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**Fatherhood and the Perfection of Masculine Identity:
A Thomistic Account In Light of Contemporary Science**

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Abbreviations

AH/POA	anterior hypothalamic preoptic area
AIS	androgen insensitivity syndrome
BG	Melissa Hines, <i>Brain Gender</i>
BNST	bed nucleus of the stria terminalis
CAH	congenital adrenal hyperplasia
CAIS	complete androgen insensitivity syndrome
CM	Thomas Aquinas, <i>Commentary on the Metaphysics</i>
ED	Simon Baron-Cohen, <i>The Essential Difference</i>
fMRI	functional magnetic resonance imaging.
FSH	follicle stimulating hormone
HMW	Steven Pinker, <i>How the Mind Works</i>
INAH	interstitial nuclei of the anterior hypothalamus
LH	luteinizing hormone
OHN	David Bjorkland & Anthony Pelligrini, <i>The Origins of Human Nature</i>
PAIS	partial androgen insensitivity syndrome
SC	Doreen Kimura, <i>Sex and Cognition</i>
SCG	Thomas Aquinas, <i>Summa Contra Gentiles</i>
SRY	sex-determining region of the Y chromosome

ST	Thomas Aquinas, <i>Summa Theologiae</i>
TBS	Steven Pinker, <i>The Blank Slate</i>
TDF	testis-determining factor
TS	Eleanor Maccoby: <i>The Two Sexes</i>

Introduction

There is no good father, that's the rule. Don't lay blame on men but on the bond of paternity which is rotten. To *make* children: nothing better; to have them: what iniquity! Had my own father lived, he would have lain on me full length and crushed me. As luck would have it, he died young.¹

(Jean-Paul Sartre)

But I know who Adam was and who he is. He stopped once on the frontier between fatherhood and loneliness. Who cut him off from men; who made him lonely in the midst of them all?...
“Ah,” he said then about himself, “I could not bear fatherhood; I could not be equal to it. I felt totally helpless – and what had been a gift became a burden to me. I threw off fatherhood like a burden.”²

(John Paul II)

Is fatherhood a burden? For Sartre, fatherhood is a lose-lose proposition: viewed from either pole of the relationship, it is a disaster. For sons, it is the crushing weight of Anchises, burdening Aeneas to the point of ruin. In an interesting gravitational paradox, Sartre appears to see the weight laid upon the father as equally calamitous: “to *make* children, nothing better; to have them, what

¹ Jean-Paul Sartre, *Les Mots*, Braziller, New York, 1964, p. 19

² Karol Wojtyła, *The Radiation of Fatherhood*. In *The Collected Plays and Writings on Theater*. Translated by Boleslaw Taborski. University of California Press, Berkeley, 1987. p. 336. (In 1978, upon being elected Pope, Karol Wojtyła took the name John Paul II.)

iniquity!" Fatherhood is a paradigm for those power-based, oppressive relationships which have now come to bear the name "patriarchal." Surprisingly, however, John Paul II places on the lips of the first man, Adam, the words that fatherhood is a burden - a burden that to him became unbearable. Is fatherhood, then, truly a burden?

ORIGINS OF THIS WORK

This dissertation originally began with another but related question. Having just completed work in clinical psychology, I was intrigued by the question of identity. My original interest was in exploring the tension that exists between the extent to which one's identity is something discovered - implying that is something already existing - and the extent to which one's identity is made. For a number of reasons, the latter project was judged unworkable. In the present work, the theme of identity is maintained but focused to isolate the reality of fatherhood, and to find its place in the fulfillment of masculine identity. From the moment I first read them, the words of Sartre that began this dissertation, lingered in the hollows of my mind. Sartre's language was obviously chosen to provoke; setting aside the rhetorical excess, however, there remains an uncanny hostility towards fatherhood. What this disproportionate ire demonstrates is that, for all his focused effort to avoid it, fatherhood remained a gravitational center for Sartre, exerting a profound, if unseen, influence in determining his life. I thus began this project with the idea that fatherhood plays a central and exigent role in the lives of men, whether or not they are aware of it. Sartre chose to rail against fatherhood. He was, however, too perceptive to attempt to ignore it.

At times, the distance that lies between an initial intuition and the reasoned argument that defends it can be vast - even if, at the end of the way, one finds that one has arrived where one began. In the case of this dissertation, I found that not only was there much ground to cover but, to use a phrase of Eliot, that the ways were deep and weather sharp; every step of the way was hotly contested. Shortly after beginning my research, the extent of the confusion, anger, and animosity surrounding the notions of masculine identity and fatherhood readily became clear; it was evident that, for many, simply to frame my question in terms of "fatherhood" and "masculinity" was something of a scandal. Inquiring into the nature of the relationship of fatherhood to masculine identity assumes that both of these things exist as independent and meaningful realities; the mere asking of the question implies that fatherhood is somehow distinct from motherhood and further that it is the special province of those who have "masculine identity," namely, men. If anything remotely useful could be said about the topic, such a line of thinking would proceed, it would have to be said in terms of parenthood and personhood, rather

than fatherhood and manhood. The latter formulation could be seen, even its mere utterance, to be an instance of sexism.

It was clear, then, that question in itself was well worth addressing and that, further, given the current state of confusion regarding the meaning of manhood, fatherhood, the proper relationship between the two, and their relationship to femininity and motherhood, it was a question that needed to be addressed. I thus decided to take up the task.

THE QUESTION

The findings of the social sciences show that the active presence of a non-abusive father in the life of a developing child has a positive effect on that child's development; it is good for children to have a father in their lives. What does one say, however, of the relationship viewed from the other side? What does move and what should move a man to want to be a father? And once he is a father biologically, what moves a man to be an active or involved father? Sartre notwithstanding, it is good for a child to have a father. But is it good for the man to be a father, or is it rather a burden that he endures, having been duped into the role by blind instinct? How does fatherhood relate to a man's perfection as a human being and, more precisely, as a *male* human being? Is fatherhood something that a man must embrace in order to achieve a certain fullness of his nature as a human male? Is fatherhood, rather, simply a matter of personal choice to be embraced or avoided according to one's druthers. Or is it, as Sartre held, a rotten relationship that is to be avoided at all costs?

To ask how fatherhood relates to the perfection of the human male as male, however, presumes that one knows what the perfection of the human being *qua* male is; it presumes that one knows the form or identity of masculinity. The answer to the question of what masculine identity is, though, is far from clear. How is one to define the human male insofar as he is male? What is the meaning of sexual difference and how deeply does that difference seep into an individual's substance? Before the question of the relationship of fatherhood to masculine identity can be addressed, the nature of masculine identity must itself be explored.

Regardless of one's theoretical starting point, masculine identity is bound to the notion of maleness. Therefore, very quickly, a host of complex questions unfold. Maleness is something predicated of many varied species, inhabiting the Porphyrian tree at many levels from plant to human. The material and efficient causes that account for maleness at these various levels of living substance vary significantly. In human beings, the Y chromosome begins the process of sexual differentiation. In some reptiles, similar to what Aristotle and Thomas thought, it appears that relative

temperatures during incubation is the mechanism of sexual differentiation. The origins of sexual difference therefore appear to vary greatly.

Once determined as male or female, that which characterizes the morphology and behavior of males of one species versus those of another can vary greatly. For instance, there are species of bird and fish in which the female is larger and more aggressive than the male. There are even some species of tropical fish in which individuals can change sex in response to ecological demands. Such phenomena regarding sexual difference are frequently employed to deconstruct the notion and significance of sexual difference.

Contemporary science has begun an attempt "to ground" sex based differences in morphology and behavior by seeking their physiological causes. Thus, for instance, much research is being devoted to discerning the manner in which the male brain differs from the female brain and in exploring how distinct male and female hormone environments influence behavior. While one might suppose that such findings of science are areas of general agreement in the debate on the nature of sexual difference, such is not the case - at least not regarding sexual difference in humans. It seems that for every scientist who says that the human male brain differs from the female brain according to x , there is another scientist who says the opposite, and yet another who says that the difference in x is rather due to a difference in y , where y is a behavioral or environmental factor.

A robust treatment, therefore, of the nature of sexual difference that takes into consideration its various manifestations throughout the world of living things generally and its many manifestations in human society is much needed. If an account of maleness does not engage the many complexities mentioned above, it is immediately vulnerable to refutation or exile for failing to consider the intricacy of the subject. In considering the relationship of fatherhood to the perfection of masculine identity, therefore, I have first considered the nature of maleness generally and then of human maleness. Having established the concept of maleness, the question of fatherhood can be addressed and set upon a firm foundation.

METHOD

Generally, this work could be best described as philosophical anthropology. However, the nature of the subject leads to the utilization of many branches of philosophy and natural science. The complexities and confusion surrounding the nature of human male *qua* male demand an evaluation of the ontological status of "maleness" itself; such questioning of ontological status inexorably leads to metaphysical considerations. The question of fatherhood - and especially "involved fatherhood" - in humans is a matter of choice and human action. Ethical considerations are, therefore, unavoidable. And yet the root of the question of the

relationship of fatherhood and manhood is physical, grounded as it is in the corporeal reality of human nature instantiated as male and female. Thus, considerations of biology are likewise unavoidable.

My goal is first to give an account of the human male as male in terms of the causes that are responsible for its existence. I seek to discover the final, formal, efficient, and material causes of maleness in man. It is by so doing that the perfection of masculine identity or, put otherwise, the perfection of the form "maleness" in man can be related to fatherhood in the human being. I generally follow Aristotle in his method in the *Physics*, beginning with the more general and confused but better known to us and proceeding to the better known by nature. The first part of the work is, therefore, dialectical, generally seeking to present the phenomena of masculinity and fatherhood in an organized way such that their causes can be discerned.

