirituality for all study participants, whether they were men or men.

**Transcendence and Immanence**

The call experiences of NCTS men exhibit a combination of both transcendent and immanent poles of Christian experience. The Assemblies of God student in the study said that his sense of call slowly grew throughout his life and was confirmed by his experiences in school. At the same time, Methodist and Presbyterian students reported instances of hearing God’s voice in a profoundly physical way. Another NCTS student reported that he “came to know Jesus Christ at age 19, like a lightning bolt, and was a new person in two days.” At Mainline Theological Seminary, by contrast, students learned “that being called by God through a vision, at a particular time on a certain day, is not the acceptable way to talk about calling” (Kleinman, 1984, p. 44). Student culture at NCTS supported students who perceived their call in a variety of ways, just as student culture tolerated devotional practices ranging from
individual meditation to chapel worship to speaking in tongues. Put another way, the men at NCTS understood their relationships with God as more than culturally specific instances of “a species-wide evolutionary basic bodily capacity” (Wildman, 2009, p. 140). Experiences of transcendence and immanence, for study participants, were available to the same individual. The Methodist who heard God say to him “Stand up and speak for me” also described how reading Luther, Wesley, and Barclay shaped his call to ministry. He also experienced God more at home in the countryside than in the seminary’s chapel services.

Implications
In the life worlds of male students at NCTS, the theme Call to Ministry was highly influential. As depicted in Figure 1, the theme Spirituality, a mid-system element, also exerted influence “backwards” in the system to the drivers Call to Ministry and School Bureaucracy. Spirituality was ecumenical, queer in a weak sense, and a response to a God outside of one’s self. This section first notes limits to this study then discusses the implications of this study for continued research on the role of spirituality in theological education and spirituality as embodied experience.

Study Limits
This study explored the spirituality of one group of men, all Protestants, studying at one Presbyterian seminary in the United States. Each participant was interviewed only once using an open-ended interview protocol. This approach limited exploration of the theme Spirituality because during interviews the researcher asked a dozen questions covering all themes of the student life world, not simply Spirituality. At the same time, the use of theoretical codes and mindmaps revealed the importance of the theme Spirituality in the life worlds of study participants. Further research is needed to determine whether or not the range of spiritual practices discovered at NCTS is typical of men at other theological schools. Moreover, a research design using multiple interviews would enable researchers to establish rapport with participants. Such rapport seems especially desirable to study research questions directly related to sexuality and spirituality. Presumably, men in seminaries would be able to discuss their experiences of intimate relationships and pleasure in the appropriate context. In this study, however, no one talked about these dimensions of their lives. Another possible area for increasing understanding of the spirituality of NCTS men would be to ask them specifically about spirituality and sport, a theme with a long tradition in American Christianity (Baker, 2007; Ladd & Mathisen, 1999; Putney, 2001). While some men mentioned going to the gym in passing, during the time that this study was conducted, NCTS carried on a sporting rivalry in flag football with another nearby theological school. The annual game featured professional referees and, on the NCTS side, a squad of cheer leaders. Researchers interested in exploring the distinctiveness of male embodied experience should also consider study designs that compare the experiences of men and women.

The Role of Spirituality in Theological Education
This study began by drawing attention to the conundrum of spirituality for men in North American Protestant seminaries: men choose to go to seminary because of a sense of divine calling and desire to discover the will of God, yet at the end of
seminary they report that spiritual formation and worship were far less important to
their educational experience than the classically academic parts of the curriculum.
The IQA method helps to interpret these survey findings by envisioning the life world
of students as one system of thought. For men at NCTS, spirituality was in the middle
of the typical mindmap and (just as importantly), the theme Spirituality exerted
influence on Call to Ministry and Church Requirements. When seen in the content of
the student life world, the importance of seeking God’s presence is clarified. Even
though students might not rank spiritual formation higher than the influence of
faculty or biblical studies, the mindmap shows the interaction of all aspects of the
student life world, including the quest to sense the presence of God.

Lived Experience and the Body
This study found that men lived their spirituality sensuously as they read, listened,
and spoke. In the current academic discussion of lived experience, there is ongoing
disagreement about how bodily experience and gender fit together. Feminists like de
Beauvoir (2010) and Young (2005) argue that one’s body as a woman is profoundly
constrained by sexism to produce characteristically feminine movements. Grosz
(1994) criticizes phenomenological analyses of bodily experience for surreptitiously
putting forward the experiences of male bodies as universal. Rabelo, Mota, and
Almeida (2009) contend that the embodied experiences of Pentecostal women and
men in Brazil do differ when they experience God overwhelming them in worship
services. Fox (2008) encourages men to kick or stomp “to protest or to express our
anger” (p. 147) and thus overcome a specifically masculine kind of emotional
poverty. From this point of view, what matters powerfully about bodily experience
(for men and women) is that such experience is always gendered, even if oftentimes
individuals go about their lives without consciously reflecting on the genderedness of
their embodied experiences. The findings of this study, by contrast, are in line with
Chisholm’s (2008) analysis of women who engage in free climbing (Hill, 2002;
Howkins, 2001). Chisholm concluded the experiences of these climbers demonstrate
“how women . . . surmount the gender limits of their situation” and thus “this study
emphasizes the category of the lived body over that of gender” (p. 35). Lived
experience of the body can be more important than the gender of the embodied
person, Young argues, because in activities like climbing the experience of female-
bodied climbers and the experience of male-bodied climbers are both highly active
instances of “the body’s full and free movement” (p. 35). Climbing skill is no more
and no less gender specific than playing the cello.

In this study, the lived body of men doing spirituality is the body that hears,
speaks, listens, reads, and prays. These capacities are not distinctive to male bodies.
The Christian spiritual practices advocated by Hughes (2008) and Tjørhom (2009),
such as participation in the Eucharist, care for the planet, and just relationships with
others, are available to male-bodied Christians and female-bodied Christians. The
reality of sex and gender does not somehow disappear. Rather, in phenomenological
terms, sex remains “like an atmosphere” (Merleau-Ponty, 2002, p. 195) at the edge
of the perceptual field rather than at its center. Calling, devotion, and
transformation in the lives of NCTS men centered on God—perhaps the queerest
outcome of all.
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Hegemonic Masculinity and Blake’s “Mission of Mercy”: David Mamet’s Cinematic Adaptation of *Glengarry Glen Ross* as Postmodern Satire of Fundamentalist Christianity

Jared Champion

This article explores the 1992 film adaptation of David Mamet’s 1983 satirical stage play *Glengarry Glen Ross*, particularly as the cinematic satire attacks the connections and similarities between fundamentalist Christianity and hegemonic masculinity. Since over a decade separates the stage play from the screen version, the writer employs an interdisciplinary American studies methodology that borrows from a variety of scholarship—history, literature, and religion—to argue that new insights can be gleaned by situating the cinematic adaptation amidst the rise of American fundamentalist and evangelical Christianity at the end of the 20th century. Through the addition of the screen character Blake (Alec Baldwin), who does not exist within the play and is not specifically identified by name within the film, the adaptation becomes an allegory for legalistic Christianity’s unique narrative of history. Blake’s overwhelming masculinity, as well as his sales success ultimatum, emphasizes the way both Christian fundamentalism and hegemonic masculinity rely upon binary definitions of faith and gender—Christian / non-Christian, masculine / feminine—respectively. In order to maintain an individual’s participation in both domains, there is no almost category: one either is Christian or masculine or one is not. As such, the film functions as a postmodern satire that simultaneously attacks both domains without proposing any new system(s) to replace the reductive binaries proposed therein.

In September of 1983, playwright, novelist, and screenwriter David Mamet’s stage version of *Glengarry Glen Ross* opened in London. Six months later, the play, directed by Gregory Mosher, opened in New York earning a Tony nomination and the Pulitzer Prize for drama. In 1992, nearly a decade later, David Mamet reworked the piece into a screenplay using the same title (directed by James Foley). The film
failed to meet its budget, but met a decidedly warm critical reception: on top of a Golden Globe and Oscar nomination, the seven main actors even shared the Valladolid International Film Festival Best Actor award. Among numerous changes to the *Glengarry Glen Ross* screenplay, David Mamet added a new character: Blake, a name Philip French (2004) argues is a reference to William Blake and “The Marriage of Heaven and Hell” (p. 181).

In the years separating the stage and screen versions of *Glengarry Glen Ross*, the American religious climate changed dramatically. Between the time of the first American staging in 1984 and the 1992 cinematic incarnation, the United States saw both the final years of Ronald Reagan’s presidency and a drastic increase in self-proclaimed fundamentalist Christians. Many scholars, including Betty Jean Craige (1988), Linda Kintz (1997), and Joel A. Carpenter (1999), have pointed to Reagan as a catalyst for the increase in conservative Christianity. Where Craige (1988) argues that for fundamentalist Christians, Reagan represents a nostalgic yearning for “traditional values” that were fiercely challenged by feminism in the 1980s (p. vii), Kintz contends that, as a public icon, Reagan embodied the idealization of the white, middle-class, Republican, Christian male as the national subject (p. 60), and Carpenter posits that Reagan offered a model whereby conservative Christianity could flourish by integrating itself into the mainstream culture (p. 173). While this paper is not about Ronald Reagan, *per se*, the previous comments uncover many of the anxieties that develop in the time separating the stage play *Glengarry Glen Ross* from the film version. By studying the piece through the lens of religion, history, and literature, one sees how the changes Mamet makes to the screenplay, most specifically the addition of Blake (Alex Baldwin), respond to these tensions in the American religious, economic, and gender climate.

### Setting the Stage for a New Critique

By constructing the business office of Premiere Properties as a masculine space (set in New York City in the film, but Chicago in the play), David Mamet’s stage play *Glengarry Glen Ross* presents a group of salesmen not only at odds with each other, but also with themselves. Each of the characters carefully manicures his self-presentation by walking a fine line between amiability and forcefulness. Like Willy Loman (from Arthur Miller’s 1949 play *Death of a Salesman*), each man tries to sell the same product: himself. When Mamet adapted his play to film (as its scriptwriter), he added an additional character *not* originally found in his play, namely, a representation of the ultimate machismo force: Blake (albeit, unnamed within the film and deliberately evasive about revealing it to the salesmen). This charismatic character shows up in the film for little more than seven minutes early on in the narrative, and, by infusing his speech with religiously intoned questions and comments like “Have you made your decision for Christ?” his sales success soliloquy shifts the satire of the stage version, which was originally directed at capitalism, to a new sociopolitical target: fundamentalist Christianity. Blake, as a character corollary for a particular brand of fundamentalist Christianity that focuses primarily on the rules of salvation/damnation, legalistic Christianity, emphasizes the binary structure of hegemonic masculinity. Both fundamentalist Christianity and hegemonic masculinity dictate an understanding of history and the individual that are both built upon reductive binaries: for fundamentalist Christianity, one is either a Christian or
one is not, and for hegemonic masculinity, one is either masculine or one is not. Neither of these two systems allows variety, and as such, they exclude anyone not meeting their respective requirements. By deploying satire according to the postmodern tradition (see below), the cinematic version of *Glengarry Glen Ross* (1992, dir. James Foley) rips apart the binaries of both Christian fundamentalism and hegemonic masculinity and opens up space for a variety of faith and gender formulations.

**Characteristics of Postmodern Satire and the Metanarrative Qualities of Fundamentalism**

The term “postmodern satire” can be easily understood by noting postmodernity’s refusal of grand narratives of history and by satire’s self-conscious response as a part of a larger social discourse. Postmodern satire is aware of its inherently fragmented structure, as well as its goal of critiquing social structures and, therefore, it deliberately avoids becoming a part of (or suggesting) any form of true metanarrative.1 As Steven Weisenburger explains:

> The common thread will be the contemporary suspicion of all structures, including the structures of perceiving, representing, and transforming. Narratives, especially, are among the most problematic of such structures, and satire becomes a mode for interrogating and counterterrorizing them. Yet postmodern satire is stuck with the very simulacra of the knowledge it so distrusts—stories....The new satires involve much more than mere “inter-art discourse,” and in many cases, readers must ask just what, if very much, the satirist means for one to salvage. (Weisenburger, 1995, p. 5)

Patriarchy and Christian fundamentalism, however, are metanarratives. Patriarchy calls for men to meet behavioral prescriptions of hegemonic masculinity, and by doing so, positions men in positions of agency, be it financial, sexual, or political. In a sense, hegemonic masculinity outlines the core elements of patriarchal manhood, namely: white, straight, middle-class, independent, and so on. Within patriarchy, any deviation from these norms threatens to feminize the individual subject and subsequently render the individual subordinate. Likewise, to fully conceptualize the faith’s metanarrative quality, one must first understand the initial adoption of its “fundamentals.” Nancy T. Ammerman (1991) begins this explanation when she states, “[Fundamentalists] were willing to argue that certain beliefs were ‘fundamental,’ and they were willing to organize in a variety of ways to preserve and defend those beliefs” (p. 1). According to its followers, each of the tenets represents a certain truth, and as such, points to a fuller, more complete order to the universe. Dispensationalism, explains George M. Marsden (1991), posits “the Bible explained all historical change through a pattern of seven dispensations or eras” (p. 40). Bruce Bawer (1998) explains further: “Dispensational premillennialism—without which Protestant fundamentalism as we know it today would not exist—adds to this belief the notion that human history has broken down into several periods, known as dispensations, during each of which human beings lived under a different set of divine laws and criteria for salvation” (p. 83). The core of the fundamentals is historical, and according to the fundamentalist Christian doctrine of
dispensationalism, truth is revealed as linear history unfolds (or has already unfolded). As Harold Bloom explains:

These Fundamentals of the faith have been variously expounded and expanded, but generally reduce to five:

1. The Bible is always right.
2. Jesus resulted from a Virgin Birth.
3. His Atonement substitutes for us.
4. He rose from the dead.
5. He will come again, in a refreshment of miracles, to govern over a final dispensation of a thousand years of peace on earth, before the final Judgment. (Bloom, 1993, p. 224)

At the most basic level, postmodernity has been able to account for the inconsistencies in history caused by fragmented narratives, whereas fundamentalism has few other alternatives than to cling steadfastly to its founding principals; to do so, fundamentalism presents itself as the sole version of history, with all others as impostors.