In the process of understanding the causes of maleness in man and the relationship of maleness to fatherhood, I have chosen Thomas Aquinas as my primary guide. The purpose of this work, however, is *not* to give an exhaustive account of Thomas's thought on the question of sexual differentiation and the relationship between the sexes. Rather, I attempt to employ Thomas's understanding of the nature of the human person in that which constitutes it and that which moves it to its end towards understanding that which constitutes the human male as male and that which moves him to his end *as male*. Therefore, Thomas is invoked not for motives of historical interest but as a mentor and expert in the craft I attempt to exercise in the pages to follow.

ORDER OF THE WORK

The overarching order of the thesis follows the structure of an article in the *Summa Theologiae*, *viz.* first, objections; next, explication of the author's position; finally, brief reply to the objections. Part I of this work plays the same general role as that of the objections; it introduces the question and presents the most salient positions existing on the subject. In Part II, drawing from what was learned in Part I, I present my own analysis of maleness and fatherhood by applying Thomas's understanding of the human person to the findings of contemporary science regarding masculinity and fatherhood. In Part III, I offer a brief reply to the positions explored in Part I and attempt to account for the challenges they pose to my own argument. More detail as to the nature of each part will be helpful.

Part I begins with a presentation of the phenomena of maleness in the human being. My guiding metaphor in this chapter is that of Ptolemy and movement of the heavens: Before Ptolemy – or any astronomer – can explain the movements of the heavens, he first must observe and chart those movements. As I

have already mentioned, human sexual difference is a topic of great complexity – which complexity is compounded by the polemical nature of much of the discourse that treats of it. Therefore, any attempt to explain maleness in humans must begin with a firm grasp of the phenomena that surround, manifest, and, perhaps at times, obscure it. Chapter 1 is my attempt to present the phenomena of human maleness in as theory-neutral a manner as possible. The chapters that follow in Part I are all attempts to explain the phenomena presented in Chapter 1; they are various accounts of “the movements of the male.”

I employed various criteria in selecting which thinkers to include in Part I. The most important of these criteria was the strength of the account offered. My goal is to present the strongest possible explanations of human male as male and fatherhood offered by other thinkers. The “strength of account” criterion explains the presence of and space devoted to the evolutionary and sociological accounts, which, in the final analysis, I found to be the most robust alternative accounts. The second criterion I employed was historical and contemporary relevance. In light of this criterion, there are chapters devoted to Freud and Jung. Merited or not, Freud’s influence on modern Western thought, especially on matters concerning sexuality, remains pervasive, even if most of his theories have fallen out of fashion in his own field of psychology. Jung is relevant especially as he tends to be invoked by more religiously minded contemporary thinkers. A chapter devoted to the neo-Freudians provides a bridge to the sociological account, which, along with evolutionary account, is the most prevalent account found in modern academia. Thus, also by the “relevance” criterion, the evolutionary and sociological accounts are given a certain emphasis evidenced in the length of the treatment dedicated to them. A brief chapter is dedicated to some neo-jungian thought because of its contemporary relevance in some modern Catholic discussions on the meaning of masculinity.

For each of the accounts reviewed in Part I, my general method has been to choose a “champion” for each school of thought. Such a selection was quite straight forward for the chapters on Freud and Jung; I chose to focus on the writings of Freud and Jung. The selection was not so clear, for instance, for the sociological account. However, after reading many sociological explanations of masculinity, I opted to focus on what I considered to be the most *unified* account that I had encountered. By doing so, I am able to present as coherent a position as possible. Thus, for sociological account, I chose to center on the work of R. W. Connell. His was the most recurrent name referenced in the contemporary literature I read. Having examined his work, I found that he gave the fullest explanation for the positions he defends. For the evolutionists, I have focused on two representatives. I present the work of Steven Pinker because he provides a broad philosophical context for the evolutionary account, which is finally essential for assessing it. However, the work of David Geary was more complete regarding the particulars of the account of

sexual difference in general and maleness more precisely, thus I rely much upon the comprehensive work of Geary. However, as Pinker also expressly relies upon Geary's work, I found presenting them together to be appropriate. Generally, as my position within a given field is not that of an "expert" seeking to refine nuances of meaning, the practice of choosing a "champion" from each field appeared to be not only justified but in fact the best manner in which to briefly present a cogent position.

Having presented the phenomena of maleness and the strongest and most pervasive contemporary explanations of the phenomena, in Part II, I offer my own account of the human male as male, and how fatherhood relates to man's perfection. Part II begins, however, with something of a "*sed contra*;" as I mentioned above, Thomas Aquinas serves as my principal guide; therefore, in Chapter 8, I present a brief summary of his position on the question of sexual difference. Since he provides the philosophical foundation of this dissertation, understanding the basic tenants of his position and how they relate to the accepted biology of his day is a necessary precondition to applying Thomas's thought to the findings of contemporary biology. My focus is on how mistaken biology led to mistaken conclusions about the nature and relationship of male and female in Thomas's writings. There is no pretence, however, of giving a full treatment of the question of Thomas's thought on sexual difference.

In the following three chapters, I offer my attempt to apply the principles of Thomas's understanding of the human person to the question of masculine identity and its relation to fatherhood in light of the findings of contemporary science. The first part of this treatment, Chapter 9, attempts to present the causes of maleness first generally – as it applies across species – and then maleness as it is found in human beings. Next, in Chapter 10, I examine generally how human beings are directed to their end, and, more particularly, how the human male is directed *in a manner* distinct from that of woman. Thus, in Chapter 10, I formally consider the natural law and the various manners of inclination that pertain to the natural law. In Chapter 11, I directly address the question of fatherhood: how it is defined, how man is led to it, and how it is related to the perfection of the human male.

The dissertation concludes in the Part III with what can be described as a kind of "reply to the objections." In this section, I succinctly respond to the various accounts presented in Part I. These replies are by necessity brief: a detailed response to each major theorist would each be a dissertation in itself. I therefore generally limit myself to a statement of the unique contribution of each school of thought followed by a observation of the fundamental principles that distinguish my position from those of the other accounts offered. I then proceed to offer brief solutions to some of the most challenging objections and puzzles that confront the rendering that I have offered. By so doing I hope to show that the thesis that I have defended is

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able to explain the phenomena of the human male in his fullness while avoiding the shortcomings of the other accounts.

CITATIONS

The Latin texts of the works of St. Thomas used in this dissertation have been taken from the *Corpus Thomisticum* website.³ The English translations utilized are indicated in the first footnote that references a given work.

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³ <http://www.corpusthomicum.org/iopera.html>. (Accessed June 25, 2008.)

Chapter 1

The Phenomena of Sexual Difference

INTRODUCTION

When Ptolemy set out to explain the movement of the heavens, a critical step preceded any possible insights he could offer. Before giving the most plausible explanations of the movement of the planets and the stars, he first had to observe, record, and map those movements - an elegant explanation of the movements the heavens would be of little worth if it did not, in fact, explain those movements. Before attempting to give an account of the phenomenon, then, it is helpful first to observe and record that phenomenon so that an explanation adequate to the experience can then be proposed.

In attempting to give an account of fatherhood and its relationship to masculine identity, the first part of this work looks to accounts provided by a series of other thinkers. An account of the human male and fatherhood, however presumes some knowledge of the phenomenon one hopes to explain. Thus, the first chapter, therefore, is dedicated to a presentation of those sex-based differences that are available to careful and critical observation. In Section I, I present the fundamental physiological mechanisms that lead to and constitute sexual differentiation of the developing fetus. This is followed by a brief discussion of so-called intersex disorders: biological miscues that lead to ambiguous or partially formed genitalia and subsequent confusion in sex-assignment. Next, in Section II, distinctions in genetics, hormonal dynamics and environments, and modes of fertility are discussed. I give special attention to the well-known male and female hormones: testosterone, estrogen and progesterone. I also present a few differences that pertain to the male and female developmental rates and the formation of secondary sex characteristics. After this, in Section III, I provide a summary of the findings of

the burgeoning subfield of neuro-psychology which is examining sex-based distinctions in the formation and function of the human brain. This leads to Section IV and a consideration of distinctions in the senses. Finally, in Section V, sex-based differences in aptitudes – physical and cognitive – and behaviors are discussed. An attempt is made to describe these phenomena with as little theoretical framework as possible. Doing so serves two purposes: it gives a mapping or picture of the phenomenon which any proposed rendering of the human male will, in some way, have to explain. In so doing, the process places before the mind images of the reality of the human being from which the nature of man *qua* male must be garnered.

Before beginning this survey, it must be said that even this seemingly scientific – and, therefore, purportedly “objective” – terrain is wrought with controversy and disagreement. The procedure followed here, therefore, is to rely upon scientists whose analyses included consideration of all available data, including contradictory studies, and who provided reasonable and proportionate conclusions from the available evidence. Conclusions were, when possible, cross checked with other sources for verification.

I. THE BIOLOGY OF SEXUAL DIFFERENTIATION

1. *The Biological Foundation of Sexual Differentiation*

With the union of the sperm from the father and the mother’s ovum, the newly conceived human receives a genetic inheritance from each parent in the form of 23 pairs of chromosomes. It is the 23rd pair that is of greatest interest here: it will usually either be XX – a genetic female – or XY – a genetic male. As researcher Melissa Hines points out, however, there are cases where the genetic constitution of an individual becomes more confused:¹ at times, there can be an extra X or Y chromosome present, or the second chromosome can be missing (XO), or an inconsistency can exist from cell to cell, with some cells being XX while others are XY. Further, there can be an imperfect Y chromosome with part of this typically male chromosome missing. She goes on to add, however, that most of these genetic irregularities do not result in irregular genital formation. So, there must be some source other than the genes that explains the cause of partial and/or ambiguous genital formation.

A part of the Y chromosome plays a crucial role in the sexual differentiation of the forming child. However, the relatively limited character of this role is

¹Melissa Hines, *Brain Gender* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004), 22. [Hereafter referred to as BG.] In much of the discussion on the physiological distinctions between males and females, I will use the work of Melissa Hines. By my estimation, *Brain Gender*, provides a well researched summary of reliable findings of sex-based physiological differences.

somewhat surprising. A gene contained in the Y chromosome is referred to as the sex-determining region of the Y chromosome (SRY). This gene is responsible for a protein referred to as the testis-determining factor (TDF).² At around six weeks after conception, the SRY by means of the TDF will begin to cue changes in the proto-reproductive organs of the developing fetus.³ However, to understand the effect of the TDF, we must further understand the situation of the fetus' genital development prior to the sixth week.

It might be assumed that, as is the case with other organs, the cells that will finally be either, for example, the ovaries in a female or the testes in a male would be designated as such from a point very early in the child's development. However, this appears not to be the case. Until roughly the sixth week in utero, the child's development is sexually neutral; i.e. the normal development of the XX and XY child are indistinguishable both in the morphology and the hormonal environments of the unborn child. Of special interest are the developing structures that will eventually become the male and female internal and external genitalia; for it appears that these structures are identical in both the forming XX and XY child up until the sixth week after conception.

More specifically, undifferentiated gonads have the potential to become either testes or ovaries. Surrounding the gonads are two sets of the ducts: the Müllerian and Wolffian ducts. In the case of normal female development, the Müllerian ducts will mature into the fallopian tubes, the uterus, and the upper portions of the vagina, while the Wolffian ducts recede.⁴ In males, the Wolffian ducts will develop into the epididymus, vas deferens, and seminal vesicles and the Müllerian ducts recede.⁵ It is from these structures that the internal reproductive organs will form.

The case is similar with the external genitalia as with the gonads: both male and female children begin with the same proto-structures that, in the case of the female, will become the clitoris and the labia. In the case of males, these same proto-structures become the penis and scrotum.⁶ Thus, up until the sixth week after gestation, not only is the developing baby not discernibly sexually differentiated, but also the very same proto structures become either female or male external genitalia and ovaries or testes.

² Mark F. Bear, Barry W. Connors, Michael A. Paradiso, *Neuroscience: Exploring the Brain*, Second Edition (Hagerstown: Lippincott, Williams & Wilkins 2001), 550.

³ Bear, et al., 551. Hines, BG, 22.

⁴ Hines, BG, 27.

⁵ Hines, BG, 24-27.

⁶ Hines, BG, 24-26.

The question obviously becomes, then, to what to attribute the changes that occur at around week six that will commence the complicated process of sexual differentiation? The apparent answer is that the Y chromosome is responsible for this process. And, while this is true, it is not the whole story. Scientists have been discovering the profound importance of hormones in the process of sexual differentiation.⁷ The SRY gene causes the gonads to form as testes rather than ovaries. The testes, in turn, begin to produce androgens (male hormones) which appear to play a decisive role in the child's forming as a male rather than female.⁸ The testosterone produced by the newly differentiated testes will cue the shaping of the proto external genitalia into a penis and scrotum. The testes also produce another substance called the Müllerian Inhibiting Factor. As the name indicates, this substance prevents the further development of the Müllerian ducts. At the same time, testosterone from the testes prompts development of the Wolffian ducts into the internal genitalia of the male.⁹ So, the Y chromosome gets the process started with the SRY gene and its testis-determining-factor. The process is then, however, taken over by the testes and their production of androgens.

Were the process in the development of females to be analogous to that of males, some part of the X chromosome contributed by the father would cue the gonads to form as ovaries and the ovaries would then produce estrogens which would cue the proto external genitalia to form according to the female pattern. It appears, however, that this is not the case. It is not the presence of estrogens that initiate the formation of female genitalia but rather the absence of a requisite amount of androgens. In the absence of the SRY and TDF initiating the differentiation of the gonads into testes, the gonads will, by default, form as ovaries. At the early stages of development, the ovaries produce relatively small amounts of estrogens - especially relative to the estrogens being produced by the mother's placenta. This indicates that male and female children have roughly the same in utero estrogen environments. That which is markedly different is the presence or absence of testosterone.¹⁰ Consequently, the course of female development is, in

⁷ Many of the findings that follow have been confirmed in large part by experimentation in various laboratory animals since - thankfully - ethical considerations prevent such experimentation on human subjects. As will be seen, many of the conclusions drawn from experiments with other animals are consistent with results found in naturally occurring disorders in humans.

⁸ Bear et al., *Neuroscience*, 550. Hines, BG, 23. Anne Moir and David Jessel, *Brain Sex* (New York: Dell Publishing, 1991), 22.

⁹ Hines, BG, 24-27.

¹⁰ Hines also references experiments in which the ovaries were removed from developing female rabbits with the result being no noticeable difference in the formation of the genitalia. BG, 24.

fact, the “default” course; without the presence of androgens produced by the testes, the same structures that, in the male, formed the penis and scrotum will, in the female, form the clitoris and labia. Similarly, without the testes producing the Müllerian Inhibiting Factor, the Müllerian ducts continue with their development into the internal female genitalia. The Wolffian ducts, however, are denied the testosterone that they need to continue their growth and so begin to regress and yield to the flourishing Müllerian structures. As with the external female genitalia, it appears that there is no necessity for estrogens from the ovaries for the Müllerian ducts to take precedence; all that is needed is the absence of androgens.¹¹

All that has been said up to this point regards the normal development of either the male or the female. In the case of the male, where the genetic makeup is XY, the Y chromosome is intact and containing an undamaged SRY gene, and the organs and cells responsible for producing and receiving the appropriate hormones are all intact and able to perform their appointed roles. Similarly, for the female, in normal development she is XX, and all the hormone levels are proper and able to be properly received. Unfortunately, such is not always the case. A moment must be taken here to see what the biologists can tell us about those rare cases where sexual differentiation is not clear.

2. Twists in the Plot

Because of a general tendency to think of male or female simply in terms of the Y or X chromosome there can be a subsequent tendency to presume that most problems regarding ambiguous sexual differentiation can be traced to these chromosomes. Above, in Subsection 1, I mentioned some of the genetic irregularities that can occur: there can be a missing Y chromosome (XO), an extra X or Y, (XXX, XXYY), or sometimes an inconsistency from cell to cell between XX and XY. In most of these cases, however, as already noted, the sex of the child will not be ambiguous. A case, however, where an anomaly does occur is when the SRY and therefore testes determining factor of the Y chromosome is absent. In this case, even though the individual will be “genetically” male, i.e., XY, the child will develop external female genitalia: A defective Y chromosome prevents the formation of testis, which in turn precludes the production of male typical levels of androgens. In the absence of sufficient androgens, the fetus develops generally according to the female paradigm. It is important to note, however, that functioning ovaries will not form. The lack of either testes or ovaries results in hormone deficiencies that become apparent at the time of puberty. Though, the original source of the anomaly in sexual differentiation is a defective Y chromosome, the hormonal environment to which the fetus is exposed plays a critical role in the formation of subsequent sexual

¹¹ Bear et al., *Neuroscience*, 551-552. Hines, BG, 24-27.

characteristics. It should come as no surprise, then, that most cases of ambiguous sexual differentiation can be traced to either the hormonal environment to which the developing fetus is exposed, or the fetus' inability to respond to that environment. Examining a few of the major disorders that give rise to ambiguous sexual differentiation will illustrate more clearly the importance of the prenatal hormone environment and provide a rationale as to why some have concluded that gender is something essentially ambiguous, existing on a continuum, a question of degree rather than kind.¹²

One such disorder is congenital adrenal hyperplasia (CAH). CAH is a genetic disorder that causes an enzyme deficiency that in turn leads to the production of androgens. The production of these androgens exposes a developing XX child to a level of androgens similar to that of a developing XY child. This androgen laden environment "confuses" the proto-structures of the external genitalia and leads to various levels of enlarging of the clitoris and fusing of the labia. In severe cases, the presence of androgens will cause virtually complete virilization of the external genitalia. With the absence of the TDF, the internal reproductive organs, however, will develop according to the female plan and will leave the XX individual capable of female reproduction: with no Y chromosome and its testes determining factor, the gonads are not cued to form as testes. It is the testes which produce the Müllerian Inhibiting Factor. Without the testes determining factor and subsequent Müllerian Inhibiting Factor, the gonads form as ovaries and the Müllerian ducts develop while the Wolffian ducts recede. For this reason, most CAH children born with ambiguous genitalia are assigned as female and receive both surgical and hormonal treatments to minimize the effects of the rogue androgens in their system.¹³ However, in severe cases, where the external genitals are almost completely masculinized, the disorder is frequently not diagnosed until later in life and the proper resolution of the disorder is more ambiguous. According to Hines, if the presence of androgens is not controlled medically, the XX individual will potentially develop male secondary sex characteristics, such as muscular development, facial and body hair, and male-typical patterns of hair loss.¹⁴

CAH has a profound impact upon developing XX children. Another disorder, androgen insensitivity syndrome (AIS) - or the more severe, complete androgen insensitivity syndrome (CAIS) - impacts developing XY children. As the name indicates, due to defects in androgen receptors, this disorder affects the ability

¹² It will also be important that whatever account is given of gender be able to "accommodate" the existence of these conditions and perhaps even provide some insight into how such situations are best resolved.

¹³ Hines, BG, 28-31. Also see: Moir and Jessel, *Brain Sex*, 30.