**Blake as a Christ-figure and the Surge of Christian Fundamentalism**

The film *Glengarry Glen Ross* begins its critique of fundamentalist Christianity by creating an allegory wherein Blake functions as a Christ-figure, that is, as a subtextual Jesus. When he establishes a new business system in the office, he plays the same role in the trajectory of the film as the fundamentalists’ Jesus does in history, and as the Christ-figure, he represents a specific hegemonic masculine ideal (most clearly indicated when he pulls out a tethered pair of brass balls from his briefcase and superimposes them near his own genitalia to visually and symbolically demonstrate his alpha male status). 2 Like the cosmic alpha male Jesus, Blake establishes a new dispensation where the salesmen are given either a new system for salvation, or not being fired. In the very first lines of Blake’s diatribe, he explains, “I’m here from downtown. I’m here from Mitch and Murray. And I’m here on a mission of mercy.” As he continues upon his mission, Blake creates a rigid business system similar to rigid fundamentalism and he also exhibits the ideal masculine figure—marked by verbal and physical intimidation that leads to financial success—for each of the salesmen to emulate (and wherein masculinity is in direct proportion to success).

Blake’s addition within the film version of Mamet’s play is particularly poignant because the years separating *Glengarry Glen Ross* from stage to film saw a surge in American fundamentalist Christianity that is impossible to ignore. This boom began slowly, brewed for some sixty years, and began to see a surge in the mid-1970s and early-1980s (Marsden, 1991, p. 112). Nancy T. Ammerman (1991) explains that, “[The turn of the 20th century] was a period that shaped [fundamentalists] more than they often realize. . . . The doctrines they emphasize as most important were the ones they had to defend against ‘modernism’ during that period” (p. 8). From the formative days of the late 1800s, to the first wave of fundamentalist Christianity in the 1920s (when the title was first used) to the 1990s when Mamet wrote the screenplay, self-identified fundamentalists grew to represent close to 15 percent of
the American population, and when one combines these individuals with the
doctrinally similar evangelicals, the tally grows to 24 percent of the American
population in 1996 (Smith, 2000, p. 17).

A person’s behavior is imperative to his or her salvation, particularly in terms
of evangelism (while fundamentalist Christians do not typically believe evangelism to
be the path to salvation, they often understand the act of evangelism as indicative of
the spiritual condition of a person post-salvation—i.e. one does not reach salvation
by evangelizing, but one does show his/her personal salvation through evangelism).
Heather Hendershot (2004) says that the number of evangelicals alone accounts for
some 25-40 percent of Americans, a huge increase in just over eight years, and this is
to say nothing of the growth of fundamentalism (p. 31). The importance, of course, is
that fundamentalist (and evangelical) Christianity existed prior to either version of
_Glengarry Glen Ross_, but the film version responds to the surge that occurred in
large part between the time of the play (1983) and the release of the film (1992).

American fundamentalist Christianity gained momentum particularly during
the 1980s. Linda Kintz (1997) points to the Republican Party’s hijacking of
Christianity as a primary catalyst for this surge (p. 60). The connection became
solidified through nationally recognizable figures, and according to Kintz, Ronald
Reagan, the 40th President of the United States (1981-1989), became an untouchable
icon, but more importantly, President Reagan linked ideas of capitalism with
conservative values and masculinity:

> Ronald Reagan became the icon of this new conservative national popular
[culture] based not on content but effects. Though he was not an authentic
cowboy, or a traditional family man, or a churchgoer, the effects of his
familiarity with the forms of popular culture, from Hollywood movies and the
rhetoric of the common man to the vague language of everyday religious
morality, were perceived as authentic. He knew how to speak the language of
everyday life and of plain folks Americans ... [and] this was true even as he
constructed a millionaire populism in which corporations, millionaires, and
ordinary people would feel themselves equal within the terms of that familiar
Transparent American Subject. (Kintz, 1997, pp. 60-61)

Kintz’s comment highlights that President Reagan served as a masculine icon
for a raised moral awareness as he simultaneously furthered “millionaire populism,”
and through this parallel development, conservative values became intertwined with
capitalist interests. The connection was not only firmly established during this
period, it was valorized. By creating a system in which morality and capitalism were
bedfellows of sorts, the period surrounding Reagan’s terms created a new structure
through which conservative values, rather than being against social ills, were in favor
of the financial betterment of individual citizens; financial gain became a moral
objective, and, in the case of politics, moral objectives became financial gain.
Reagan’s masculinity aligns closely with hegemonic masculinity: personal and moral
success could be judged by one’s ability to create wealth, a sort of financially self-
made man.

The fundamentalism-capitalism-hegemonic masculinity triad is not altogether
surprising. Religious historian George Marsden (1980) points to the period
immediately following World War I as a pivotal time in the formation of fundamentalist Christianity as a school of thought that organized a community of followers. By examining the birth of American fundamentalist theology, he argues that the term fundamentalism (at the time of its coinage in 1920) “called to mind the broad, united front of the kind of opposition to modernism that characterized these widely known, if little studied, volumes [of anti-modernist theology]” (p. 119). To be clear, fundamentalist Christianity solidified during World War I when fascism raged violently abroad. Much like the patriotic fervor that followed the September 11, 2001 attacks, World War I foregrounded the values deemed “American” (capitalism, liberty, independence, etc.). By centering the coagulation of fundamentalism into an identifiable movement in a period of strong American and distinctly related capitalist fervor, Marsden highlights that, at its inception, fundamentalism was actually not opposed to capitalist values but, strangely enough, born of them.

The original play first hit the American theatre stages in 1983, relatively early in the rise of contemporary fundamentalism. By the time the film version was produced in 1992, President Ronald Reagan (1981-1989) had finished his tenure and George H. W. Bush (1989-1993) was finishing what would become his only term in office. The (now renamed Religious Right) Moral Majority was a veritable social and political force, and fundamentalism—through an alliance with capitalist modes—had been gaining speed for nearly two decades. As Ammerman (1991) notes, “in 1988, politically active conservative pastors again had the ear of Republican George [H. W.] Bush. By 1989 Jerry Falwell could declare his mission was accomplished, that conservative consciences had been raised” (p. 1).

The Intersection of Christianity and Capitalism

Scholarship has explored the intersection of Christianity and capitalism at length. In one such study, Colleen McDannell notes,

While there are certainly Christians who disdain the material world and strive to eliminate visual representations of it from their communities, there is no compelling reason to hold these groups as the standard to which all other Christians must be compared. If we assume that whenever money is exchanged religion is debased, then we will miss the subtle ways that people create and maintain spiritual ideals through the exchange of goods and the construction of spaces. (McDannell, 1995, p. 6)

McDannell’s comment emphasizes fundamentalist Christianity’s adaptation to a capitalist system, as well as the willingness of faith-based groups to take structural cues from the market. While Christianity is not necessarily in the middle of secularization, it began to structurally mirror capitalism. Carpenter addresses conservative Christianity’s flexibility to broader cultural changes when he explains,

rather than viewing evangelicalism as a throwback, as a religion of consolation for those who cannot accept the dominant humanist, modernist, liberal, and secular thrust of mainstream society, perhaps it is more accurate to see evangelicalism as a religious persuasion that has repeatedly adapted to the changing tone and rhythms of modernity. (Carpenter, 1999, p. 173)
Postmodernity avoids an overarching metanarrative in favor of a variety of fragmented narratives, or as Kevin J. Vanhoozer (2003) explains, “Yet there are many narratives, and this plurality is what makes the postmodern condition one of legitimization crisis: whose story, whose interpretation, whose authority, whose criteria counts, and why?” (p. 10). Vanhoozer’s “legitimation crisis” is a constant point of concern for fundamentalists in a postmodern era. If it is to be understood that there is no identifiable center, postmodernism then destabilizes traditional interpretations, and so the locus of meaning Christians place traditionally in God or Christ is no longer authoritative. Postmodernity’s opposition to legalistic Christianity was no doubt disturbing to those in the midst of the conflict. “Postmodernity,” writes Linda Kintz (1997), “thus represented a crisis in people’s ability to locate any meaning to which they could tie an empassioned commitment” (p. 60). Postmodern thought ravaged the metanarrative quality of fundamentalism, and in order to survive, fundamentalism adapted. Or, as Kintz explains,

in order to link passion to meaning, the reconstruction of everyday life by popular conservatism has thus exploited and reconfigured that sense of unease it helped to produce. In fact the strategy of traditionalist conservatism depends in part on the production of fear against which its own absolutist certainties can then function as an indispensable inoculation. (Kintz, 1997, p. 60)

Much like Christian fundamentalism that activates fear in order to create borders between groups, hegemonic masculinity also functions in much the same way. As Tim Edwards (2006) explains, “most fundamentally, the crisis of masculinity may relate to the sense that masculinity in terms of the male sex role is itself ipso facto crisis-inducing. In this sense, masculinity is not in crisis, it is crisis” (p. 17). In the film’s construction of gender, rather than being unthinking or unaware of the privilege masculinity allows, the salesmen struggle to maintain their masculinity without anyone realizing their panic. For both Christian fundamentalism and hegemonic masculinity, there is no almost category.

**Christianity, Fundamentalism and Binary Choices**

To help understand the binaries at work here, this analysis borrows the definition of “fundamentalism” (also known as “legalistic Protestantism” or “conservative Christianity”) from Bruce Bawer (1998) who explains it as follows: “Conservative Christianity understands a Christian to be someone who subscribes to a specific set of theological propositions about God and the afterlife, and who professes to believe that by subscribing to those propositions, accepting Jesus Christ as savior, and ... evangelizing, he or she evades God’s wrath and wins salvation” (p. 5). This definition therefore shows that fundamentalism offers two choices: salvation or damnation. Likewise, Blake in the cinematic *Glengarry Glen Ross* establishes a similar business system of reward and punishment, namely:

Good, ‘cause we’re adding a little something to this month’s sales contest. As you all know, first prize is a Cadillac Eldorado. Anybody want to see second prize? Second prize is a set of steak knives. Third prize is you’re fired.⁴
The film connects the idea of business “sales” as synonymous with evangelism. If the salesmen do not accomplish their sales targets, or evangelism goal, they are fired. The idea of being “fired” for personal failure is especially appropriate in terms of the fundamentalist–salesman correlation since the punishment for not living up to one’s evangelical expectations on Earth is an eternity in Hell, or put in businessman terms, being “fired” and thus unemployed. Blake offers a Cadillac Eldorado to the salesmen as first prize and goes on to challenge their masculinity as proven through sales: “Are you man enough [to take their money]?” Here, one must remember that the film’s satire functions by tearing apart binaries. Carla J. McDonough (1992) points out the instability of masculinity in Mamet’s drama, “the system of patriarchal capitalism that promises to define them, to position them in a place of power, is precisely what disempowers them by setting up a competition which always positions the majority of players as losers and, therefore, as not-men” (p. 202). The salesmen begin the contest as losers, “the good news is your fired. The bad news is you’ve got all you’ve got, just one week, to regain your jobs starting with tonight.” From the very beginning, the salesmen are thrown into the binary. Furthermore, Blake’s use of the phrase “good news” is important for it is the translation of the word “gospel,” a term used by conservative Christians to refer either to Jesus’ atonement for sins on the cross or his second coming. The car name Eldorado connotes El Dorado (Spanish for “the golden one”), and now refers to the fabled enticing city of gold, not unlike Heaven with its streets of gold. To the businessmen, sales mean Heaven, and failure means Hell.

In keeping with the allegory, Mitch and Murray are representative of a fundamentalist’s God. Mitch and Murray, rather than two separate people, represent headquarters, allegorical for God. The head office is responsible for Blake’s visit to the office to establish a new dispensation. Of course, this structure furthers the critique of fundamentalism since Mitch and Murray are behind the entrapping structure of this brand of Christianity. This structure highlights perhaps the most problematic nature of legalistic Christianity: if God is all-powerful, omniscient, and benevolent, how then is it that he would create an order by which his own son would have to suffer a brutal death for the sake of humans’ sinfulness? As Dave Moss (Ed Harris) explains:

> Threaten a man all you want, you can’t whip a dead horse....Sell $10,000, you win a Cadillac, you lose, we’re gonna fire your ass; it’s Medieval, it’s wrong, and you know who’s responsible? It’s Mitch and Murray, ‘cause it don’t have to be this way. (emphasis mine)

Moss addresses a crucial inconsistency within the fundamentalist system: if God transcends space and time in such a way that there is nothing beyond his understanding, then why, knowing that man would only end up corrupt and helpless, did he still choose to create such a system? This structure known as “substitutionary atonement” establishes a system where Jesus is not a messenger of God’s love for mankind, but a begrudging pawn of the cosmic system modeled on financial exchange (Bawer, 1997, p. 88). Blake too notes his own reluctance:
I came here because Mitch and Murray asked me to. They asked me for a favor. I said “the real favor, follow my advice and fire your fucking ass because a loser is a loser.”

According to the historical narrative of fundamentalism, Jesus’ establishment of the new dispensation through his crucifixion and resurrection is the absolute pinnacle of history; the core difference between a legalistic and non-legalistic Christian is whether Jesus’ goal on Earth can be best understood in the three days of crucifixion and resurrection (the establishment of a new dispensation) or the roughly thirty years of service capped by the crucifixion as a display of love, not law. As Bruce Bawer (1998) explains, “legalistic Protestantism believes that Jesus’ chief purpose was to carry out that act of atonement” (p. 6). However, not all Christians interpret the narrative of Christ in this manner. The difference, as Bruce Bawer (1998) notes, is that:

Legalistic Protestantism sees Jesus’ death on the cross as a transaction by means of which Jesus paid for the sins of believers and won them eternal life; nonlegalistic Protestantism sees it as a powerful and mysterious symbol of God’s infinite love for suffering mankind, and as the natural culmination of Jesus’s ministry of love and selflessness. (Bawer, 1998, p. 6)

The legalistic interpretation then creates a difficult dichotomy: though the traditional fundamentalist belief is that Jesus performed his actions out of love for humanity, if one is to believe he died for the sinfulness of humankind, then the salvation dually represents both Jesus’ saving power and humankind’s sinfulness. In this model, Jesus did two things on the cross: he established a new pattern for redemption and showed humans exactly how despicable they are. Therefore, Jesus’ death on the cross was necessitated by humankind’s own failure within the previous order. This understanding of Jesus also places strong emphasis on his more traditionally masculine characteristics: Huston Smith explains, “the resurrection reversed the cosmic position in which the cross had placed Jesus’ goodness. Instead of being fragile, the compassion the disciples encountered in him was powerful; victorious over everything, even the seeming end of everything, death itself” (cited in Bawer, 1997, p. 48). Since this system places emphasis on the moment of the establishment of a new dispensation, or system of salvation, the particular focus on the laws of salvation established by a powerful Jesus is not surprising. Likewise, Blake makes himself known to the salesmen for the sole purpose of establishing a new system of order above them and then leaves.