¹⁴ Hines, BG, 35.

of developing cells to respond to androgens. The Y chromosome will appropriately prompt the gonads to form into testes which in turn will produce androgens. AIS, however, prevents the appropriate proto genital structures from responding to the androgens. This can be partial (PAIS), or complete (CAIS). In the case of PAIS, the external genitalia will be ambiguous, the masculinization process having been partial and incomplete. In the case of CAIS, because of the inability of the proto-structures to respond to the androgens being produced by the testes, the external genitalia will develop according to the female pattern. Usually, unless there is a family history of CAIS (AIS is a genetic condition), it will be assumed that a newly born CAIS, XY child is an XX female. The problem will likely not be discovered until the new adolescent fails to menstruate at puberty.¹⁵

Menstruation will never commence in a CAIS individual for, while the external genitalia may have formed according to the female pattern, the internal reproductive organs formed neither according to the male nor the female pattern. As we already noted, the Y chromosome cues normal formation of the testes. The testes will produce the Müllerian Inhibiting Factor which in turn will prevent the Müllerian ducts from forming into normal female internal genitalia. However, due to the inability of the Wolffian ducts to respond to the testosterone from the testes, neither will they form according to the normal male pattern. The extent of the unresponsiveness, again, will vary according to the degree of un-receptivity in the proto structures.¹⁶

Interestingly, XY individuals with CAIS will develop breasts and have female patterns of muscular development and hair growth and loss. This appears to be due to the transformation of excess testosterone in the system into the estrogen estradiol which then causes the development of female physical characteristics.¹⁷

Certainly, there are more intersex disorders that could, with profit, be discussed here. However, having briefly described the effects of one disorder affecting XX individuals and another that affects XY individuals is enough to make the point that Aristotle made long ago: in nature, things do not always go exactly as planned. Rather, nature's ends will be achieved not always, but for the most part.¹⁸

¹⁵ Hines, BG, 31-32, 34.

¹⁶ Hines, BG, 32.

¹⁷ Hines, BG, 32, 35. Also see Bear et al., 553 for an explanation of the relationship of testosterone to estradiol. Estradiol is synthesized from testosterone with the aid of an enzyme named aromatase. The chemical structures of the androgen and estrogen are, in fact, very similar, though their effects are very different.

¹⁸ For instance, see Aristotle, *Physics*, trans. R. P. Hardie and R. K. Gaye, ed. Jonathan Barnes (Princeton: The Princeton University Press, 1984), Book 2, Chapter 8, 199a 34-199b 7: "Now mistakes occur even in the operation of art... Hence clearly mistakes are possible in the operations of nature also. If then in the art there are cases in which what is rightly produced

Sadly, problems with systemic hormone levels or an individual's ability to respond to them can produce persons whose sexual determination is not clear. Hines observes that the existence of intersex syndromes - as a consequence of which, for example, an individual might have XX chromosomes, with internal female reproductive organs, but external male reproductive organs, and male musculature and hair growth - brings to the forefront the question of what exactly it is that defines an individual as male or female:

Scientific understanding of the processes of sexual differentiation and the consequences of alterations in the processes appear to challenge widely accepted concepts of what it means to be male or female. For instance, many people view each individual as being consistently one gender or the other and regard a person's genetic constitution as scientific and legal proof of what that gender is. In every day life, the external genitalia serve the same purpose. However, intersex syndromes demonstrate the inadequacy of the genes, the genitalia, or any other single characteristic to define gender. In these syndromes, some characteristics considered definitive of gender are male, whereas others are female.¹⁹

The intersex disorders draw attention to how the fundamental process of sexual differentiation may go awry. They also underscore the important role of hormones in the forming of the primary sex characteristics. Any account that claims to explain sexual differentiation will have to consider these rare but significant occurrences.

The interplay of genes, hormones, and a cell's capacity to respond to hormones is of critical importance for both as regards the typical process of sexual differentiation and its occasional ambiguities. A brief discussion of genetic and hormonal distinction between the sexes beyond the gestational period is therefore in order.

II. THE UNFOLDING OF SEXUAL DIFFERENCE

1. Genetic Distinctions

The crucial role of the Y chromosome has been discussed above. Further distinctions, however, exist between the X and Y chromosomes that should at least be noted, even if the precise consequences of such distinctions are not yet known. The Y chromosome contains approximately 80 genes versus approximately 1,090 for

serves a purpose, and if where mistakes occur there was a purpose in what was attempted, only it was not attained, so must it be also in natural products, and monstrosities will be failures in the purposive effort... [I]f they failed to reach a determinate end [it] must have arisen through the corruption of some principle, as happens now when the seed is defective.”

¹⁹ Hines, BG, 34-35.

the X chromosome: "There are important differences between the 46,XX and 46,XY karyotypes. The most obvious is the striking contrast in the size and known patterns of inheritance of the Y chromosomes. The X chromosome contains about 5 percent of the DNA in the human genome. The Y chromosome not only is less than half of this but also has a long heterochromatic portion of the long arm that is noncoding."²⁰ The disparity between the number of genes on the X versus the Y chromosome is mitigated by the fact that the majority of the genes on the second X in females are inactive. The inactivation, however, is not complete: "Approximately 15 percent of genes on the inactive X escape inactivation, and another 10 percent are partially inactivated, with the percentage inactivated varying from one woman to another. Thus there is ample scope for double doses of genes carried on the X chromosome to contribute to biological differences between the sexes."²¹ Another consequence of the male genotype is that males are subsequently more susceptible to disorders associated with a defective X chromosome. In females, defects in the X chromosome can be compensated by the presence of the second X. In males, however, there is no such possibility. Thus, in males, there is greater incidence of diseases such as hemophilia and Duchenne muscular dystrophy.²²

Regarding the activity of the Y chromosome, Bear et al. remark: "Compared to the X chromosome, the smaller Y chromosome has few genes and less diverse functions."²³ The crucial importance of the sex-determining region of the Y chromosome (SRY) has already been discussed insofar as it is this region that initializes the formation of the testes. However, it appears that parts of the Y chromosome are also responsible for spermatogenesis; this appears to be the case since problems in the sixth and seventh band of the long arm of the Y chromosome result in male infertility.²⁴ Further, Bear et al. note that the SRY regulates genes on other chromosomes and that other genes on the Y chromosome affect male specific physiology.²⁵ Thus, while it appears that the most consequential effect of having an XX or XY genotype is the determining of the gonads as ovaries or testes, nevertheless these genes appear to have effects beyond gonadal determination.

²⁰Daniel D. Federman, "The Biology of Human Sex Differences," *The New England Journal of Medicine*, 354;14, (April 6, 2006): 1511. According to Bear et al., while the X chromosome contains several thousand genes, the Y chromosome only contains about 15. p. 549.

²¹ Federman, "Sex Differences," 1511-1513.

²² See Bear et al., *Neuroscience*, 549-550.

²³ Bear et al., *Neuroscience*, 550.

²⁴ Federman, "Sex Differences," 1513.

²⁵ Bear et al., *Neuroscience*, 550.

2. Hormones

The importance of distinct hormone environments is evident from the biological mechanisms of sexual reproduction and emphasized by the profound impact of hormonal anomalies as witnessed by the intersex disorders. However, there remains much more to be said regarding the hormonal differences between the sexes and the morphological, behavioral, psychological, and aptitudinal differences that result from these differences.

The phenomenon of hormones in males and females is an instance of a pattern that will be seen repeatedly in examining the reality of male and female: a remarkable interplay of sameness and difference. The statement that the male hormone environment is dominated by androgens, such as testosterone, and that that of the female is dominated by estrogens, such as estradiol, is neither controversial nor obscure.²⁶ However, the divergent paths begin at the same point: with androgens. All estrogens begin as androgens: "androgens such as androstenedione and testosterone are synthesized in both the ovary and testes and then partially converted to the estrogens estrone and estradiol. This reaction is irreversible and is catalyzed by aromatase, which has strikingly different activities in males and females."²⁷ Thus both the male and female synthesize estrogens from androgens by means of aromatase. Federman continues:

The fact that both sexes make the same steroid hormones means that physiologic differences are necessarily quantitative. To state it another way, the sex-steroid differences between men and women reflect two regulatory decisions: how much androgen is made, and what percentage of that quantity is converted to estrogen.²⁸

Regarding those distinctions, he goes on to note that men make 20 times as much androgen as do women, but convert only 0.25% of that into estrogens. Women, while making 20 times less androgen convert half of that to estrogens, thus converting 200 times more androgen to estradiol.²⁹

It is difficult to discern exactly what all of the effects of distinct levels of circulating hormones are. Clearly, they play a central role in the formation of secondary sex characteristics expressed during puberty. In males, testosterone is primarily responsible for male typical musculature, deepening of the voice, spermatogenesis, sex drive, erectile function, and growth of the beard, prostate, and

²⁶ See, for example, Bear et al., *Neuroscience*, 553.

²⁷ Federman, "Sex Differences," 1508.

²⁸ Federman, "Sex Differences," 1508.

²⁹ See Federman "Sex Differences," 1508-1509. He notes that daily the testes produce 7000 µg of testosterone and convert 0.25% to estradiol (17.5 µg). The ovary produces only 300 µg of testosterone, but converts one half of that to estradiol.

penis.³⁰ While testosterone and dihydrotestosterone are the primary components of pubertal changes in males, they are not the sole factors in these developments. Studies of males who lack either estrogen receptors or the aromatase enzyme necessary for converting androgens to estrogens reveal atypical pubertal development. Specifically, they will not display the usual pubertal growth spurt and growth completion. They also will manifest atypical bone density.³¹ Thus, certain developmental processes require not only testosterone, but also the ability to produce and receive estrogens for their proper completion.

As testosterone is central for the development of secondary sex characteristics in males, so is estrogen in females. It is responsible for breast development, the advent of menstruation, the pubertal growth spurt, and the completion of growth. Estrogen, however, is not responsible for sex drive and sexual excitement and satisfaction, which may, at least in part, be due to testosterone.³² A kind of inverse of the situation with males appears to be at work: while the primary role is played by estrogen, it appears that development will not reach its completion without the presence of and receptivity for androgens. This establishes at a hormonal level a principle that perhaps will be seen to exist at all other levels: a reciprocal, mutually perfecting complementarity in which elements of each are found in the other.

However, there is yet more to discuss regarding hormonal distinctions between males and females beyond simply the circulating quantities of these hormone; an intersex syndrome such as AIS makes it clear that circulating hormone levels are only part of the picture. These hormones must be transported, metabolized, and then have their effect once they are properly received. At each step of this process there exists the possibility of sex-based differences between men and women.³³

Federman notes that androgens and estrogens are transported through the blood stream by the same hormone-binding globulin. Androgens and estrogens, however, relate differently to their transporter with the net result being that the relative availability of androgens and the subsequent biological expression of androgens will be affected more profoundly by fluctuations in levels of the binding globulin. Thus there will be a sex-based difference in the levels of free hormones available to other tissues based upon the distinct manner in which the transporting globulin reacts to androgens and estrogens and how those hormones react to it.³⁴

³⁰ Federman, "Sex Differences," 1510. Bear et al., *Neuroscience*, 553.

³¹ Federman, "Sex Differences," 1510.

³² Federman, "Sex Differences," 1510.

³³ See Federman, "Sex Differences," 1512, (Note to Figure 2.)

³⁴ See Federman, "Sex Differences," 1508.

Though estrogens and androgens have the same vehicle, they relate distinctly to that vehicle.

There are vastly distinct levels of hormones at work in males and females. Likewise, though the agent of their transportation is the same, this agent behaves distinctly for androgens and estrogens. It is also the case that tissues responsive to these hormones extend beyond the reproductive organs. Therefore, to begin to understand the impact of the distinction of kind and quantity of sex hormones, it will help to understand a little more how such these hormones are processed by the body.

The aromatase enzyme is responsible for converting androgens to estrogens. In addition to the breast and prostate gland, it is also found in many types of tissue that are typically not associated with sex-based difference. These include the brain, bones, liver, and adipose tissue.³⁵ According to Federman, most of the effects of the changing of androgen to estrogen by aromatase are intracellular in scope. However, aromatase in the liver and adipocyte contribute greatly to *systemic* levels of estrogens. As stated above, all estrogens are converted from androgens and the initial level of androgens and the conversion rates are vastly different for males and females. Thus, there must be some distinctions in the organs that bring about these varying levels. And when the balance is thrown off, difficulties arise.³⁶ Thus, once again, the balance of sex hormones has significant importance beyond their expression in organs directly associated with reproduction.

There are also sex-based differences in the manner in which cells respond to and metabolize hormones: the receptors for androgens and estrogens are distinct. There is one receptor for androgens and two for estrogens. Once received, there are various steps that lead to the expression of the hormone. Federman states: "Each step of the process provides opportunities for the introduction of sex-based differences."³⁷ In summarizing how androgens and estrogens can bind distinctly to tissues, he writes:

Thus each tissue can construct its own androgenic or estrogenic identity with developmental and potentially behavioral consequences that could not be predicted on the basis of circulating hormone levels. This may be particularly important in the

³⁵ Federman, "Sex Differences," 1508.

³⁶ See Federman "Sex Differences," 1510. There are a number of medical conditions correlated with excess aromatase activity: Obesity, Klinefelter's syndrome, aging, hyperthyroidism, liver disease, endometriosis, uterine fibroids, sertoli-cell tumors, germ-cell tumors, and sex-cord tumors.

³⁷ Federman, "Sex Differences," 1512 (Note to Figure 2).

brain with respect to sexual behavior, sexual identity, partner choice, and other sex-related events.³⁸

Biological and behavioral sex-based differences due to hormones are not simply based upon distinct circulating levels of sex hormones, but also based upon distinct ways in which these hormones are metabolized. Thus, the equation for determining exact behavioral correlates for hormonal distinctions is, even on a purely material level, much more complicated than determining circulating levels of a given hormone.

Because of its profound behavioral implications, the effect of sex hormones on various brain tissues must be discussed in greater detail. Before providing such a treatment, however, other tissues that are targets for sex hormones should at least be mentioned. Federman provides a list of such somatic tissues.³⁹ Among somatic tissues affected by androgens are: muscle, larynx, beard, distribution of sexual hair, bone and cartilage, immune system, nervous system, heart, and red cells. Those affected by estrogens include: breast, uterus, adipose-tissue distribution, heart and vascular endothelium, bone and cartilage, immune system, nervous system. While some of these are easily recognized as pertaining to primary or secondary sex characteristics, the impact of sex hormones, for instance, upon cardiovascular tissue and function, goes beyond what is typically thought of as a secondary sex characteristic and provides another basis for sex based differences.

Up to this point, focus has been upon what are called, in fact, the sex hormones: androgens and estrogens. These hormones are all steroids. "steroids are fatty molecules and can easily pass through cell membranes and bind to receptors within the cytoplasm, giving them direct access to the nucleus and gene expression."⁴⁰ Other hormones, however, enter the scene as possible bases of sexual distinction. In particular, it appears that oxytocin and vasopressin may play a role in sexual difference. These hormones are proteins as opposed to steroids.⁴¹ The most recognized effect of vasopressin is to regulate water and salt levels in the body. Those of oxytocin are causing contraction of the uterus during childbirth and causing milk to be let down during lactation.⁴² However, recent studies have discovered increasing and significant evidence that the effects of these hormones extend beyond those mentioned. Two distinct species of vole offer some insight into the possible

³⁸ Federman, "Sex Differences," 1510-1511.

³⁹ See Federman, "Sex Differences," 1511, Table 3.

⁴⁰ Bear et al., *Neuroscience*, 553.

⁴¹ Bear et al., *Neuroscience*, 553.

⁴² Bear et al., *Neuroscience*, 561.

consequences of oxytocin and vasopressin in humans.⁴³ (A vole is a small, mouse-like rodent found in Eurasia and North America.)

While very similar in most ways, prairie and montane voles display distinct mating and parenting behaviors: prairie voles are reliably monogamous, forming a tight bond with their mating partner. They live together in one nest and mother and father cooperate long-term in caring for the young. Montane voles, however, display no partner loyalty and nest individually. Female montane voles display brief mothering instincts but then quickly leave their young to survive on their own.

Members of the same genus, prairie voles and montane voles are genetically very similar. It appears that the primary difference that correlates to their distinct reproductive behaviors is how they produce and process vasopressin and oxytocin. In particular, the brain of the female prairie vole is highly receptive to oxytocin. During mating, oxytocin spikes and her brain responds. If the female prairie vole is given oxytocin antagonists, she does not display the normal intense bonding with her mate. Interestingly, vasopressin functions in the same way in male prairie voles: levels spike during mating and appear to be responsible for the bond with the female partner. A male given vasopressin while being introduced to a new female will form a bond with that female similar to that formed while mating. Vasopressin antagonist given during mating will prevent the bond from forming.

Oxytocin and vasopressin appear also to correlate to parenting behaviors in females and males with oxytocin stimulating maternal behavior in female prairie voles and vasopressin increasing time spent with cubs in male prairie voles.

The brains, however, of montane voles are not responsive to oxytocin or vasopressin. The one exception to this is the initial period after the female montane vole has given birth and is caring for her cubs. During this time, she exhibits a response in her brain to oxytocin similar to that of female prairie voles.

It is, of course, difficult to transfer this information from voles to humans. Bear et al., speculate that it is possible that these hormones play a role in human mating and parenting: "There is some evidence from primates that vasopressin and oxytocin levels vary with sexual arousal, and that oxytocin facilitates nurturing behavior in females and sexual assertiveness in some males."⁴⁴

The research of cellular biologists Daniel Huber, Pierre Veinante, and Ron Stoop led them to conclude that: "Vasopressin enhances aggressiveness, anxiety, and stress levels and the consolidation of fear memory. Oxytocin decreases anxiety and stress and facilitates social encounters, maternal care, and the extinction of

⁴³ The following discussion of prairie voles and montane voles is a summary of Bear et al., *Neuroscience*, 560-562.

⁴⁴ Bear et al., *Neuroscience*, 562.

conditioned avoidance behavior.”⁴⁵ It appears that oxytocin may also play a role in augmenting sexual pleasure in humans and feelings of bondedness for both men and women.⁴⁶

Regarding vasopressin, as with male prairie voles, it appears that human males have more receptors for this hormone. Interestingly, the disposition of vasopressin receptors appears to be related to testosterone levels in early development. According to Hines, the presence of testosterone in early development will increase the number of cells that respond to vasopressin in adulthood.⁴⁷ Vasopressin appears to affect men and women differently regarding sexual intimacy. Vasopressin appears to support male arousal; it has the opposite effect, however, on women, for whom vasopressin is associated with sexual disinterest.⁴⁸ Vasopressin also seems to be associated with protective or territorial feelings which in women might be associated with care for her children⁴⁹ and in males with protectiveness of the woman with whom he has mated. Hiller summarizes the possible effects of vasopressin and oxytocin in males:

A form of inter-male rivalry and aggression mediated in part by vasopressin secretion during the arousal phase of male sexual activity, might have evolved to enable men to protect their partners from rivals and increase men's confidence in parenthood. At the same time the neurochemistry enabling men to be supportive, caring fathers is oxytocin, synthesized in the brain and released at orgasm, which promotes anti-aggressive and nurturant feelings towards both his partner and their children.⁵⁰

⁴⁵ Daniel Huber, Pierre Veinante, Ron Stoop, “Vasopressin and Oxytocin Excite Distinct Neuronal Populations in the Central Amygdala,” *Science*, Vol. 308, (April 8, 2005): 246.

⁴⁶ Janice Hiller, “Speculations on the Links between Feelings, Emotions and Sexual Behavior: Are Vasopressin and Oxytocin Involved?,” *Sexual and Relationship Therapy*, Vol. 19, No. 4 (November 2004): 396-399, 405-406.

⁴⁷ Hines, BG, 73.

⁴⁸ Hiller, “Speculations on the Links between Feelings, Emotions and Sexual Behavior: Are vasopressin and oxytocin involved?,” 399-400.