The Romans Road and A.I.D.A.
The emphasis on the dispensations points to another major issue: legalistic Christianity regards salvation as an individual’s central concern. To the fundamentalist, life begins when one is connected directly to Christ and this does not occur until salvation is attained through the request of atonement, or one’s being “saved.” It is helpful to look at a series of Bible verses in Romans that fundamentalist Christians refer to as the “Romans Road,” namely:
But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us. Romans 5:8 (New International Version)
For all have sinned, and fall short of the glory of God. Romans 3:23
There is no one righteous, not even one. Romans 3:10
For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord. Romans 6:23
For, “Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.” Romans 10:13
If you declare with your mouth, “Jesus is Lord,” and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. Romans 10:9

According to Kathleen C. Boone (1989), the Romans Road has become an icon of fundamentalism, and legalistic Christians often use it to evangelize (p. 102). It is found on t-shirts, worn in malls, evangelical tracts left on restaurant tables in addition to a tip, and on sandwich boards on the sides of highways. Harold Bloom (1993) points to this particular privileging of the Romans Road as evidence of the thrust for an experiential faith (p. 212). It then becomes clearly evident that the “experience” of salvation takes its cues from Saul’s (who later changed his name to Paul) Damascus Road experience (Acts 9:1-19). This experience of salvation becomes an epiphany of sorts, or one’s realization of the need for forgiveness. The disparity between experience and choice becomes highly problematic when one considers that the fundamentalist “spiritual experience … finds its center in doctrine alone … the competency of the solitary soul confronting the resurrected Jesus” (Bloom, 1993, p. 206). Within the terms of tacit consent, however, the only need the salesmen have within Glengarry Glen Ross is to avoid being fired (metaphorically death). As Blake delivers the corporate ultimatum, he gives his own secular version of the Romans Road, namely:

A.B.C. A, always. B, be. C, closing. Always be closing. ALWAYS BE CLOSING.
A.I.D.A. Attention, Interest, Decision, Action. Attention, do I have your attention? Interest, are you interested? I know you are ‘cause it’s fuck or walk, you close or you hit the bricks. Decision, have you made your decision for Christ? And Action. A.I.D.A....

This formula leads to a problematic notion of agency: if the only two options are either (a) metaphoric death-by-firing or (b) conforming to the system that Blake has established, then the salesmen are truly not free to decide (i.e. choose their own faith) because even leaving the company on their own volition carries the same end result as quitting. Blake’s A.I.D.A. speech presents the selling process as cyclical in nature: it begins with the salesmen first entering the system and then charges them to continue its propagation. Thus, the speech ends with Blake’s own charge to the men: “Go and do likewise. A.I.D.A. Get mad you son-of-a-bitches. Get mad.” Much like fundamentalism, if the salesmen choose not to adopt and apply their company’s selling credo, they are out of the system altogether. There is no third option; if any of them decide against Blake’s “decision for Christ,” it is truly “fuck or walk.” Blake creates a situation where the men must attend to their own survival in the company; it is in their best interests not to worry themselves over their peers’ performance. As Bruce Bawer (1998) explains, “fundamentalism encourages believers to attend to
their own souls (and those of their nearest and dearest) and not to care overmuch for the welfare of others (especially nonfundamentalists)” (p. 63). Likewise, when pondering the ramifications of Blake’s A.I.D.A. selling mantra, salesman George Aaronow (Alan Arkin) notes, “It’s not right to the customers.”

Fundamentalism’s emphasis upon the act of evangelism is most curious in light of fundamentalism’s own lip-service to the idea of justification by faith. Here, the basic premise is that humans attain salvation not by deed, but merely by belief in Jesus as savior. When the responsibilities of Christianity include the act of evangelism, the inconsistency then becomes highly problematic. Blake’s speech, too, shows this element of disparity:

You see this watch? You see this watch? That watch costs more than your car. I made $970,000 last year. How much did you make? You see pal. That’s who I am, and you’re nothing. Nice guy? I don’t give a shit. Good father? Fuck you—go home and play with your kids. You want to work here? CLOSE!

Blake discounts the validity of the good works of each and commands them to be successful in other actions. He is completely apathetic to their kindness or commitment to family, but oddly seems desirous for them to be financially successful: Blake, like the others, is a salesman, so their success would not directly affect him. In fact, he shows up to the office not so much to increase sales, but “because Mitch and Murray asked me to.” He explains, “The real favor: follow my advice and fire your fucking ass because a loser is a loser.” Similarly, fundamentalism charges members to walk a curious line between the understanding of their own failure and empowerment to convert non-believers.

The salesmen’s understanding of choice defines them, especially with respect to occupation and office as metanarrative. Fear of (metaphoric) death drives the crucial choices of their business lives. Belief in the inerrancy of the Bible is one of the “fundamentals” of fundamentalism. Furthermore, fundamentalism, explains Ammerman (1991), “offer[s] a comprehensive and satisfying explanation for the complexities of life….If there [are] decisions to be made, then the Bible surely [has] the answers” (p. 28). This intense privileging of Holy Writ began in large part as a response to the rise in overwhelming scientific evidence that contested Biblical authority. The ability of fundamentalists to arrange verses out of context in order to create a system of salvation is a by-product of the belief of inerrancy. Kathleen C. Boone (1989) explains the careful extraction of verses from their context to create the Romans Road: “By selecting which verses will be read, of course, the evangelist performs an editorial function, naturally avoiding any verses which do not pertain to the purpose, or worse, would seem to contradict fundamentalist soteriology [salvation theory]” (pp. 102-103).

The danger, as well as the power, of the acceptance of Biblical inerrancy is that any seemingly cohesive arrangements of de-contextualized verses are valued as much, if not more than, the initial passages. Ellen M. Rosenberg points to the privileging of verses, even when taken out of context, when she explains:

In the absence of creed, or a set of interpretive rules by which new challenges might be evaluated, [fundamentalists] can hold together only with a core belief
structure of extraordinary generality and ambiguity. The Bible fills the need; it becomes a projective test, a protean Rorschach. As the code words have become ‘Biblical inerrancy,’ the Bible itself is less read than preached, less interpreted than brandished. Increasingly, pastors may drape a limply bound Book over the edges of the pulpit as they depart from it. Members of the congregation carry Bibles to church services; the pastor announces a long passage text for his sermon and waits for people to find it, then reads only the first verse before he takes off. The Book has become a talisman. (cited in Bloom, 1993, p. 220)

For the salesmen, Blake’s A.I.D.A. speech is a guiding text from which he intends the men to draw an absolute code not because it is true or inerrant, but because it is the only option: i.e. “Always be closing.” As Blake explains, “only one thing counts in this life: get them to sign on the line which is dotted.” For Blake, any questioning of this value system is irrelevant. While the salesmen show some resistance to Blake’s directive, all except Roma toil away trying to make sales from worthless leads.

**Glengarry Glen Ross’ Filmic Response to Christian Fundamentalism**

Blake’s addition to the film version of David Mamet’s *Glengarry Glen Ross* makes the film’s trajectory a postmodern response to Christian fundamentalism. Steven Weisenburger explains the satirical form exemplified within the film as follows:

> The postmodern satirist suspects *all* kinds of codified knowledge as dissimulations of violence, and all of us as potential victims during their exchange. Contemporary, degenerative satire is itself a discourse of violence. It is a means of exposing modalities of terror and of *doing violence* to cultural forms that are overtly and covertly dedicated to terror. Especially in postmodern America, degenerative satire is realist narration backlit by fantastic outrage. (Weisenburger, 1995, p. 6)

Degenerative satire differs from more classical (generative) satire in its refusal to offer an alternative: Jonathan Swift’s “modest proposal” is that since society does not take care of the poor, we must eat babies. The satire generates a solution. Postmodern, or degenerative, satire merely attacks systems, but avoids any suggestion of a new order. The definition is thus ideal for the study of *Glengarry Glen Ross*. In his explanation of postmodern satire, Weisenburger borrows Jean-Francois Lyotard’s (1985) idea of “terror.” Lyotard asserts that: “the social bond, understood as the multiplicity of games, very different among themselves, each with its own pragmatic efficacy and its capability of positioning people in precise places in order to have them play their parts, is traversed by terror” (p. 99).

When this concept is applied to the film, this terror is specifically the fear of firing (metaphorically Hell), and the game is the manipulation of the salesmen to accomplish the goals of the larger business system. The application of Lyotard’s “terror” takes on even more nuance when he explains that terror functions through “imprisonment, *unemployment*, repression, hunger, anything you want” (p. 99,
emphasis mine). The salesmen embody this terror as seen through Dave Moss’ conversation with George Aaronow (Alan Arkin):

I’ll tell you what the hard part is—to stop thinking like a goddamn slave….Mitch and Murray, fuck you. What I say, fuck you!…George, we’re men here. [George says: “Yes”]. And I’ll tell you—I’ll tell you what the hard part is? [George says: “What?”]. Starting up. Standing up. Breaking free of this bullshit, this enslavement to some guy, ‘cause he’s got the upper hand…. [Jerry Graff] said ‘I’m going on my own.’ And he was free, you understand me?

Though Moss wants to rebel, he also understands his helplessness to break free of the system (metanarrative) that terrorizes him. While he could take his chances trying to find work in Graff’s office, the move would completely eliminate his chance of winning the Eldorado and would leave him unemployed: essentially, his quitting Premiere Properties (leaving the system) mirrors firing and therefore is not really a plausible solution. Granted, the two salesmen talk of finding work with Graff, but even this plan is shaky: when pressed, Moss goes home to Wisconsin, not to Graff’s office.

Jerry Graff vs. Gerald Graff

Moss’ reference to a specific person, Jerry Graff, might seem a touch out of place, but this underscores the film’s connection between fundamentalist Christianity and masculinity. To explain, Jerry Graff is a loosely veiled reference to Gerald Graff, a professor of literature and education (at the time the article was published, Graff was a professor at Northwestern University in Chicago, Mamet’s hometown). During the early 1980s, Graff gained academic renown for his practice of “Teaching the Conflicts,” and in 1988 he published a widely influential essay, “Teaching the Conflicts: An Alternative to Educational Fundamentalism.” The article was published in a collection of other pieces from the 1987 Modern Language Association Commission on the Status of Women in the Profession resulting in the book Literature, Language, and Politics (Craigie, 1988, p. ix). According to collection editor Betty Jean Craigie (1988), the essays respond to a division between the religious conservatives and the perceived liberalism of the academy, especially apparent in the canon wars: “The 1980s have witnessed in government, religion, and education the rise of what is being called the New Right, apparently a backlash against the perceived liberalism of the 1960s. Religious fundamentalists, recognizing (like their left-wing adversaries) that texts impart values, are attempting to control the curriculum of public grade schools” (p. vii). On one side, feminist scholars called for a revision of the literary canon to include more diverse authors and artists, and on other side, religious and political conservatives fought what they saw as the breakdown of traditional values (Craigie, 1988, p. viii). The primary concern of both sides involved the position of men and women within (or without) traditional gender roles.

In many respects, Gerald Graff represents a step away from the binary created by the two groups described by Craigie: the New Right who called for a nostalgic “back-to-basics” (Craigie, 1988, p. vii) curriculum or the “left-wing adversaries” who sought to expose the “‘ politicization’ of literary studies” (Graff, 1988, p. 104). Rather
than choose a side, Graff suggests that scholars take a step back from choosing sides in the binaristic Right/Left, nostalgic/progressive debate in order to explore what is at stake for the educational fundamentalists. Graff suggests that seeking “consensus” in the aims of education (i.e. a metanarrative to legitimize higher education) distracts from the possibility of “conflicting approaches” to the study of humanities (p. 102). Likewise, he refutes the Right by arguing that, “the fundamentalist educational program legitimates itself by constructing a myth of history, which maintains that cultural and educational consensus was intact until very recently and therefore is recoverable now” (p. 102). Graff suggests that scholars should embrace the controversies raised by the New Right instead of falling into an us/them binary where, “[scholars] formulate [educational fundamentalists’] problems in ways that are not only unproductive but also virtually guarantee defeat” (p. 99). While Graff’s “teach the controversy” seems to counter the previous claims about degenerative satire, it does not suggest a new system; instead, Graff offers a way of embracing the gray areas and conflicts, but not a new system or metanarrative. Much like Gerald Graff in 1988, in the film, Jerry Graff offers a step outside the binary, but not necessarily a new system.

It is worth noting that Jerry Graff does appear in the stage version of the play, but even so, Gerald Graff’s scholarship developed quite differently in the years between the play and the film. In the play, Jerry Graff is understood as a model of independence, but not necessarily in likeable terms; in the play, Moss mentions that, “The dif... the difference. Between me and Jerry Graff. Going to business for yourself. The hard part is... you know what it is?” Aaronow replies, “What?” to which Moss explains, “Just the act” (p. 35). The play’s reference is likely a reference to Gerald Graff’s early work, which criticized the work of poststructural linguists like Jacques Derrida.

Given Mamet’s interest in language and communication, Mamet very likely read Graff’s (1979) *Literature Against Itself: Literary Ideas in Modern Society*, which concerns itself primarily with the nature of language in the face of poststructuralist criticism. Though Jerry Graff never actually shows up in the play or the film, the echoes of Gerald Graff’s work do appear. When Graff published his book a few years before Mamet wrote the play, the critical reception of the piece was divided: poststructuralist and postmodern scholars found it oversimplified and traditional, and traditional scholars hailed Graff as a hero. Critic George Levine (1981) called Graff a “crusader” in that Graff “affirms the mimetic qualities of language, the possibility of objective truth, the existence of objective values, the moral and cognitive functions of literature” (p. 147). George Levine represents a more nostalgic perspective of language in the face of postmodernity, much like the salesman who shares a homophonic surname and similarly clings to an antiquated manhood marked by a foregone ability to sell. Both Levine and Levene unsuccessfully combat the changing rules of their respective games, literary criticism and sales.

The real force of the fundamentalist metanarrative is its power to make adherents (as well as those who are prospects for evangelism) internalize their roles within the “game.” For fundamentalism, a person’s ability to sell the faith is synecdoche for his or her faith. Shelley ‘The Machine’ Levene (Jack Lemmon), like the other salesmen, sees masculine identity especially in relation to his position within (or without) the metanarrative. As he said when he angrily confronted office
manager John Williamson (Kevin Spacey): “You do not know your job. Do you know that? A man is his job. You are fucked at yours. You hear what I’m saying to you?” (emphasis mine).

The difference between the characters in the film who represent a part of this system, and the one who is free from the terror, namely Ricky Roma (Al Pacino) is that Roma is able to see himself without the referent of the workplace. Even after the robbery, the film leaves it unclear as to whether or not Roma even knows about the ultimatum. In fact, when Roma learns of the robbery, his only concern is whether or not the company will give him the car, not if he will be fired.

The reduction of religion or gender to a simple binary format is a major issue for both fundamentalists and hegemonic masculinity. To be clear, supervisor Williamson (Kevin Spacey) says, “I don’t make the rules. You don’t like the rules, Dave? There’s the door.” But the salesmen cannot leave the company; they are bound to it because they are only presented with a binary choice: stay or leave, and they cannot afford to leave for their various reasons. Furthermore, none of them believe it is possible for them to join another company. Similarly, according to the strictures of Christian fundamentalism, humans are too old from birth to “move to another company,” as it were. This doctrine offers humans salvation through Jesus, or death and damnation by rejecting him. The salesmen are fundamentalists, but not by choice. Each of the characters, with the exception of Ricky Roma, is bound to fundamentalism by his mere awareness of the system.