⁴⁹ Hiller, “Speculations on the Links between Feelings, Emotions and Sexual Behavior: Are vasopressin and oxytocin involved?,” 399.

⁵⁰ Hiller, “Speculations on the Links between Feelings, Emotions and Sexual Behavior: Are vasopressin and oxytocin involved?,” 406.

As with all relationships of hormones to behavior and psychological states, the relationship of oxytocin and vasopressin to human behavior are complex and the subjects of ongoing research.⁵¹

3. Fertility

I will return many times to consideration of hormonal distinctions between men and women. However, to understand some of the complexities and causes of male and female hormonal distinction, one must first understand differences in male and female fertility.

While aspects of neural activity leading to stimulation of the genitalia and sexual climax appear to be similar for males and females,⁵² general patterns of male and female fertility and the hormonal activities that precipitate and result from these patterns vary greatly.⁵³ Distinctions in the fertility of men and women can be clarified by looking at various aspects of that fertility: its timing (when men and women have the active ability to reproduce), the germ cells that play the leading role in the process of reproduction, the hormonal sequences that support the processes, and the organs that control the hormones.⁵⁴

From the time of puberty, men are continuously fertile at least into the ninth decade of their lives. Though the number of sperm may decrease over time, due to the manner of the process of spermatogenesis, supply generally remains plentiful.⁵⁵ By contrast, women can conceive a child for only approximately 12 hours per month after the release of the ovum from the ovary. And, unlike the male, who continually produces millions of sperm, the female begins with a fixed number of ovarian follicles, each of which has the potential to become the dominant follicle or ovum released every month during the years of her fertility. At the time that the proto-gonads differentiate into ovaries, there are 3 to 4 million ovarian follicles. This begins a process of rapid attrition which eventually leads to menopause. Of the original 3-4 million, only about 1 million remain at birth. At the time of the onset of menstruation only 400,000 to 500,000 remain. By the time the woman reaches her sixth decade, none will remain. Before that, however, diminishing estrogen levels

⁵¹ See Tillmann H. C. Krüger, Boris Schiffer, Matthias Eikermann, Philip Haake, Elke Gizewski and Manfred Schedlowski, "Serial Neurochemical Measurement of Cerebrospinal Fluid During the Human Sexual Response Cycle," *European Journal of Neuroscience*, Vol. 24 (2006): 3445-3452.

⁵² See Bear et al., *Neuroscience*, 556-559.

⁵³ Federman provides an interesting comparison of male and female fertility based upon four axes: timing, endocrine pattern, germ cell, and controlling mechanism. I will follow him in this comparison.

⁵⁴ This discussion follows Federman's treatment, "Sex Differences," 1507-1508.

⁵⁵ Federman, "Sex Differences," 1507.

due to attrition of ovarian follicles will have led to menopause and the ending of the woman's fertile time.⁵⁶

The overarching pattern of a woman's fertility is governed by the attrition of ovarian follicles. The monthly pattern however is governed by the preparation and presentation of the ovum and the complex hormonal symphony that facilitates it. The arcuate nucleus of the hypothalamus initiates a rhythmic release of luteinizing hormone (LH) and follicle stimulating hormone (FSH) that leads to the maturing of 10 to 12 ovarian follicles, which produce and release estrogen. This estrogen creates a feedback cycle with the hypothalamus and pituitary gland to control the release of further LH. As one of the follicles becomes the dominant follicle it causes a spike in estrogen levels which in turn leads to a spike in FSH and LH production, which in turns leads to ovulation.⁵⁷

After ovulation, the remnant of the dominant follicle - called the corpus luteum - secretes progesterone and estrogen which signal the hypothalamus to halt the pituitary gland's production of LH and FSH. If the ovum is not fertilized, the corpus luteum will degenerate after about 11 days and with it the monthly production of progesterone and estrogen decline and a menstrual period ensues. In the absence of these hormones, the hypothalamus will re-cue the production of LH and FSH and the cycle will begin again.⁵⁸

In males, FSH is involved in the maturation of sperm. LH triggers the testes to produce testosterone, one effect of which is also to assist in the production of sperm.⁵⁹ Both FSH and LH, the production of which is controlled by the hypothalamus, contribute to male fertility. Thus male fertility is ultimately orchestrated by the hypothalamus while female fertility is controlled by the hypothalamus and the corpus luteum.

At this point, it should be clear that the hormone environments in men and women are significantly distinct, not only as regards the kinds of hormones present, but also as regards to how they are metabolized and expressed, and as regards the rhythms of their fluctuations. What is not clear at this point is what the behavioral or dispositional consequences of such differences are. Such differences have been hinted at when discussing possible behavioral consequences of greater responsiveness to oxytocin in women and vasopressin in males. Convincing evidence exists that there are significant behavioral consequences to oxytocin and vasopressin levels in prairie voles. The human person, however, is much more complicated, having many more factors which influence behavior; it is therefore far more difficult

⁵⁶ Federman, "Sex Differences," 1507-1508.

⁵⁷ See Federman, "Sex Differences," 1507. and Bear et al., *Neuroscience*, 554-556.

⁵⁸ Federman, "Sex Differences," 1507. Bear et al., *Neuroscience*, 554-556.

⁵⁹ Bear et al., *Neuroscience*, 554.

to discern relationships between hormones and behaviors in humans. This is further complicated by the fact that the expression of a hormone depends upon many factors beyond circulating levels of that hormone. Further complication enters in trying to discern whether for instance an elevated hormone level caused a certain type of behavior or whether a certain type of behavior caused the elevated hormone level. Notwithstanding these complications, some attempt should be made at describing behavioral correlates to hormone levels.

4. Testosterone

No hormone is more controversial as regards its behavioral effects than is testosterone. Harvard evolutionary psychologist Steven Pinker provides what appears to be a balanced assessment of the effects of testosterone:

Variation in the level of testosterone among different men, and in the same man in different seasons or at different times of day, correlates with libido, self-confidence, and the drive for dominance. Violent criminals have higher levels than nonviolent criminals; trial lawyers have higher levels than those who push paper. The relations are complicated for a number of reasons. Over a broad range of values, the concentration of testosterone in the bloodstream doesn't matter. Some traits, such as spatial abilities, peak at moderate rather than high levels. The effects of testosterone depend on the number and distribution of receptors for the molecule, not just on its concentration. And one's psychological state can affect testosterone levels as well as the other way around. But there is a causal relationship, albeit a complicated one.⁶⁰

The exact nature of the relationship between testosterone and libido, self-confidence, and the drive for dominance, for all the reasons that Pinker has pointed out, is difficult to capture exactly. But it appears clear enough that there is some sort of causal relationship. A shot of testosterone will not turn a mild-mannered male into a criminal, but it is reasonable to say that it is not purely accidental that violent criminals have higher testosterone levels than nonviolent criminals or that trial attorneys have higher testosterone than those in less aggressive positions. Bear et al. summarize the effects of testosterone as follows:

Male testosterone levels vary during the course of the day due to innumerable factors, including stress, exertion, and aggression. It is not clear whether increase in testosterone is a cause or an effect, but it is correlated with social challenges, anger, and conflict. Testosterone levels rise in anticipation of sex or even fantasizing about

⁶⁰ Steven Pinker, *The Blank Slate: The Modern Denial of Human Nature* (New York: Viking Penguin, 2002), 347-348. [Hereafter referred to as TBS.]

it. One study found that testosterone levels increase if a male sport fan watches his team win, but levels decrease in fans of the losing team.⁶¹

Bear et al. make it clear they are not convinced that testosterone plays a causal role regarding anger or conflict, but the correlation is noted.⁶²

There will be more to say about the possible effects of testosterone in the sections that follow: certainly there will be much to say regarding the importance of testosterone regarding sexual differentiation of the human brain. Moreover, the effect of testosterone on certain cognitive abilities and behavioral tendencies must be further discussed.

5. Estrogens and Progesterone

Before proceeding to discuss sexual differentiation in the brain, some general comments about the effects of the typically female hormone environment are in order. The effects of estrogen and progesterone as regards the mechanics of the menstrual cycle have already been discussed. In addition to these purely physiological effects some claim that estrogen has effects upon the mood of the woman; it promotes more brain cell activity, heightens the senses, and is associated with “a sense of well-being and alertness, high feelings of self-esteem, enthusiasm, pleasure, and sexual arousal. Evolution has equipped women with a chemical timetable which makes them feel pleasure and contentment at the optimum time for successful conception.”⁶³ Progesterone is there to promote apt conditions for a successful and healthy pregnancy. It also, however, slows down the brain compared to when estrogen reigned supreme and lowers libido. Overall, progesterone has a calming effect and brings about emotional equilibrium.⁶⁴

The bonding, maternal effects of oxytocin have already been mentioned. In discussing why women tend to be peace-makers more so than men, hormone expert Theresa Crenshaw wrote: “Mellowing them [women] are their relatively high levels of serotonin, oxytocin in abundant supply, and estrogen, a gentle, ordinarily soothing antidepressant hormone.”⁶⁵ Crenshaw points to levels of serotonin,

⁶¹ Bear et al., *Neuroscience*, 553

⁶² Bear et al., *Neuroscience*, 553. David Geary points out that, in lower primates the relationship between social dominance and testosterone appears to be a very complicated one that depends more upon the balance between hormone levels and proper response to the environmental situation. See David C. Geary, *Male, Female* (Washington, DC: American Psychological Association, 1998) 64-70.

⁶³ Moir and Jessel. *Brain Sex*, 72.

⁶⁴ Moir and Jessel. *Brain Sex*, 71-73.

⁶⁵ Quoted in Steven E. Rhoads, *Taking Sex Differences Seriously*, Encounter Books, San Francisco, 2004. p. 172.

oxytocin, and estrogen as possible explanations for women's general tendency to be less inclined to overt conflict.

More can and must be said about the importance and influence of hormones. They are, however, one part of an intricate system of biology and behavior, which cannot be fully understood without appeal to the other principal components that account for the whole. One other such integral part is the brain.

6. Other Developmental Differences

An interesting general difference in development of boys and girls is that boys take longer to develop: girls reach 50% of adult height more quickly than boys, enter puberty before boys, and complete growth earlier than boys.⁶⁶ Delayed male maturation appears to play a role in the development of male secondary sexual characteristics but also affects male vulnerability to death and disease. "For instance, the slower maturation of boys results in longer legs, relative to overall body height than would otherwise be the case, which, in turn, contributes to the larger overall size of men relative to women."⁶⁷ Regarding male vulnerability to disease, Geary writes: "The delayed maturation of boys relative to girls and the general tendency for male hormones to suppress immune functions appear to put boys and men at risk for a wider array of illnesses and premature death than same-age girls and women."⁶⁸ He adds that boys have higher basal metabolic rates and higher activity levels which lead to higher caloric requirements, which, in turn render boys more vulnerable to environmental problems, such as lack of proper nutrition.

Somatic tissues that respond to sex hormones and secondary sex characteristics have been discussed above, but some expansion on sex differences that emerge at puberty will be helpful. During puberty, the hips and pelvis of girls widen. Boys develop larger hearts, skeletal muscles, and lungs. They also have "higher systolic blood pressure, lower resting heart-rate, a greater capacity for carrying oxygen in the blood, and a greater power of neutralizing the chemical products of muscular exercise.... In short, the male becomes more adapted at puberty for the tasks of hunting, fighting and manipulating all sorts of heavy objects."⁶⁹ Boys and girls also develop the facial and bodily features that will make them more sexually attractive to the other sex.⁷⁰

⁶⁶ Geary, *Male, Female*, 212.

⁶⁷ Geary, *Male, Female*, 212-213.

⁶⁸ Geary, *Male, Female*, 216.

⁶⁹ J. M. Tanner, *Foetus into Man: Physical Growth from Conception to Maturity* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1990), 74. Quoted in Geary, *Male, Female*, 213.

⁷⁰ Geary, *Male, Female*, 213.

III. SEX DIFFERENCE IN THE BRAIN

1. *Distinctions in the Brain: Introduction*

It was noted above that tissues and organs other than the genitalia respond to sex hormones, leading to sex based differences, for instance, in susceptibilities to certain diseases. Of those organs that respond to androgens and estrogens, the brain is among the most important. Initial discoveries in sex based differences in the human brain have led to a plethora of research and a good bit of controversy regarding what conclusions can be drawn from such research. That there are, however, differences between the brains of men and women does not seem to be much disputed. Melissa Hines explains why scientists are able to have some certitude that there are differences in the male and female brain, even before specific experiments are done to isolate and manifest such differences. The logic of this pre-experimental knowledge is quite simple: "The existence of sex difference in behavior implies the existence of sex differences in the brain because the brain provides the basis for all behavior."⁷¹ That there are some differences, at the very least in sexual behavior, is granted. Since, for Hines, the brain is the basis of behavior, a sex-based distinction in behavior can only be explained by a sex-based distinction in the brain. Hence one ought not be surprised that there are some differences in the male and female brain. For instance, differences in male and female fertility have already been discussed. Part of the brain - the hypothalamus - is responsible for cueing the production of LH and FSH, the production of which is significantly distinct for men and women. One would suspect therefore that the hypothalamus would be a part of the brain that is the locus of sex-based differences. In fact, it will be so. To explore further sexual differentiation in the brain, first, the origins of sex based brain differences will be discussed. This discussion will focus on sex based differences found in non-rational animals. Following that, a summary will be given of sex-based brain differences found in humans.

A growing number of authors and researchers attempt to summarize the conclusions of the rapidly growing research on sex-based differences in brain structure and/or functioning. The first aspect of this centers on actual measurable differences in things such as the relative size of the brain itself or a part of the brain, or the number of neurons. The second, brain functioning, uses recent technologies such as functional MRIs and/or PET scans to examine how the male and female brain reacts to similar stimuli or performs similar tasks. For this discussion, I will follow principally the work of Canadian biopsychologist and respected researcher of sex differences, Doreen Kimura and American psychologist/neurologist, Melissa Hines.

⁷¹ Hines, BG, 65.

2. *Origins of Contemporary Research*

Before entering into the world of differences in the human male and female brain, a word about the origins of this research is in order. Certainly, a complete treatment of the relationship of sex-based differences in the brain to behavioral differences would include a discussion of phrenology;⁷² here, however, it will be more useful to focus on more proximate sources, namely, sex-based differences in the brains of other mammals. It was research in this arena that sparked much of the current research on the human brain. In particular, the venerable lab rat has proved a most worthy subject of brain experimentation. Moir and Jessel explain the reasons for this: "Its brain does not develop in the womb as ours does. Its brain takes final shape only after birth. So it is easier for us to see what is going on, and find out why. We can watch the development of the brain, and manipulate its very nature."⁷³ They go on to note that the brain of a male rat at the time of its birth is at roughly the same point in development as that of a human fetus at seven weeks old. Thus, experiments can manipulate the hormonal environment of the newly born rat to simulate various hormonal environments that might be encountered by a developing human in utero. By this means, researchers can see what areas of the rat brain are sensitive to varying levels of sexually distinct hormones, and what behavioral consequences follow from manipulation of various androgens and estrogens at various times of development.

Much time could be spent on providing a list of discovered sex-based differences in the brains of rats and monkeys, etc. For now, however, it will suffice to discuss only one example; doing so will provide an idea of the nature of the research and the conclusions drawn from such research.

Melissa Hines discusses how female rats are exposed to male typical hormone environments at critical times in the brain's formation. If the hormone environment is altered at the proper time in infancy and/or prenatally and then reinforced in adulthood, the female rat will display male typical sexual behavior, such as mounting a female rat. Interestingly, the genetic female thus hormonally manipulated will abandon her female typical behavior. A male similarly subjected to the female typical hormonal world at the proper times also will abandon male typical sexual behavior and display female typical behavior. The timing of these hormonal interventions must be precise: if they are applied either too early or too late, the subject will be relatively unaffected.⁷⁴

⁷² See Daniel N. Robinson, *An Intellectual History of Psychology* (Madison, WI: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1995), 275-277.

⁷³ Moir and Jessel, *Brain Sex*, 25.

⁷⁴ Hines, BG, 48.

A conclusion of this research is that certain parts of the mammalian brain appear to be sensitive to systemic hormone levels at certain periods of development. It appears that the window of sensitivity for these developmental periods is relatively small. Thus, a part of the brain may respond to the presence of androgens *while it is forming*; that part of the brain will then form according to either a male or female pattern and that formation in one mode or another will be permanent.⁷⁵ If, for example, androgens were added after the critical period, a given part of the brain would remain relatively unaffected.

Hines offers four ways in which hormones can affect cell growth and subsequently brain formation:

They [hormones] can enhance the growth of neuron processes, such as dendrites and axons; they can rescue neurons from programmed cell death; they can cause cell death; and they can determine which neurotransmitters are used by cells.⁷⁶

It seems that all of these modes of affecting cell growth help to determine the distinct ways in which the male and female brains form. Thus, testosterone (or the estrogens formed from it) can have the effect of increasing growth, preventing some cells from dying (the areas which eventually will be larger in males) while causing others to die (areas that will eventually be larger in females). Finally, sex hormones can determine to which neurotransmitter a cell will respond. This provides the possibility for a significant sexually-differentiated brain chemistry. (It has already been noted, for instance, that pre-natal testosterone levels affect the adult brain's ability to respond to the hormone vasopressin. Thus, based upon in utero levels of testosterone, the adult brain will respond differently to the presence of vasopressin.)

Much more could be said about sex differences in the brains of non-human mammals. For current purposes, however, it will suffice to reiterate a few general principles gleaned from experiments with animals: manipulation of hormonal levels at appropriate times during the formation of the brain - whether pre- or post-natal - proves to alter the manner in which the brain forms and the adult behaves. Thus, the hormone environment to which a forming animal is subject plays a crucial role not only in the forming of the sexual organs, but also in the forming of the brain and, thereby, on subsequent adult behavior. Not only are the hormone levels crucial, but also the timing of the introduction of such hormones and the ability of various tissues to respond to such hormones. Studies on the brains of male and female animals, for instance, rats, show significant structural differences - some of which are observable to the naked eye of a trained observer, which differences depend

⁷⁵ See Hines, BG, 68.

⁷⁶ Hines, BG, 72.

upon systemic levels of testosterone while the brain is forming. Because the brain is the source of animal behavior, it is reasonable to conclude that distinctions in behavior can be traced to differences in the brain. Sometimes, the role of a specific area of the brain can be isolated so that sex-based differences in that region can be correlated with behavioral differences. Exact and causal correlations between brain differences and specific behaviors, however, have often proved difficult to establish.

3. *Brain Differences in Humans*

Discussing the human being will always be more complicated, and often more controversial, than non-rational animals. Nevertheless, it appears that also in humans, there are discernable distinctions in the male and female brain. A text from Bear et al.'s standard neurology textbook is a good place to start; it echoes a thought offered earlier by Hines:

Sexual reproduction depends on a variety of individual and social behaviors - finding, attracting, and keeping a mate; copulating; giving birth; and nursing and nurturing the offspring - and in each case, the behavior of males and females is usually quite different. Since behavior depends on the structure and function of the nervous system, we can make the strong prediction that male and female brains are also somehow different.⁷⁷

The same pre-experimental principle is invoked: the brain is the source of behavior. If there are differences in behavior, there must, therefore, be differences in the brain. So, because there are differences in behavior, there are differences in the brain. These same authors go on to say that, nevertheless, sexual dimorphisms in the human brain have been difficult to find and "have so far proven to be small, subtle, few, and of unknown function."⁷⁸ There are two general categories of brain differences that will be of interest here: structural differences, such as differences in size and/or density of tissue, and functional/organizational differences. These latter differences refer to instances where the structures of the brain are not discernibly different, but nevertheless differ in organization or function. As they are the more concrete, it is simpler to begin with the structural differences.

i. *Brain Size and Matter (the Gray and the White)*: Even when adjusted for body size, "Men's brains are larger than women's by 10 to 15 percent."⁷⁹ Kimura is quick to point out that the exact significance of this difference is unclear. Some have

⁷⁷ Bear et al., *Neuroscience*, 562.