Fundamentalism claims itself to be the one true path to Heaven, the cosmic reward for those “who accept Jesus as their savior and subscribe to the correct doctrines” (Bawer, 1998, p.6). The similar business system leaves the salesmen no outside options. The very fact that they even heard the speech by Blake makes them accountable to the system and the bosses above them. This situation carries significant weight in that it links them to the idea that the establishment of Blake’s dispensation was necessitated by their own worthlessness. Blake is very clear about the inadequacy of the men when he exclaims, “You can’t close the leads you’re given; you can’t close shit; you are shit. Hit the bricks, pal, ‘cause you are going out!” The salesmen quickly internalize this worthlessness, as seen through salesman Dave Moss. During the tirade, he questions Blake: “You’re such a hero, you’re so rich. How come you’re coming down here wasting your time with a bunch of bums?” Later, however, he is not as confident. He remarks, “Send a guy out there, no support, no confidence.” Regardless of their own belief in themselves, the men are bound to the business system above them. They are subjects to the system simply by knowing it is above them.

Tellingly, Ricky Roma is the only character successful in the sales contest, as well as the only salesman absent when Blake delivers the ultimatum. The film makes three separate mentions of the fact that Roma is absent when Blake speaks to the salesmen. While there are many fundamentalist Christians who believe that all humans are accountable for accepting Jesus, the general belief is that humans are only responsible for their own salvation after hearing the fundamentalist Christian narrative of Jesus. In answer to the classic question akin to “does a person who lives in the jungle and never hears about Jesus go to Hell?” evangelist R. C. Sproul (1978) explains, “the New Testament makes it clear that people will be judged according to
the light that they have” (p. 55). The film acknowledges this in an exchange between Moss and Aaronow:

Moss: To the law, you’re an accessory before the fact.
Aaronow: I didn’t ask to be.
Moss: Tough luck, because you are.
Aaronow: Why, because you just told me about it?
Moss: That’s right….You’re out, you take the consequences.
Aaronow: And why is that?
Moss: Because you listened.

The screen version echoes much of the stage version, but it adds the lines, “You’re out, you take the consequences” and “Because you listened.” The problem with this, of course, is that simply hearing about the system places a person within it. Because Roma never hears the message, he alone has the power to develop his own system; thus, his is the only true consenting role in the entire film. Roma dwells in a system free of the binaries fundamentalism and hegemonic masculinity employ to create internalized terror. Throughout the film, he meanders through the “conditions of postmodernity described by postmodern theory—fragmentation, lack of a center, unease, fear” (Kintz, 1997, p. 61). As one not implicated in the cyclical structure of fundamentalism, Ricky Roma explores a limitless range of possibilities in order to work out a system of his own, free from the confines of fear. Roma delivers the vast majority of his dialogue in a bar with James Lingk (Jonathan Pryce) sorting out his own masculinity and morality. As he explains to Lingk:

When you die, you’re gonna regret the things you don’t do. You think you're queer? I’m gonna tell you something, we’re all queer. You think you’re a thief? So what? You get befuddled by a middle class morality? Get shut of it, shut it out. You cheat on your wife? You did it. Live with it. You fuck little girls? So be it. There’s an absolute morality? Maybe. And then what? If you think there is, go ahead, be that thing. Bad people go to Hell? I don’t think so. You think that, act that way. A Hell exists on earth? Yes. I won’t live in it. That’s me. Did you ever take a dump that made you feel like you just slept for 12 hours?

Though his final question may seem a bit unusual within the context of his speech, as a foil to the other characters, it makes good sense. Roma’s freedom from Blake’s ultimatum affords him release and rest since the bonds of ABC and AIDA cannot suffocate him. Unlike the other salesmen who toil away tirelessly for fear of being fired, he can relax, sort out his own beliefs without the same overarching pressures of fitting into one side of a binary. The other salesmen fall into the school that sees the establishment of the new dispensation as their primary concern: they must decide between two poor choices. Roma, on the other hand, is able to see the larger picture, devoid of a single crucial moment. As he tells James Lingk during their bar meeting:

The great fucks you may have had, what do you remember about them?... I dunna know. For me, I’m saying what is it, it’s probably not the orgasm....What
I’m saying, what is our life? Our life is looking forward or it’s looking back. That’s it. That’s our life. Where’s the moment? And what is it we’re so afraid of? Loss. What else?

For Roma, questioning is acceptable. Unanswered questions do not shake his tranquility. Somehow, he relishes the mystery of life within this context. Roma addresses and deconstructs a historical understanding of humanity without the fear or terror of losing his own definition of himself. Though he does not take any affirmative stances to create a new system, he is aware of his position in relation to the system, as well as the others’ respective roles. He angrily says to office manager Williamson when he ruined an arrangement Roma had with Lingk:

Who ever told you that you could work with men?...What you’re hired for is to help us. Does that seem clear to you? To help us. Not to fuck us up. To help men who are going out there to try to earn a living, you fairy.

Roma, at peace with his own masculinity, blasts Williamson for not understanding the complexity or nuances of the selling system; and as he seethingly calls him: “You fucking child.” Williamson understands the office world in terms of binary categories—sales are good and lost deals are bad—and this reductionism causes him to blow Roma’s deal with Lingk as he excitedly tells Lingk the deal has been finalized. While Roma’s homophobic comment echoes some of Blake’s homophobic speech (e.g. “fucking faggots,” “cocksucker”), the key difference is that Roma represents a more complete understanding of the workplace and Williamson’s presence fails to intimidate Roma.

**The Critique of Faith**

The film addresses and critiques their individual struggles with the business system, allegorical for fundamentalist Christianity, through the unique development of rounded Christian characters, which is rare but extremely important. As Boone (1989) explains, “fundamentalism discourse is in fact marked by an unrelenting rationalism, not the irrationalism and emotionalism with which fundamentalism has so often been identified” (p. 11). Likewise, reducing masculinity to a position of privilege does nothing to help break apart the power dynamics. To present fundamentalists as followers of an illogical system of formulaic stereotypes and archetypes does not establish a rubric for understanding the forces weighing upon the individual fundamentalist; the same holds true of our understanding of men and masculinity. By creating caricature-free characters, the degenerative satire forces the viewer to empathize with the salesmen, representative of individuals struggling against, or adapting to, fundamentalist Christianity, as more than stereotypes and therefore leaves hope in the nothingness at the end of the film: even if the film ends unhappily for the salesmen, the satire itself represents the potential to dismantle restrictive narratives. As Weisenburger (1995) notes:

At first glance these decidedly postmodern figures suggest a world where the individual subject cannot be heard and has ceased to matter. The human subject seems merely a site occupied by various discourses before being swept...
aside by terrifying, impersonal forces. The initial picture is of an amoral landscape, an axiological wasteland where all the monuments of rectitude have been leveled. (Weisenburger, 1995, p. 6)

To leave the viewer with a plausible choice at the end of the film would be to commit the same errors of fundamentalism and hegemonic masculinity, namely: a total denial of agency through the limiting of choice to only a binary option. Postmodern satire, as social criticism, resists any urge to corner itself into a metanarrative, so instead of a solution, the satire merely destroys the binaries that restrict the characters. With David Mamet’s addition of Blake into the filmic rendition of his stage play, an entirely new critique emerges—one that attacks the structures of fundamentalism and masculinity alike.

*Glengarry Glen Ross* begins by establishing a system mirroring fundamentalism, and when the credits roll, leaves the audience without a plausible alternative. Not even the character free from fundamentalism is admirable. The characters are painfully un-comical in their attempts to grapple with faith, and their motives admirable. The genius of this filmic adaptation is its power to break the traditional adaptative tendency to sanitize the newer piece, or as Deborah Cartmell (1999) explains, “In fact, adaptations offer an escape into another world, a time often portrayed as simpler and happier. These adaptations strip the original text of what is regarded as unpleasant, satisfying a nostalgic yearning for a sanitized version of the past, and are thus escapist in their overall appeal” (p. 26).

Since Mamet adapted the film for a later era audience, Blake’s addition keeps the text alive for a newer social climate. Whereas a film paralleling the play without any major additions would have been possible considering the original text was written as a script as well, Mamet’s decision prevents the audience from being able to disqualify the critique embodied therein as antiquated, therefore, the addition of Blake maintains the resonance of the film’s critique for a newer generation. Adaptation scholar Robert Stam explains the relationship of an original text to its adaptation as follows:

In the broadest sense, intertextual dialogism refers to the infinite and open-ended possibilities generated by all discursive practices of a culture, the entire matrix of communicative utterances within which the artistic text is situated, which reach the text not only through recognizable influences, but also through a subtle process of dissemination. (Stam, 1992, p. 64)

In Mamet’s film, the dissemination occurs to the notions of masculinity, particularly the constructions of masculinity reflected through a legalistic Christian vision of Jesus. As the scattering occurs, the characters desperately seek to reconstruct some level of identity, and all efforts are in vain.

**Conclusion**

The film adaptation of *Glengarry Glen Ross* shows a significant response to the rise of American fundamentalist Christianity, particularly as it has adopted capitalist modes. The film’s strength is that it points to a highly problematic brand of faith without discrediting fundamentalists as unthinking and abstraction-needy. By creating a
caricature-free critique that seriously addresses the intricacies of fundamentalism, the film is able to fully deconstruct the structure of the faith through a foil to postmodernity, but by leaving the viewer without a possible “solution” to the satire, the film also effectively breaks apart fundamentalism at its roots without falling into the same problematic structures.

References


Notes

1 The term metanarrative comes from Jean-François Lyotard’s The Postmodern Condition (1984) and refers specifically to a “master story” that legitimizes codes of knowledge or unified narrative of history (p. 12).

2 For further research about the changing image of Jesus in the United States, see Stephen Prothero (2003) who offers a compelling analysis of Christianity adjusting to American cultural rhythms in his American Jesus: How the son of God became a national icon.

3 Scholars of American fundamentalist Christianity generally agree that, while fundamentalism found root in the mid-1800s (as a response to scientific advancements like Darwin’s theories) and solidified during World War I, it did not become a formidable socio-political force until a surge in popularity began gaining speed in the mid-1970s and accelerated much more rapidly through Reagan’s presidency. For more information, see Carpenter (1999).

4 While Blake offers three prizes, the steak knives function dually as contempt for failure and as minimal reward for base-line achievement. In this sense, the 2nd place prize represents a salesman who has not been situated in the winner/loser binary yet.

5 For further reading on popular culture and evangelism, see Hendershot’s (2004).

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Intimate Relationship Behaviors of Cuban Male College Students

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To assess the influence of acculturation and religiosity on the intimate relationship behaviors of Cuban males, 62 male college students from Cuba answered questions regarding their acculturation to American society, religiosity, and dating and sexual history. Cuban males whose parents allowed them to date at an early age, went on their first date and had their first girlfriend similar to the age when parents allowed dating, and had their first sexual encounter within three years of dating initiation. Religiosity impacted when parents allowed dating and first sexual encounter of youth. Acculturation impacted age at initial dating, first girlfriend, and first sexual encounter. Cuban males who were less acculturated to American society were at an increased risk of early dating behaviors and early sexual activity.

The Latino population in the United States is the fastest growing immigrant population at this time. According to the United States Census Bureau (2001), there are 35.3 million Latinos living in the United States, accounting for 12.5 percent of the overall population. Estimates suggest that by the year 2050 the Latino population will make up 24 percent of the total population (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2001).

The Latino population is extremely diverse, containing few universal characteristics. It has been suggested that the only common feature Latinos share is that they can trace their family heritage to one of the countries in Latin America (Massey, 1993). Other than that, they can be any race, speak English or Spanish (or both), migrate from twenty different countries, and be foreign born or native born to the United States (Driscoll et al., 2001). The term “Latino” was created by the U.S. Census Bureau to account for immigrants from Mexico, Cuba, Puerto Rico, Central America and South America (Driscoll et al., 2001). In the current study, the term “Latino” is used to match the definition provided by the U.S. Census Bureau; when speaking about a particular subgroup of the overall “Latino” population, country of origin is used to clarify. For the most part, Latinos reside within the largest and fastest growing cities/states (for example, Texas, California, New York, Florida) in the United States, but are slowly moving into more rural areas (U.S. Census, 2001). Of particular interest in the current study are immigrant males from Cuba currently attending higher education in Miami Florida. Cubans are the third largest Latino immigrant group with more than 50 percent of Cuban immigrants residing in Miami Florida (Grenier, 2006; Queralt, 1984).
Latino youth are growing as a percentage of the total youth population in America at a faster rate than the overall Latino population. The rise in the Latino immigrant population is due to high immigration trends (U.S. Census, 1999) as well as high birth rates in comparison to their non-Latino counterparts. For instance, in 2009, Latino women had the highest fertility rates at 21 births per 1,000 women when compared to non-Latino white (11 births per 1,000 women) and non-Latino black women (15 births per 1,000 women) (National Center for Health Statistics, 2010); this includes teenage pregnancies. Latina adolescents have an increased chance of becoming pregnant and bearing children during adolescence than non-Latino youth (National Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy, 2001).

**Dating Behaviors**

There appears to be very rigid gender role expectations among male and female Latinos (Carillo, 1982), which are subsequently demonstrated by their different dating patterning behaviors. Males are desired to portray very masculine characteristics, such as being proud, authoritarian, possessive in romantic relationships, and revengeful when desecrated (Jones & Korchin, 1982). Latino men are expected to exhibit *machismo* (for example, be strong, providers of the family, courage, honor, pride) (Marin & Marin, 1991; Pavich, 1986). The process of achieving *machismo* may include such things as fighting, alcohol consumption, and sexual pursuits in an attempt to demonstrate a higher level of masculinity (Pavich, 1986). There is also an underlying assumption that no male has truly achieved *machismo* until after fathering a child (Alvirez et al., 1981; Mirande, 1988; Pavich, 1986). Latino females, on the other hand, are expected to demonstrate *marianismo*, which is the polar opposite of *machismo*. *Marianismo* emphasizes chastity, premarital virginity, obedience to males, and care giving of family members (Baca Zinn, 1982; Pavich, 1986). There tends to be a double standard in terms of premarital virginity; females are expected to remain virgins by both their male and female peers, where neither sex expects males to maintain their virginity. This double standard is evident in the differing dating behaviors.

Previous research has documented that the timing of sexual activity is different between Latino males and females, with males having sex at a younger age and having more frequency of sexual activity than females (Driscoll et al., 2001; Raffaelli, Zamboanga, & Carlo, 2005). For the most part, research has concluded that Latino males are more involved in dating behaviors, initiating dating and sexual activity earlier than Latino females (Driscoll et al., 2001). It has been reported that adolescent male Latinos have higher rates of sexual intercourse and more sexual partners than females (Raffaelli, 2005).

More specifically, Latino females tend to delay involvement in early forms of dating, such as associating with a dating partner and friends (Raffaelli, 2005). Latino females also participate in unsupervised dating later than Latino males (Raffaelli, 2005). However, both Latino males and females have been found to experience their first serious relationship at similar ages (Raffaelli, 2005). This could indicate that there is a smaller gap between age at initial dating and age at first sexual activity for Latino females than for Latino males, which may pose an explanation to the elevated risk of early pregnancy and child birth for Latino females (National Campaign, 2001). In addition, previous research has illustrated that 10 percent of Latino youth become
sexually active prior to age 13, compared to only 5 percent of white American adolescents (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2000). This gendered difference in the timing of dating initiation and sexual activity among Latino males and females may best be explained by not only the double standard for males and females (machismo and marianismo) but also by acculturation (Ford & Norris, 1993; Sabogal et al., 1995) and religiosity (Beckwith & Morrow, 2005; Lefkowitz et al., 2004; Mahoney, 1980; Pearce & Thornton, 2007) as well as the parental practices of Latino parents (Flores, Eyre, & Millstein, 1998; Hovell et al., 1994; Raffaelli & Ontai-Grzebik, 2004; Villaruel, 1998). In turn, parental practices may also be impacted by acculturation and religiosity measures.

Parents Influence
Parents play an important role in the intimate relationship formation patterns of their children. Previous research suggests that parental control, monitoring, and supervision of adolescents influence their dating and sexual attitudes and behaviors (Dorn-busch et al., 1985; Hogan & Kitagawa, 1985). Unfortunately, many parents find this time in their journey of parenthood to be troublesome and difficult (Gray & Steinberg, 1999; Zani, 1993). This time may especially be difficult for immigrant and minority parents if their expectations and values for intimacy differ from the vast majority (Barkley & Mosher, 1995; Espin, 1984). The norms of the larger American culture differ substantially from those held dear within the Latino community. Specifically, the rigid gender role expectations of the larger Latino community may conflict with the gender role and sexual expectations of the host society. Latino parents may therefore have difficulty imprinting their culture’s traditional values on their children as children become more acculturated to American society (Barkley & Mosher, 1995).

Generally, Latino parents have a particular pattern of childrearing for their male and female children (Carillo, 1982). Because females are seen as vulnerable to the demands of the sexually aggressive male (Jones & Korchin, 1982), daughters are protected from possible sexual encounters by either keeping them at home or chaperoning activities outside of the home (Pavich, 1986). Ultimately, females are expected to be submissive to males while maintaining sexual purity (Jones & Korchin, 1982). Boys, on the other hand, are seen as independent and masculine (Jones & Korchin, 1982). As a result, parents encourage their boys to avoid any activity that may pose a threat to their masculinity (Jones & Korchin, 1982). Also, boys are encouraged to explore their manhood and sexual identity by engaging in sexual conquests (Pavich, 1986); as a result of these cultural values, Latino males are generally free of restraint to explore their own sexuality (Flores, Eyre, & Millstein, 1998), making parents more lax in their rules regarding dating for their male children. Latino parents, however, retain the cautious approach to sexuality for their daughters (Hovell et al., 1994; Raffaelli & Ontai-Grzebik, 2004; Villaruel, 1998).

Acculturation
Acculturation is how immigrants adapt to their new environments by modifying values, attitudes, behaviors, language, and norms of their home country (Clark & Hofsess, 1998; Ebin et al., 2001; Marin & Marin, 1991; Warner & Srole, 1945). Previous research has found that dating and sexual behaviors of Latinos change as
they become more acculturated to American society, by resembling white, non-Latino American behaviors with increasing acculturation (Afable-Munsuz & Brindis, 2006; Anshensel, Fielder, & Becerra, 1989; Flores et al., 1998; Ford & Norris, 1993; Guilamo-Ramos et al., 2005). Gender differences in dating behaviors and sexual activity reduce with increased acculturation (Ford & Norris, 1993; Marin et al., 1993; Upchurch, Anshensel, & Mudgal, 2002), suggesting that acculturation moderates the effects of gender on dating and sexual behaviors.

An examination of family generations concluded that Latino cultural norms are the strongest in families where both generations (e.g., parents and children) are less acculturated (Sabogal et al., 1987). This means that with less acculturation comes a lesser risk of early dating behaviors and early sexual activity for Latino females. This, however, does not apply to Latino males, considering the already double standard of sexual expectations held by the Latino community. Acculturated Latino females are more likely than less acculturated Latinos to engage in premarital sexual intercourse and to have multiple partners (Carmona, Romero, & Loeb, 1999; Darabi & Ortiz, 1987; Ford & Norris, 1993; Sabogal et al., 1995). More recent studies have linked acculturation-related variables, such as place of birth (Ebin et al., 2001), length of time in America (Guilamo-Ramos et al., 2005), and language spoken at home (Ebin et al., 2001) to sexual timing in adolescent Latino males and females.

Other studies have failed to find a relationship between acculturation and adolescent Latino dating and sexual behaviors. Raffaelli et al. (2005) failed to find a relationship between place of birth (US-born, foreign born) and timing of sexual behaviors in female Latino college students. Jimenez, Potts and Jimenez (2002) also failed to find an association between language spoken at home (Spanish, English) and timing of sexual activity in Latino females adolescents.

Ford and Norris (1993) examined Latino males and females separately and found that acculturation measures were positively related to sexual activity for females but not for males; this study also failed to find a link between acculturation and number of sexual partners in the past year for both male and female Latinos. A more recent study examined the sexual behaviors of female Cuban American college students and found that older, less religious, and US-born Latinos were at an increased chance to be sexually active and to engage in risky sexual behaviors than other Latinos (Raffaelli et al., 2005). To date, however, no study has isolated male Cuban American college students for evaluation.

Religiosity

Previous research has documented that Latinos rely on religion as a major support system for the family unit (Bernal & Shapiro, 1996; Garcia-Presto, 1996). They may also use religion to maintain the traditional gender roles and sexual expectations of males and females of Latino origin, or perhaps these roles exist as a direct result of religious beliefs. The majority of Latinos are Roman Catholic (Driscoll et al., 2001). However, this mainstream religion is often combined with local religious beliefs as well as ideas and practices that originate in Africa (Driscoll et al., 2001). More recently, Protestantism has become more common in Latin America. Latinos in the United States may be highly influenced by their religious beliefs and practices in their daily lives (Driscoll et al., 2001), which may influence their dating behaviors and practices.
Most studies that have examined religious influences have used measures of religiosity instead of religious affiliation (Roof & McKinney, 1987; Sherkat & Ellison, 1997). Level of religious activity may vary based on affiliation or religious denomination. Previous research has also found that level of participation in religious activities is more associated with intimate relationship attitudes than religious affiliation (Pearce & Thornton, 2007). This suggests that religiosity measured by frequency of religious participation may be a more stable measure to examine regarding dating behaviors and sexual activity instead of religious affiliation (Roof & McKinney, 1987; Sherkat & Ellison, 1997).

Religious participation reinforces attendants’ religious messages and teachings. These messages generally support the idea of sexual abstinence, the sanction of marriage, and consequences for premarital sexual activity and divorce. Previous research has shown that religious participation influences ideas toward sexuality, regardless of religious affiliation or denomination (Roof & McKinney, 1987; Sherkat & Ellison, 1997). Religious participation also indicates the attendants’ level of dedication to the religion (for example, teachings and community). Level of participation may also designate regular contact with believers of the religion providing behavioral monitoring, regulation of unapproved actions, as well as social sanctions within the religious community (Sherkat & Wilson, 1995). Frequent participation may hinder the amount of available dating partners as other youth members of the religion may also postpone dating behaviors and sexual activity due to religious teachings and believed consequences (Thornton & Camburn, 1989).

Religiosity has been found to be associated with adolescent and emerging adults’ sexual behaviors (Beckwith & Morrow, 2005; Lefkowitz et al., 2004; Mahoney, 1980). Previous research has demonstrated that level of religiosity and current dating status are associated with sexual activity (Beckwith & Morrow, 2005; Lefkowitz et al., 2004; Mahoney, 1980; Roche & Ramsbey, 1993). Greater religious involvement has been associated with sexual abstinence and reduced sexual experience (Bearman & Bruckner 2001; Blinn-Pike, 1999; Blinn-Pike et al., 2004; Haglund, 2003; Hardy & Raffaelli 2003; Lefkowitz et al., 2004; Meier 2003; Miller & Gur 2002; Regnerus 2007; Thornton & Camburn 1989). Research has demonstrated that adolescent females are more likely to be involved in religious activities, to be sexually abstinent, and to have less sexual experience than adolescent males (Blinn-Pike, 1999; Donnelly et al., 1999; Lefkowitz et al., 2004).

**Limitations of Previous Research and Purpose of Study**

Previous research that has examined the dating behaviors and sexual activity of adolescent and emerging adult Latinos’ has not specifically defined their participants’ country of origin. The term “Latino” can include immigrants who migrated to the United States from Mexico, Cuba, Puerto Rico, Central America and South America (Driscoll et al., 2001). However, immigrants from varying countries of origin have differing cultural and social values, norms, beliefs, and behaviors that have to be altered to adapt to their new environment. Some studies have attempted to generalize findings from Mexican-Americans to the greater Latino community. However, it is not feasible to generalize behaviors and attitudes of immigrants from Mexico to immigrants from other Latin American countries, such as Cuba. Few studies have examined the dating behaviors and sexual activity of Cuban immigrants.
Research that has examined Cuban immigrants has isolated Cuban females, omitting Cuban males from analyses (Raffaelli, Zamboanga, & Carlo, 2005). It is important to examine males as well considering that current literature proclaims a gendered difference in the dating behaviors and sexual activity of Latino immigrants, with males being more active than females (Driscoll et al., 2001). In addition, it is important to examine this group of immigrants considering the recent immigration trends in the United States as well as estimated Latino growth over the next forty years (U.S. Census, 2001; U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2001).

Previous research has linked level of acculturation to dating behaviors and sexual activity, with more acculturated immigrants behaving closer to their US-born, non-Latino white counterparts (Ford & Norris, 1993; Flores et al., 1998). Even so, current literature remains inconsistent. Some studies have linked measures of acculturation to increased dating behaviors and more sexual activity (Ebin et al., 2001). Other studies, however, have not found a link between the two (Jimenez, Potts & Jimenez, 2002; Raffaelli et al., 2005). Religiosity is another factor that has been associated with dating behaviors and sexual activity of Latino immigrants. These studies have used measures of frequency of religious participation rather than religious affiliation to examine the influence of religiosity (Sherkat & Wilson, 1995). Current literature claims that the more active a person is with their chosen religion, the less likely they are to be involved in dating behaviors and the less likely they are to be sexually active at an early age (Meier, 2003). It remains unclear, however, how measures of acculturation and level of religiosity interact together to influence the dating behaviors and sexual activity of Latino immigrant males from Cuba.

To address some of the limitations of previous research, the current study examined the relation between measures of acculturation and level of religiosity on the dating behaviors and sexual activity of immigrant Cuban male college students. Acculturation was measured using immigrant generation (first generation immigrant, US born with immigrant parent(s), US born with US born parents). Frequency of attendance at religious services (1 = never, 5 = several times a week) was used as an index of religiosity. Regression analyses were used to assess the extent to which the predictors were related to dating behaviors, including age when parents allowed dating, age at first date, age at first girlfriend, and age at first sexual encounter (1 = <10, 5 = >18).

Data analyzed in the current study was derived from an online survey administered at a southeastern public research university with a highly diverse student population. Participants included 62 unmarried Cuban male college students. Missing data was handled by using the Full Information Maximum Likelihood (FIML) method to estimate values for missing cases. The estimated values were then substituted for the missing cases, a process referred to as imputation, using the computer program Amelia (King, et al., 2001). The new data set was used in analyses. The following research questions were tested:

- What dating behaviors do Cuban male immigrants demonstrate?
- How does acculturation and religiosity best combine to predict the dating behaviors of immigrant Cuban males?
Method

Participants
Sixty-two Latino male college students from Cuba participated. The majority of participants, 53 (86 percent) were between the ages of 18 and 21 with the remaining participants being between 22 and 25 (n = 9; 14 percent). Forty-two percent (n = 26) of participants were seriously dating at the time of the study, with 24 (39 percent) not dating, and 12 (19 percent) casually dating.

Sixty-three percent (n = 39) of participants were Catholic, 8 (13 percent) were Protestant, and the remaining 15 (24 percent) were of some other religious affiliation. Fifty-nine percent (n = 37) of participants rarely attended religious services (i.e., never; once a year), 14 (22 percent) attended several times a year or monthly, and 11 (17 percent) attended regularly (i.e., once a week to several times a week). Twenty-seven percent (n = 17) viewed religion as somewhat important, 39 percent (n = 24) viewed religion as important (i.e., very or extremely important), and another 33% (n = 21) viewed religion as not important.

Five percent of participants (n = 3) were born in the United States with parents who were also born in the United States (i.e., third generation immigrants); 24 percent (n = 15) were born in the United States with parents who were foreign born (i.e., second generation immigrants), and 71 percent (n = 44) were foreign born with parents who were also foreign born (i.e., first generation immigrants).

Measures

Demographic questionnaire. Participants were asked six questions that assessed their (a) age, (b) country of origin, (c) sex, (d) racial identification, and (e) current relationship status.

Acculturation questionnaire. Three questions were used to assess participants’ level of acculturation. Acculturation was measured with indices of immigration generation (first, second, third). Questions included those with dichotomous response options: (1) “Were you born in the United States,” (2) “Was your mother born in the United States,” and (3) “Was your father born in the United States.”

Religiosity questionnaire. One question that assessed frequency of religious meeting attendance (i.e., responses ranging from 1 (never) to 5 (several times a week) was used to measure participants’ religiosity.

Dating behavior questionnaire. Participants answered four questions that assessed their (a) age when parents first allowed dating; (b) age at first date; (c) age at first girlfriend; and (d) age at first sexual encounter. Age responses ranged from 1 (< 10) to 5 (>18).

Procedure
All participants were recruited through introduction to psychology courses at an international university and received research credit for participation. All participants read an informed consent letter and completed the informed consent form prior to completing the 30-minute online questionnaire. Participants were first asked general demographic questions followed by sets of questions regarding their dating history and behaviors.
Results

Dating Behaviors

Analyses revealed that the majority of participants, 32 (52 percent) were allowed to date between 13 and 15 years of age. This was also the time when the majority of participants, 31 (50 percent) went on their first date. Thirty-five percent \( n = 22 \) had their first girlfriend at this time. Another 21 percent \( n = 19 \) had their first girlfriend between the ages of 16 and 18 years, followed by those who had their first girlfriend between the ages of 10 and 12 years, 8 (13 percent). Forty percent \( n = 25 \) had their first sexual encounter between the ages of 16 and 18 years, 29 percent \( n = 18 \) engaged in their first sexual activity between the ages of 13 and 15 years, followed by 23 percent \( n = 14 \) who had their first sexual experience over the age of 18 years. Descriptions of dating behaviors can be found in Table 1.

Table 1: Dating Behaviors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parents Allowed Dating</th>
<th>First Date</th>
<th>First Girlfriend</th>
<th>First Sexual Encounter</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>( n )</td>
<td>( % )</td>
<td>( n )</td>
<td>( % )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&lt; 10 years</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 to 12 years</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 to 15 years</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 to 18 years</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt;18 years</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Intercorrelation of Study Variables

Intercorrelations of the study variables are presented in Table 2. There was some correlation between the outcome variables (i.e., age when parents allowed dating, age at first date, age at first girlfriend, age at first sex) to acculturation and religiosity indices. For instance, the age when parents allowed dating was correlated with having a second generation immigrant status and frequency of religious meeting attendance. Parents who were foreign born with native born children and parents who frequently attended religious services allowed dating at a later age than other parents. Age at first date and age at first girlfriend were correlated with having a first or second generation immigrant status. Being a first generation immigrant was related to earlier age at first date and earlier age at first girlfriend, while being a second generation immigrant was related to a later age at first date and later age at first girlfriend. Age at first sexual encounter was correlated with having a first or second generation immigrant status as well as frequency of religious meeting attendance. First generation immigrants had their first sexual encounter at an earlier age. Second generation immigrants had their first sexual encounter at a later age. In addition, those who attended religious services more frequently had their first sexual encounter at a later age.

Results also indicated that the outcomes measures were intercorrelated. Age when parents allowed dating was correlated with participants’ age at first date and age at first sexual encounter. Parents who allowed dating later had youth who postponed dating and sexual activity. Age at first date was also correlated with age
at first girlfriend and age at first sexual encounter. Those who did not date until a later age had their first girlfriend at a later age and had their first sexual encounter at a later age than those who dated earlier. Age at first girlfriend was correlated with age at first sexual encounter. Participants who had their first girlfriend at a later age had their first sexual encounter at a later age as well.

Table 2: Intercorrelation of Study Variables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Girlfriend</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Parental Permission</th>
<th>Sex</th>
<th>3rd</th>
<th>2nd</th>
<th>1st</th>
<th>Religiosity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Girlfriend</td>
<td>.65*</td>
<td>.19</td>
<td>.44*</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td>.28**</td>
<td>-.34*</td>
<td>.11</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parental Permission</td>
<td>.19</td>
<td>.40*</td>
<td>.29**</td>
<td>-.08</td>
<td>.23#</td>
<td>-.20</td>
<td>.26**</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sex</td>
<td>.44*</td>
<td>.59*</td>
<td>.29**</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>.27**</td>
<td>-.32*</td>
<td>.29**</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd</td>
<td>.28**</td>
<td>.28**</td>
<td>.23#</td>
<td>.27**</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-.88*</td>
<td>.11</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1st</td>
<td>-.34*</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-.20</td>
<td>-.32*</td>
<td>-.13</td>
<td>-.88*</td>
<td>-.15</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religiosity</td>
<td>.11</td>
<td>.19</td>
<td>.26**</td>
<td>.29**</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>.11</td>
<td>-.15</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*p < .01; **p < .05; #p = .07.

Age when Parents Allowed Dating
The linear combination of religiosity and acculturation was significant for age at when parents allowed dating, $F (3, 61) = 2.41, p = .07, R^2 = .11$. Frequency of attendance at religious meetings contributed significantly to the age when parents allowed participants to begin dating, $t (3, 61) = 1.93, p = .05$. As frequency of religious meeting attendance increased, the age at which parents allowed dating increased as well. The overall model accounted for 11 percent of the variance in age when parents first allowed dating. Results of regression analyses can be found in Table 3.

Table 3: Beta Weights and Regression Results for Dating Behaviors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parent Allowed Date</th>
<th>Age Date</th>
<th>Age Girlfriend</th>
<th>Age Sex</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Third Generation</td>
<td>-.58</td>
<td>-.33</td>
<td>.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First Generation</td>
<td>-.44</td>
<td>-.53**</td>
<td>-.85*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religiosity</td>
<td>.21**</td>
<td>.11</td>
<td>.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$R^2$</td>
<td>.11</td>
<td>.11</td>
<td>.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$F$ statistic</td>
<td>2.41***</td>
<td>2.31#</td>
<td>2.74**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Second generation omitted. *p < .01, **p < .05, ***p = .07, #p = .08
Age at First Date
The linear combination of religiosity and acculturation was significant for age at first date, \( F(3, 61) = 2.31, p = .08, R^2 = .11 \). Being a first generation immigrant was a significant contributor to the age at first date, \( t(3, 61) = -2.13, p = .03 \). This demonstrated a negative relationship between acculturation measures and age at first date, with those who were second generation (\( M = 3.64, SD = .84 \)) and third generation immigrants (\( M = 3.33, SD = .58 \)) reporting going on their first date at a later age (\( M = 3.62, SD = .82 \)) than those who were first generation immigrants (\( M = 3.07, SD = .80 \)). The overall model accounted for 11 percent of the variance in age at first date for the sample.

Age at First Girlfriend
The linear combination of religiosity and acculturation was significant for age at first girlfriend, \( F(3, 61) = 2.74, p = .05, R^2 = .12 \). Being a first generation immigrant was a significant contributor to age at first girlfriend, \( t(3, 61) = -2.63, p = .01 \). This demonstrated a negative relationship between acculturation measures and age at first girlfriend, with those who were second generation (\( M = 3.41, SD = 1.02 \)) and third generation immigrants (\( M = 3.67, SD = .58 \)) reporting having their first girlfriend at a later age than those who were first generation immigrants (\( M = 2.53, SD = 1.24 \)). The overall model accounted for 12 percent of the variance in age at first girlfriend for the sample.

Age at First Sexual Encounter
The linear combination of religiosity and acculturation was significant for age at first sexual encounter, \( F(3, 61) = 3.63, p = .01, R^2 = .16 \). Being a first generation immigrant was a significant contributor to age at first sexual encounter, \( t(3, 61) = -2.26, p = .02 \). This demonstrated a negative relationship between acculturation measures and age at first sex, with those who were second generation (\( M = 3.91, SD = .80 \)) and third generation immigrants (\( M = 4.00, SD = 1.00 \)) reporting having their first sexual encounter at a later age than those who were first generation immigrants (\( M = 3.20, SD = 1.26 \)). Frequency of attendance at religious meetings contributed significantly to age at first sex, \( t(3, 61) = 1.99, p = .05 \). As frequency of religious meeting attendance increased, the age at first sexual encounter increased as well. The overall model accounted for 16 percent of the variance in age at first sexual encounter.

Discussion
The current study assessed the association between acculturation and religiosity on the intimate relationship behaviors of Cuban male college students by questioning Cuban male emerging adults about their past experiences. The majority of research that has examined the sexual behaviors of Latino youth and emerging adults has focused on Mexican-American participants. Results of these studies are then generalized to the larger Latino community, which can also include Latinos from Cuba, Central America, South America, and Puerto Rico (Driscoll et al., 2001). Considering that 10 percent of Latino youth become sexually active prior to age 13 (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2000), it is important to avoid
generalizations and to devote more research to specific populations. Because of this need, the current study specifically focused on Cuban males.

What Dating Behaviors do Cuban Male Immigrants Demonstrate?

While there were some participants who had their first girlfriend at a later or earlier age, the majority of Cuban males in the current study tended to go on their first date and to have their first girlfriend after their parents granted permission to date. The initial age at first date was between 13 and 15 years of age. This seems somewhat early to be allowed to date. However, previous research has documented that Latino parents allow sons to participate in intimate relationship behaviors earlier than daughters (Raffaelli, 2005). This may be because of the strong masculine gender roles Latino parents expect to integrate to their sons (Jones & Korchin, 1982). This masculine goal may be so strong that Latino parents encourage sexual conquests of their sons in an attempt for him to prove his masculinity and reach machismo (Pavich, 1986). In addition, this age at dating initiation is somewhat early in comparison to white, non-Latino youth who tend to have their first date between the ages of 14 and 16 years of age (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2000).

For the most part, Cuban males had their first sexual encounter within three years of having their first girlfriend, between the ages of 16 and 18 (40 percent). Even so, there were participants who demonstrated earlier intimate relationship behaviors. For instance, 13 percent of participants had their first girlfriend between the ages of 10 and 12 years, and 29 percent engaged in their first sexual activity between the ages of 13 and 15 years of age. These statistics are not surprising, as estimates suggest that 10 percent of Latino youth become sexually active prior to age 13, compared to only 5 percent of white American adolescents (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2000). Results of the current study may suggest that Cuban males participate in sexual activity earlier than their Latino counterparts. The younger dating and sexual behaviors of Cuban males supports previous research that has concluded that Latino males have sex at a younger age than females (Driscoll et al., 2001; Raffaelli et al., 2005), are more involved in dating behaviors, initiate dating and sexual activity earlier than females (Driscoll et al., 2001), and have higher rates of sexual intercourse and more sexual partners than females (Raffaelli, 2005). This particular gender difference in the intimate relationship behaviors of Cuban males and females appears to be a direct result of the double standard that exists in terms of premarital virginity (Jones & Korchin, 1982; Marin & Marin, 1991; Pavich, 1986). Cuban males may initiate early intimate relationship behaviors, such as dating and sexual intercourse, in an attempt to achieve machismo (Alvirez et al., 1981; Mirande, 1988). It remains unclear, however, if the ultimate goal during these activities is fatherhood, as fatherhood is seen as the ultimate achievement of machismo (Alvirez et al., 1981; Mirande, 1988; Pavich, 1986).

How Does Acculturation and Religiosity Best Combine to Predict the Dating Behaviors of Immigrant Cuban Males?

Frequency of religious meeting attendance influenced the age when parents allowed their Cuban sons to date, with those who attended religious services frequently postponing giving permission to date. In addition, age at first sexual encounter was
also influenced by frequency of religious meeting attendance. Cuban males who attended religious services frequently postponed sexual activity until a later age than those who attended religious services less frequently. Religiosity, however, did not significantly impact age at first date or age at first girlfriend.

These findings are in agreement with previous research on religiosity that has found that level of participation in religious activities is associated with intimate relationship attitudes (Pearce & Thornton, 2007; Roof & McKinney 1987; Sherkat & Ellison 1997). This is not just for the adolescent or emerging adult but also for the parent as well.

Frequent religious meeting attendance reinforces the religious messages and teachings, which often promote sexual abstinence, the sanction of marriage, and consequences for premarital sexual activity and divorce; and demonstrates dedication to such teachings. Parents listen to these messages and come to the conclusion that postponing permission to date will postpone or prevent their adolescents and emerging adults from engaging in premarital sexual activity. In the current study, parents were somewhat successful in postponing sexual activity as youth who attended religious services frequently waited longer to have sex than youth who did not attend religious services frequently. In addition, frequent religious activity not only provides behavioral monitoring, regulation of unapproved actions, and social sanctions within the religious community (Sherkat & Wilson, 1995) for youth, but for parents as well. Parents may have their parental practices observed by the religious community and maintain parental monitoring practices that are congruent with the teachings of that particular religion.

Previous research has found that religiosity is associated with adolescent and emerging adults’ sexual behaviors (Beckwith & Morrow, 2005; Lefkowitz et al., 2004; Mahoney, 1980), with greater religious involvement being linked with sexual abstinence and reduced sexual experience (Bearman & Bruckner 2001; Blinn-Pike, 1999; Blinn-Pike et al., 2004; Haglund, 2003; Hardy & Raffaelli 2003; Lefkowitz et al., 2004; Meier 2003; Miller & Gur 2002; Regnerus 2007; Thornton & Camburn 1989). The same was found in the current study for Cuban males. It may be that frequent participation limits the number of potential dating partners as other youth members of the religion also postpone dating behaviors and sexual activity due to religious teachings and believed consequences (Thornton & Camburn, 1989).

Immigrant status impacted when Cuban males went on their first date, how old they were when they had their first girlfriend, and how old they were when they had their first sexual encounter. Those who were first generation immigrants, meaning that both of their parents and the participant were born in Cuba and later moved to the United States, went on their first date earlier, had their first girlfriend earlier, and had their first sexual encounter at an earlier age than second and third generation immigrants. It appears as though the rigid gender roles and sexual expectations that exist in Cuban culture make their way into American society with the migration of Cuban immigrants. Cuban immigrants embrace machismo, as well as marianismo, and these expectations are evident in their intimate relationship behaviors. With this in mind, it makes sense that first generation immigrants would demonstrate earlier dating and sexual behaviors than second and third generation immigrants. It may be that, for Cuban male immigrants, as they become more
acculturated to American society, their expectations for machismo decrease, and as a result, the age when they begin dating and engaging in sexual behaviors increases.

Findings from the current study differ from past research in a number of ways. Previous research has found that dating and sexual behaviors of Latinos change as they become more acculturated to American society, by resembling white, non-Hispanic American behaviors with increasing acculturation (Afable-Munsuz & Brindis, 2006; Aneshensel, Fielder, & Becerra, 1989; Flores et al., 1998; Ford & Norris, 1993; Guilamo-Ramos et al., 2005). In addition, previous research has concluded that with less acculturation comes less risk of early dating behaviors and early sexual activity (Sabogal et al., 1987).

This was not the case in the current study. Here, less acculturated Cuban males were at an increased risk for early dating behaviors and early sexual activity. In the current study, as acculturation increased there was less of a risk for early dating and sexual activity for Cuban males. These differences may be a result of examining differing populations as well as the result of decreasing expectations regarding machismo. The majority of research on Hispanic and Latino youth and emerging adults has focused on participants from Mexico (i.e., Aneshensel, Fielder, & Becerra, 1989; Ford & Norris, 1993). The current study, however, specifically focused on Cuban males.

Limitations of Study
The sample used in this study was a college population, representing a distinct group of Latino adolescents and emerging adults. Latino students have lower rates of college attendance (Orfield, 2002) compared to native born students, causing problems for generalizing the findings of this study to Latino non-college students and emerging adults. Also, the survey was administered online. This may have interfered with how participants responded to answers. They may not have been completely honest in their responses or they may have exaggerated or underreported their experiences.

Implications for Future Research
The current study demonstrates that differences exist between Cuban males and Mexican Latino youth and emerging adults in terms of intimate relationship behaviors. Specifically, the trends found in Mexican Latino youth are not present for Cuban males. In fact, the acculturation trend works in the opposite direction for Cuban males with less acculturated Cuban males being at a higher risk for early dating behaviors and early sexual activity. Further investigation on these differences is needed.

References


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Recently, the social sciences have found a new interest in the history of emotions. This “emotional turn,” as this epistemological shift has been called, examines the efficacious and contagious role of emotions in historical and socio-political processes. No longer is it assumed that modernity was born of a marriage of rational thinking and technological progress that marginalized and repressed the affective dimension of social life, but rather that it transformed and cultivated particular emotional expectations of its subjects, assigning to men and women different emotive qualities. The common perception that modernity imposed emotionless behavior on men and emotionality on women is, in the volume under review, both affirmed (by tracing it to the emerging bourgeois subject of the 1800s) and also critically evaluated. To claim that a gender-dualistic view of emotional attributions sufficiently characterizes modernity is, according to the volume’s overall thesis, the result of failing to see that gender-duality is itself the result of particular historical processes. It is not so much that men in modernity are asked to renounce emotions than to embody particular emotional virtues which, as they transform over time, may be reduced to a narrow range of choices or subjected to specific social regiments. Modernity may have led to the impoverishment of men’s emotional choices but it also has eventually given way to a wider range of expressiveness.

In *Die Präsenz der Gefühle*, the narrowing and widening of male affective expressiveness, both in the public and private realms, is illustrated by focusing on German history from the 1800s to the 1990s. While displaying emotional sensitivity was expected of men in early bourgeoisie, such an affective repertoire underwent a significant contraction in the late nineteenth century and eventually peaked in the habitus of “Sachlichkeit” of the early twentieth century. “Sachlichkeit,” which might best be translated as a cold, functional, objective matter-of-factness, describes the behavior of the generations of men from 1914 to 1945. These are the men who fought, endured and witnessed two World Wars. As a masculine ideal, the “sachliche” generation found its most violently criminal outlet in the communal and emotional bonds of “Kameradschaft” (camaraderie) during the Second World War.

Most of the chapters of *Die Präsenz der Gefühle* go back to a 2007 conference of a working group on history and theory; hence, it is not surprising that most contributors are historians by training and profession, with a few authors coming from the fields of sociology, ethnography, religious studies, philosophy and educational sciences. The bulk of the volume consists of analyses of particular milieus and rhetorical situations in German history, probing the intersectionality of
masculine/gender theory and the history of emotions. Although the volume is very important for those who study German cultural history, scholars interested in critical issues of masculinity will—if they are able to read German—greatly benefit from working through these pages: for not only do the 13 chapters provide valuable insight into the generations of men that so shaped the darkest period of mid-twentieth century European history, but they also sparkle with theoretical sophistication.

The opening paragraph of the Foreword is worth quoting in length, for it establishes the framework for this fine volume.

Until now, the history of manly emotions in modernity has been mostly narrated in negative terms: as disciplining, repressing or disastrous unleashing. This volume wants to broaden and change this contradictory and yet one-sided image of a deficient and pathological masculine emotionality. Emotions are a historically malleable, yet a constantly present component of masculinity. Focusing on German history of the 19th and 20th centuries, we will examine the relationships between masculinity and emotions in modernity on discursive, performative and behaviorial-motivational levels as well as in diverse fields of male activities, such as politics and war, marriage, family and community, as well as religion and sexuality. (p. 7)

The introductory essay by the editors, Borutta and Verheyen, provides a solid overview about the theoretical base of the “emotional turn” in history and how it can be fruitfully applied to an interdisciplinary investigation of masculinity. In regard to the history of emotions, Borutta and Verheyen (as well as other contributors) make repeated references to the works of English-speaking scholars Joanne Bourke, Catherine Lutz, Barbara Rosenwein, and Michelle Rosaldo as well as German authors Ute Frevert, Martina Kessel, Alexandra Przyembel and Daniela Saxer. This list of all-female scholars is complemented by German masculinity studies (e.g. Klaus Theweleit, Wolfgang Schmale, George Mosse, Thomas Kühne, Ernst Hanisch, Martin Dinges). Emotions, Borutte and Verheyen write, are composed of three essential components: they have a physiological dimension, a cognitive dimension (which is linked to normative discernment), and a cultural dimension, the latter of which is “expressed, modeled and represented ... in social practices” (p. 17-18). With respect to social practices of masculinity, it is important to keep in mind the wide variety of acceptable male behavior around the globe, from the public lamentation of thirteenth-century Italian men to the public hand-holding of contemporary South Asian men. To lose sight of such global perspective might tempt scholars to make universal claims when studying culture-specific masculinities.

In regard to German masculinity, Borutta and Verheyen state that modern German history shows a “wavelike up and down of the production of masculine emotions,” ranging from Friedrich Schlegel’s proclaimed “soft masculinity” to the “hard and cold masculine models of the Wilhelmine Empire, the Weimar Republic and the Third Reich” and back again (or, better, forward) to “the construction of a rather soft and warm masculinity of the current federal republic” (p. 20).

These “wavelike” transformations are well represented in the chapters that follow. Andreas Reckwitz, for example, distinguishes between four phases that
transformed and produced different hegemonial forms of male emotionality: the sensitive sentimentality of early bourgeois morality ("empfindsame Bürgerlichkeit"); the production of gender-dualistic assignments of emotions during hegemonial bourgeoisie of the late nineteenth century (the rational masculine achiever vs irrationally emotive women); the radicalization of an emotion-deprived, cold masculinity ("Sachlichkeit") in the early twentieth century; and the emergence of a postmodern ideal of the emotional self in the 1960s and 1970s, which encouraged men not to repress but to cultivate their repertoire of emotionality.

Chapters that illuminate the transformation from early bourgeois sentimentality to the gender-rigidity of the nineteenth century include Catherine Newmark, who looks at the engendering of reasonable emotions that were valued as manly virtues (following Rousseau, Kant and others); Stefan-Ludwig Hoffman’s study of intimate, non-sexual friendships among freemasons; and Ellinor Forster’s empirical study of the spectrum of emotional expressiveness as gleaned from divorce documents of rural Tyrol.

The next three chapters address masculine behavioral ideals as they were formed and radicalized in the early part of the twentieth century. Nikolaus Buschmann traces the discourse on patriotic and political loyalty from 1848 to the Weimar Republic. He shows how the emergence of the German nation state went hand in hand with a German masculinity that relied on loyalty to the national community, on camaraderie, and on a fear-defying mentality that resulted in the cold matter-of-factness earlier described as “Sachlichkeit.” Daniel Morat further pursues “Sachlichkeit” as an attitude that characterized German men in the Weimar Republic. Based on Helmut Lethen’s extensive work on this issue (which Lethen called “Verhaltenslehre der Kälte” [behavioral teaching of coldness]), Morat interprets the code of “Sachlichkeit” not as one without emotion but, rather, as one that tries to combat and defy a strong emotion. “The incantation of a painless body machine,” he writes, ultimately serves like a “magic charm” to defend oneself against “vulnerability” and to “manage a particular emotion: namely fear” (p. 165). This behavioral ideal eventually led to a male mentality of dissociation that the Nazi regime could exploit in their “brutalization of politics” (p. 169). It found its pinnacle in the “camaraderie” of the German Wehrmacht. Camaraderie, Thomas Kühne states in his chapter on “Tenderness and Cynicism,” forged strong communal, male-male bonds among soldiers; it provided them the needed emotional sustenance and cohesion in order to maintain one’s loyalty to the brutal fighting and the killing operations. “The ‘human’ face of Kameradschaft,” Kühne concludes, “made bearable the ‘inhuman’ face of war and one’s own participation in it” (p. 199).

The last four chapters speak to the post-1945 phase of transformation. Encouraged by countercultural movements, manly ideals emerged that rebelled against the masculine roles and ideologies of the fathers. It was the 1968 generation that led the charge against the father generation. Yet, as Aribert Reimann writes, these men remained caught in strong machismo culture under the banner of revolutionary zeal and sexual liberation. Similarly, the socialist ideals in the GDR, according to Sylka Scholz, remained in contradictory tension between the public praise of the socialist worker-hero and the increasing retreat into privacy, where a new image of tender fatherhood emerged. Benno Gammerl observes a widening of emotional expressiveness among homosexual men (in West Germany) in his
comparative analysis of personal ads from the 1960s and 1990s. These ads display little difference in terms of quantitatively measurable emotionality, Gammerl concludes, but qualitatively things changed a great deal, best summarized in the idiomatic change from seeking a “kindhearted comrade” (1960s) to a “tender boyfriend” (1990s) (p. 276). Finally, the spiritual and esoteric new age movement of the 1970s and 1980s, with its appeal to body therapy and personal transformation, encouraged German men to renew themselves by discovering their feminine self, speaking from their hearts, and integrating “intellect and intuition, heart and hand, head and belly” (p. 292).

With respect to the post-1945 phase of the emotional history of German masculinity, a chapter on the crucial 1950s is sorely missing in this otherwise excellent volume. After all, it is in this decade that the old and cold masculine ideals—which had peaked in the supremacist, racial ideology of Herrenmenschen (master race), but now found itself defeated and discredited—transitioned into moderately democratic and youthfully rebellious alternatives. This transformation, however, did not happen naturally or automatically. Rather, the 1950s culture managed to change national loyalty to the value of private fidelity by reestablishing a male-ruled household, in which men were the breadwinners and women the reproductive laborers. On the surface, normalcy and moral decency (Anständigkeit) reigned, but these only masked a subterranean geography of conflictual emotions.

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*The Embrace of Eros* is a welcome addition to the growing body of literature that addresses Christian attitudes toward the sexual body from contemporary perspectives. In her Introduction, editor Margaret Kamitsuka, who teaches religion at Oberlin College, briefly traces the genesis of this book project: At a conference in 2006, she writes, “about fifty theologians and scholars of religion across North America […] came together to discuss how eros and sexuality have fared in Christianity historically and up to the present” (p. 1). Serene Jones, now president of Union Theological Seminary, similarly reflects in her Afterword on these beginnings and praises the scholars for “the level of honesty and seriousness” with which they talked about sexual practices, so “rare in the theological academy and church today” (p. 297). Indeed, the 17 chapters of this volume convey the liveliness and integrity of these original conversations, and the reader is rewarded with an anthology that “investigates the possibilities for and the shape of an eros in Christianity that would be enlivening not repressive, matter-of-fact not obsessive, plurivocal not uniform” (p. 2).

Formally, *The Embrace of Eros* is divided into three parts: historical perspectives from biblical texts to the early and medieval church and the Reformation (Part I); cultural perspectives that examine discourses on erotic desires and sexual identities (Part II); and theological perspectives that probe new eschatological, ecclesiological and incarnational models (Part III). This division follows an internal logic that moves from historical review to deconstructive readings and, finally, to reconstructive theological engagement with the Christian traditions. Although one might expect from such an anthology highly specialized contributions that reflect the particular interests of each author, *The Embrace of Eros* shows, gratefully, an overall stylistic and thematic coherence. Each chapter begins by outlining the issues at stake, thus easing the reader’s entry into the particular questions that are addressed and discussed in the pages to follow. Since one must assume that such a choice is not accidental, the editor is to be commended for seeing through such disciplined writing. John Thiel’s opening paragraph in his chapter on “Augustine on Eros, Desire, and Sexuality” serves as a good example:

The theological career of Aurelius Augustinus (354-430) has so influenced the Christian tradition that one should credibly argue that no person besides Jesus himself has had more of a hand in shaping its beliefs and practices. Augustine’s views on the Trinity, creation, the nature of the church, grace
and free choice, and the efficacy of the sacraments all molded the history of theological thinking on these topics and, in some cases, even set the course for what became Christianity’s orthodox heritage … [His views have] been most consequential at the level of Christian attitudes toward and values concerning human desire, the yearning that our minds, hearts, and bodies experience … [and] this essay [will] consider how Augustinian sensibilities are still very much engrained in the tradition, even as we have become critically aware of their deleterious effects. (pp. 67-68)

After briefly establishing a general framework, Thiel signals clearly the intent of his contribution on Augustine: he wants to remain fair to the tradition but alert to current critical understandings of the Christian heritage. This balance between accounting for the tradition historically while offering innovative (and, occasionally, provocative) ways of critical engagement is a hallmark for most of the volume’s contributions.

In chapter 1, David Jensen suggests to read biblical texts on sexuality and sexual desire neither through a traditional rule-based approach nor through the more recent “hermeneutics-of-suspicion” approach. Rather he prefers to read them as “narratives of desire,” which value “God’s desire for humankind and of humankind’s desire for communion with God and for relationship with one another” (p. 30). Sex is one important dimension of such desire. In chapter 2, Mark Wallace develops a theology of touching (he calls it a “biblically inflected ‘haptology’”; p. 34), which he illuminates with examples from the Gospel, the early church, an encounter in a parish today, and Toni Morrison’s novel *Beloved*. William Johnson follows with a typological exploration of homoeroticism in the New Testament, concluding that the “New Testament texts in light of the Roman ethos of sexual dominance and exploitation” (p. 65) do not speak against committed and egalitarian homosexual relationships. Thiel wonders whether Augustine’s tragic vision of humanity’s brokenness, which has led the church father to understand desire as “disjunctive” (desire either for God or for flesh), can be turned into a more inclusive vision of desire (chapter 4). Corey Barnes (chapter 5) argues that Thomas Aquinas saw “bodily passions in a remarkably positive light” (p. 84) when compared to medieval standards (and in contrast to Augustine). “Aquinas was the first medieval to recognize concupiscence as natural to humanity” (p. 96), Barnes states, and that includes sensual pleasure as long as it is rightly directed. The last two chapters of Part I address Catholic sexual ethics of the 1968 encyclical *Humanae vitae* (by Tatha Wiley) and Martin Luther’s objections to celibacy (by Paul Capetz), the latter arguing against some Protestant churches that still require ordained gay ministers to remain celibate today.

Compared to the first section, the five chapters of Part II are slightly more uneven in rigor and persuasiveness. What connects them is the notion of performativity: gender performativity in the academy (chapter 8); rhetorical performances by twentieth-century church writers on typologizing same-sex desire, which Mark Jordan calls a “baptizing” of certain identities (chapter 9); the performative power of evangelical wives in affirming their husbands’ masculinity by adopting the advice of evangelical marriage guides (chapter 10); a critical reading of the ancient understanding of eros through the lens of the massive African HIV crisis...
(chapter 11); and the commodification of blackness/black bodies in hip-hop and its ambiguous reception as “desire and dread” in white male culture (chapter 12).

The final section, also consisting of five chapters, is more normative, if by “normative” we do not mean dominant assertions but constructive ethical thought that is not merely descriptive and analytic. The five contributors reinvigorate and innovate the erotic through theological-ethical probings, emphasizing the value of relationality. For Laurie Jungling, “eros” is defined “as the divine call into life as embodied relationality” (p. 217), which she connects to Christian ideas of God’s creative potency. For Laurel Schneider, the task of today’s incarnational theology must be to free it from exclusive monotheism and singular truth claims. Alternatively, she suggests that “promiscuous incarnation” refuses any patrilineal dominance; instead, the idea of promiscuity points to the mixing of substances, which is always porous, impure, multiple, passionately open, and “distinctly nonascetical” (p. 234). Paul Lakeland argues that an “ecclesiology of desire” must replace the worn and problematic “spousal metaphor” with which the relationship between Christ and the Church has been described in the past (p. 255). Kamitsuka contributes a chapter on the eschatological imagination: are we resurrected with our sexual and gendered bodies and also with our memories and psychic/physical wounds? Would these bodies still be sexually intimate? The final chapter by Joy Bostic invites the reader to imagine the Trinitarian relationship as an ecstatic dance, which the Eastern (orthodox) church knew as perichoresis. Like Wallace in an earlier chapter on haptology, Bostic uses Morrison’s Beloved to illustrate her case. Perichoresis could be understood as a “mutual, interanimating, participatory dance of radical relationality that brings about healing, justice, and transformation” (p. 292).

The Embrace of Eros is a great source for inspiring scholars of Christian history and theologians to rethink our gendered and sexual relationships and to reenvision the important role of eros in the diverse lives we live as men and women.

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The world easily recognizes acting idol Clint Eastwood (b. 1930). This American cultural symbol and veritable living legend was originally famous as ramrod Rowdy Yates within TV’s *Rawhide* before earning filmic fame with his tough-guy charm and loner persona within Sergio Leonie spaghetti westerns, his *Dirty Harry* cop franchise and assorted genre pictures. However, Eastwood the film director is just as important for his morality tales of astonishing maturity, sensitivity and insight; albeit, less researched. And so it is to Drucilla Cornell’s considerable credit that she turned her critical attention to the directorial accomplishments of this international symbol of effortless masculinity (alongside John Wayne, Gary Cooper and Sean Connery) to explore modern-day American masculinity.

If wanting a blow-by-blow criticism of Eastwood’s filmography or a hagiography full of facts and figures then this book will not satisfy your “Go ahead, make my day” (*Sudden Impact*) demand. One is better off reading *Aim for the Heart: The Films of Clint Eastwood* (Howard Hughes, 2009), *American Rebel: The Life of Clint Eastwood* (Marc Eliot, 2009) or *Clint: A Retrospective* (Richard Schickel, 2010). But if primarily interested in director Eastwood (and sometimes concurrent actor and producer), along with a critical psychoanalytical-philosophical portrait of his virility-cum-vulnerability within the cowboy, boxing, police, romance, western and war genres, then “you’ve got to ask yourself one question: ‘Do I feel lucky?’” (*Dirty Harry*), with the answer being “Yes!” with a bullet. Cornell’s text that “is as much about freeing men as it is about freeing women” (p. 77) definitely eschews film fluff and sits comfortably alongside *Heroes, Antiheroes and Dolt*: *Portrayals of Masculinity in American Popular Films, 1921-1999* (Ashton D. Trice & Samuel A. Holland, 2002), *Extra-Ordinary Men: White Heterosexual Masculinity and Contemporary Popular Cinema* (Nicola Rehling, 2009), *Shadows of Doubt: Negotiations of Masculinity in American Genre Films* (Barry Keith Grant, 2010) and many others.

of White Masculinity, Conclusion: The Last Take, Notes, Filmography: Clint Eastwood as Director, and Index.

Her Introduction identified four major themes that connected together his diverse genre offerings, namely: (1) the horrifying impact of trauma upon our shared ethical life, (2) the struggle with evil as a possibility for each of us, (3) the powers of moral repair and repentance and their implicit dangers, and (4) the relationship between masculine narcissism (enforced via castration threats) and violence engendered by an exaggerated sense of control over oneself or nations (pp. 7-8).

Chapter 1 examined disruption, trauma and violence within Eastwood’s westerns: *High Plains Drifter* (1973), *Pale Rider* (1985) and *Unforgiven* (1992) that utilized mystery, conflict and brutality to blur the boundaries of heroism with villainy, and man with myth. Eastwood’s The Stranger was a personification of hellish violence, Preacher was a mythical angel of death, and the fatigued and remorseful Bill Munny was a re-commissioned former gunslinger. All three films undermined the cowboy mythos with rapist heroes, crying gunslingers and compassionate killers as it simultaneously glorified violence and revenge as a masculine trait. It also wallowed in the traditional genre conventions of wide open spaces, harsh working lives and the transformational power of female love.

Chapter 2 explored the nature of evil and links to violence, eroticism, retribution and mercy within his Secret Service film *In the Line of Fire* (1993) and three unrelated cop films: *Tightrope* (1984), *Blood Work* (2002) and *Sudden Impact* (1983). Eastwood’s alpha males deal daily with evil by confronting, embracing and trying to control it, but at a high personal cost to their emotional lives and souls in service to the State. And yet, his hardened but fragile men more easily conform to classic cop genre conventions regarding life-and-death struggles, adversarial superiors, damaged interpersonal and buddy relationships, regrets, addictions, benefiting from the evil of others, duty and pursuing justice that sometimes transcends legalism. Eastwood’s women can even display more machismo than his men in the feminist equivalent of Cornell’s phallus (p. 31).

Chapter 3 challenged Hollywood romance notions within *The Bridges of Madison County* (1995) via the lustful gaze of lonely farm wife Francesca Johnson for the middle-aged and emotionally vulnerable photographer, Robert Kincaid. Traditional masculine assumptions about intimacy, sex and commitment where defied; coupled with Francesca’s rejection of a permanent “happy” relationship following their four-day illicit affair for staying-in-her-marriage-for-the-family’s-sake reasons. This “trapped” life choice with brief fantasy interlude was stereotypical, but Cornell wants to elevate it into the heroic realm (cum-role model for children?); especially when socially sanctioned by the clingy but respectful Kincaid who doesn’t act like a domineering cowboy or cop and take what he so desperately wanted.

Chapter 4 explored the themes of failed fatherhood (real and surrogate) and moral repair within his crime film *A Perfect World* (1993), political film *Absolute Power* (1997) and boxing film *Million Dollar Baby* (2004). Eastwood eschewed the stereotypic good fathers who always know best for inadequate ones desperately seeking to reconnect with their estranged families by apologizing for their past errors (Cornell’s symbolic castration-cum-ethical behavior). And yet, one would argue that uncompromising honesty (good and bad) rather than lionizing masculine failure is the better pathway to healing psychic scars-cum-relationship redemption.
Chapter 5 explored the seductive power and danger of violent revenge, plus the fantasy of control related to traumatic injury within the dark crime film *Mystic River* (2003). Cornell finds value in vindictiveness since revenge offers a safety-valve that protects victims’ fragile psyches. Any failure to dutifully respond indicates incapacity leading to dangerous self-hatred, therefore, only an avenging victim can restore injured pride and avoid self-destruction by emphasizing the other’s wrong (but not their own weaknesses). Worryingly, Cornell considers murder “a kingly act grounded in love” (p. 131) even when this extra-legal justice is rooted in error and thus intrinsically unjust and morally dubious but very macho.

Chapter 6 explored Eastwood’s western war film *The Outlaw Josey Wales* (1976) and contemporary military war films *Firefox* (1982), *Heartbreak Ridge* (1986), *Flags of Our Fathers* (2006) and *Letters from Iwo Jima* (2006) to intimately show how battlefields are nightmares that isolate, impair, damage and shatter men physically, psychologically, morally and spiritually. Eastwood shows that militarized masculinity on either warring side ultimately benefits no one; thus for Cornell reversing the stereotypic belief that war makes “a man” (whilst snugly fitting into the stereotypic anti-war film genre wherein heroes and not really heroes but propaganda pieces engaged in a war on truth).

Chapter 7 explored white racism and masculine narcissism within Eastwood’s pseudo-biopic *White Hunter Black Heart* (1990), crusading journalist film *True Crime* (1999) and intimate jazz biography *Bird* (1988). The former two films were indictments of the white man’s exploitation of black men rooted in masculine phallic fantasies; the latter film was a homage to the drug addicted Charlie “Bird” Parker and his brilliant American art form; whilst all three films focused upon the undesirable consequences of racist assumptions.

Cornell’s Conclusion recapped Eastwood’s convention-twisting directorial abilities in pursuit of what constitutes a “good man” via protagonists tragically scarred by issues of gender, race, war, internal conflict, psychic damage and the nature of masculinity trapped within the very definition of revenge, violence, moral repair and justice.

The detailed plot summaries are very helpful, but the diverse inter-connections, abrupt filmic interludes (e.g., *Beloved* [p. 130]; which was not indexed), and tangential asides (e.g., *The Searchers* [pp. 125, 143-144]; *Dirty Harry* films [pp. 169-170]) can confuse and distract one. More worryingly, readers unfamiliar with Freudian and Lacanian concepts (e.g., “Oedipal complementarity” [p. 95]) or the philosophies of Kant, Levinas, Derrida etc., especially without any preparation by Cornell, will feel disorientated; which is exacerbated by the sometimes painfully labored points (e.g., most of Chapter 6 to say that “War is Hell”). At times, truncated film titles aggravate (e.g., *Flags* and *Letters* [p. 164]) but most disappointing is the omission of any illustrative film stills to savor.

Overall, despite these minor imperfections, there is much more to admire than disappoint in *Clint Eastwood and Issues of American Masculinity*, which is an academically insightful, engaging and challenging exploration of important themes underpinning Eastwood’s oeuvre that whets the appetite for deeper critical explorations of the man, theme and field. In future editions, one expects similarly insightful analyses of Eastwood’s *Changeling* (2008), *Gran Torino* (2008), *Invictus* (2009), *Hereafter* (2010), and *J. Edgar* (forthcoming). Cornell’s text would be a
worthy addition to any personal or professional library; whether Eastwood, psychology, gender, feminist, philosophy or film-focused.

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As a sign of changing times, since 1990, representations of the cinematic Jewish male have evolved. More and more explicitly-identified Jewish actors have moved from being leading indie men and secondary characters in mainstream film to the forefront of contemporary US cinema. In this new “postethnic” era in which masculinities have arguably been gentled, replacing the hard white bodies of the 1980s (viz. Sylvester Stallone, Chuck Norris and Arnold Schwarzenegger), the queer/sissy Jew emerged as the vanguard of a new softer and kinder cinematic multiculturalism and cultural pluralism. This was facilitated by the creation of 1980s advertising images, the “New Man,” that is a “de-masculinized” and feminized (Kirkham, 1995, p. 107) emotionally sensitive, vulnerable, tender, loving but hunky male, a position for which the queer/sissy Jew was already ideally suited.

Furthermore, a cultural context emerged in which “the multiple meanings of masculine identity, the existence of masculinities, has been made increasingly apparent” (Tasker, 1993, p. 1). Consequently, not only have the number of Jews on film multiplied, but also they have taken on new and different forms, marking a departure from the past. Contemporary cinema introduced a spectrum of multiple Jewish masculinities that began to populate the ground between the poles of toughness and queerness. We are thus witnessing a shift towards more subtle, nuanced, playful and even outrageous representations of the Jew in contrast to earlier representations. The variety of Jewish masculinities proliferated to include Jews who are stoned, solitary, nasty, brutish, short, unprofessional, working-class and more. In doing so, the male Jewish Diaspora body is not just queer, that is a passive site often the locus for suffering, humiliation, victimization, stereotyping, idealization, and sexual inadequacy, but has also became a means of identification, pride and sexual prowess where the Jew, in all his variety, is openly and proudly identified.

In line with Steven Cohan and Ina Rae Hark’s 1993 call for re-defining the study of film masculinities to include a broader set of paradigms than before, the appearance of this new collection exploring Jewish masculinities is timely. *Brother Keepers: New Perspectives on Jewish Masculinity* is intended to be a sort of sequel to Harry Brod’s earlier book, *A Mensch Among Men: Explorations in Jewish Masculinity* (1988). It contains eighteen chapters, divided into four sections: “The Boy is Father to the Man,” “Toward Embodiment: Wrestling with the Angel,” “Emasculation and its Discontents” and “Hearts and Souls.” It is an intentionally eclectic collection, bringing together rabbis, artists, activists, writers, academics and other professionals, producing such different contributions as essays, poetry, stories and ritual. The contributors are diverse: male and female, observant and secular,
younger and older (Brod, “Introduction: Why Now?,” p. 8). The result is a mixed bag that will have broad appeal, but those who enjoy the scholarly pieces might find the personal reflections less interesting and vice versa.

For my purposes—as a teacher of Film Studies, researching into contemporary explorations of Jews, Jewishness and Judaism—the essays dealing with film and literature were the most informative. These include: Jackson Katz’s exploration of violence and the construction of Jewish-American masculinity in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries; Israel Bartal’s discussion of virility and impotence; Michael Gluzman’s essay on nationalism and sexuality in Theodor Herzl’s Alneuland; Raz Yosef’s appreciation of contemporary gay Israeli cinema, in particular Eytan Fox’s Yossi and Jagger (2002); a reading of the Jewish masculinity in Michael Chabon’s most “Jewish” novels by Warren Rosenberg; and Michele Aaron’s discussion of the “new queer Jew” in contemporary cinema. To these can be added Eric Kline Silverman’s chapter on circumcision.

Other essays are more spiritual in nature, tackling religious texts, such as the story of Jacob. Given this dimension to the collection, and given the title of the first section, “The Boy is Father to the Man,” it is perhaps strange that there is not a deeper and more nuanced treatment of the Akedah (the binding of Isaac), particularly given its problematic nature for Jewish masculinities in general and father-son relationships in particular.

A slight quibble is with a point that Jackson Katz makes in his essay. He asserts that the referencing of Steven Spielberg’s Munich (2005) in Judd Apatow’s Knocked Up (2007) demonstrates that “Israel is important to Jews in the United States and around the world for many reasons” (p. 69). I feel this is a misreading of the film and would suggest instead that Israel has little to do with this scene (or indeed film) but rather that the direct reference to Eric Bana’s performance in the film can be read as a major ego boost to Jewish males. Given the scope of the book, this could have productively been explored in more detail.

Another unfortunate drawback is that the book took some time from conception to print. Consequently, some of these contributions can be found in book or chapter form elsewhere, probably published in the interim period. These include Silverman and Yosef, for example; however, the chapter-sized chunks here provide a useful introduction to students unfamiliar with their longer works.

References

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