⁷⁸ Bear et al., *Neuroscience*, 563.

⁷⁹ Doreen Kimura, *Sex and Cognition* (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1999), 128. [Hereafter referred to as SC.]

suggested that this difference in size correlates to greater spatial ability in males.⁸⁰ Others suggest that the difference in brain size may translate to slightly higher general intelligence. There are, however, no definitive conclusions at this point regarding the significance of these differences. Cambridge psychiatrist Simon Baron-Cohen offers the following speculation on the significance of distinct brain size:

Having more brain cells may lead to greater attention to detail, which itself would lead to better systemizing. The cost of such attention to detail could be slower grasp of the overall picture.⁸¹

While Baron-Cohen expresses no hesitation regarding the facts that males have a greater attention to detail and females have a greater grasp of the overall picture, he is clear that the relationship of these attributes to brain size is an area where future research must be focused.

The female brain has been found to possess more gray matter than the male brain. The male brain, by contrast has been found to possess more white matter than the female brain.⁸² Gray matter processes information. White matter transmits electrical impulses from brain to body.⁸³ While, as is the case with most areas of sex differences in the brain, it is not exactly clear what the significance of this difference is, some speculate that more white matter could be related to greater risk taking and less impulse control in males.⁸⁴

ii. *The Hypothalamus*: This part of the brain is perhaps the single largest region of known sex differences and hence is the locus of much research.⁸⁵ It is

⁸⁰ Kimura summarizes differences in spatial ability stating that males do show advantages in most spatial tasks with the greatest differences being in image rotation and targeting. Males also tend to navigate in a mode different than females tending to use a more fixed system, such as the directions of north, south, etc instead of landmarks. Women are better at remembering positions of objects in an array and remembering landmarks. See Kimura, SC, 43-64.

⁸¹ Simon Baron-Cohen, *The Essential Difference: The Truth about the Male and Female Brain* (New York: Basic Books, 2003), 112. [Hereafter referred to as ED.]

⁸² Ruben C. Gur, Bruce I. Turetsky, Mie Matsui, Michelle Yan, Warren Bilker, Paul Hughett, and Raquel E. Gur, "Sex Differences in Brain Gray and White Matter in Healthy Young Adults: Correlations with Cognitive Performance," *The Journal of Neuroscience*, 19 (10) (May 15, 1999): 4065-4069.

⁸³ Michael Gurian. *What Could He Be Thinking: How a Man's Mind Really Works* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2003), 59.

⁸⁴ Gurian, *What Could He Be Thinking*, 58-59.

⁸⁵ See Kimura, SC, 129-131; Hines, BG, 188-190. Baron-Cohen, ED, 113.

known to be important for mediating various sexually differentiated behaviors and rich in cells that react to the presence of androgens. Some studies link the hypothalamus to aggression.⁸⁶ Other studies have associated it with maternal behavior. Two areas of the hypothalamus in particular are the focus of much research because they show consistent sexual dimorphism in other mammals: the anterior hypothalamic preoptic area (AH/POA) and the bed nucleus of the stria terminalis (BNST).⁸⁷ These regions of the human brain also consistently exhibit sex-based differences. Regarding the AH/POA, parts of the interstitial nuclei of the anterior hypothalamus (INAH) appear to be smaller in females.⁸⁸ Behavioral correlates to this difference are unknown. One interesting study, however, found that an area of the INAH (INAH-3) which is smaller in females than males is also smaller in homosexual males. Another hypothalamic area - the suprachiasmatic nucleus - is larger in homosexual males than heterosexual males. This area is associated with "regulating day-night, seasonal, and other biological rhythms." Interestingly, a study of undergraduates showed that homosexual males showed waking and rising patterns similar to that of females.⁸⁹

Regarding the BNST, areas of it have been shown to be consistently larger in males than females. (Generally, the BNST is associated with aggression, male sexual behavior, and ovulation.)⁹⁰ Kimura recounts a study in which male transsexuals (males who felt that they had been born the wrong sex) had BNST similar to females.⁹¹ At this point, however, no conclusive research exists.

iii. *The Hippocampus*: This area of the temporal lobe appears to be associated with memory functions and spatial abilities in non-humans.⁹² Baron-Cohen notes that rats appear to use the hippocampus to navigate mazes and that birds which hide food over large areas - thus having a greater need for precise navigation - have a larger hippocampus than birds that do not hide their food far and wide. He also notes that more prenatal testosterone in these animals leads to a larger hippocampus. Hines, however, reports that fMRIs reveal that the human female hippocampus is larger than the male hippocampus.⁹³ This is, at first appearance,

⁸⁶ See Pinker, TBS, 347.

⁸⁷ See Hines, BG, 66-67.

⁸⁸ Kimura, SC, 130; Hines, BG, 188-189.

⁸⁹ Kimura, SC, 130-131.

⁹⁰ Hines, BG, 190.

⁹¹ Kimura, SC, 131.

⁹² Kimura, SC, 131, 203. Baron-Cohen, ED, 113.

⁹³ Hines, BG, 199.

contrary to what might be expected given the tendency for men to perform better on certain spatial tasks. Kimura addresses this seeming discrepancy as follows:

[I]n humans the hippocampal region appears to serve more generalized memory function, rather than spatial memory. Remember also that human females have, if anything, better memory for location of objects – at least when they are part of an array – than men.⁹⁴

Thus it appears that the functioning of the hippocampus is dedicated to more functions in humans than in other animals. As for the navigating function in humans, this does, at least in some instances, seem to be differently distributed in males and females. Physician, psychologist, and researcher of sex differences Leonard Sax reports that, while navigating, activity in the male brain tends to be limited to the hippocampus while females also use the cerebral cortex (a part of the brain associated with its higher functions).⁹⁵ This could possibly be related to consistent experimental results indicating that males and females have different modes of navigating: males tend to use fixed coordinates, such as north and south, while females tend to rely upon landmarks.⁹⁶

iv. The Amygdala: The amygdala is another area of the brain that is rich in testosterone receptors, making it a good candidate for studies on possible sex-based differences.⁹⁷ Hines reports evidence that the amygdala is larger in males than in females.⁹⁸ If the amygdala is damaged, empathizing skills will be lost or diminished. It plays a role in attaching emotional significance to stimuli and in judging the emotions of others. fMRI scans show distinct modes of reacting to photographs

⁹⁴ Kimura, SC, 131-132.

⁹⁵ Leonard Sax, *Why Gender Matters: What Parents and Teachers Need to Know about the Emerging Science of Sex Differences* (New York: Doubleday, 2005), 86.

⁹⁶ Kimura, SC, 47-48.

⁹⁷ Kimura describes the amygdala as follows: "Part of the limbic system of the brain that plays an important role in fear and aggression, and that apparently mediates rough-and-tumble play." SC, 201. See also, Baron-Cohen, ED, 109-110. He notes that in rats, if the female is injected with testosterone soon after birth, she will display male-typical rough-and-tumble play. If testosterone is cut off from an adult male rat, part of his amygdala will shrink to female-typical size. If the female is injected with testosterone, the same part of her amygdala will swell to male-typical size.

⁹⁸ Hines, BG, 198. Sex-difference researcher Michael Gurian speculates that the larger amygdala in males is associated with greater aggression in males. See *What Could He Be Thinking*, 82.

containing emotional content in males and females.⁹⁹ When watching films with negative emotional content, the right side of males' amygdala was active while the left side of females' active. Males and females also show distinct patterns in the amygdala when reacting to unpleasant odors.¹⁰⁰ In adolescents, when confronting negative emotions, male brain response remains in the amygdala while female adolescents move the processing of the negative emotion to the cerebral cortex.¹⁰¹ Baron-Cohen makes the point that the amygdala is connected with the pre-frontal cortex, specifically, the orbito- and medial-frontal areas. These areas are associated with discerning what another person is thinking or intending. The amygdala is also connected with the superior temporal sulcus (STS). The STS has been associated with determining what another person is thinking when they are looking at you – a skill in which females surpass males.¹⁰² Thus Baron-Cohen will go on to make the argument that distinction in the male and female amygdala and related parts of the brain are possibly related to women's superior empathizing.

v. *The Corpus Callosum/Interconnectivity*: The corpus callosum is another area of much research and significant disagreement. It is “the largest bundle of fibers connecting the two cerebral hemispheres.”¹⁰³ Early studies seemed to indicate that the female corpus callosum is larger than that of the male. Some subsequent studies claimed the opposite.¹⁰⁴ Even today, some claim that the female corpus callosum is 25 percent larger.¹⁰⁵ While there is an array of opinions on the topic, there appears to be relative agreement regarding the rear fifth of the corpus callosum, called the *splenium*; research has shown that women have more fibers connecting the two sides of the brain in the splenium.¹⁰⁶ It is also interesting to note that, according to some researchers, sex-based differences in the corpus callosum also vary with age. This

⁹⁹ Baron-Cohen, ED, 110.

¹⁰⁰ Hines, BG, 198.

¹⁰¹ Sax, *Why Gender Matters*, 29. The amygdala, with its associations with fear and anger, is in sharp contrast to the cerebral cortex, which is generally associated with language and reason. Lack of connection with the cerebral cortex could when confronting negative emotions could account for some aspects of male aggression and lack of impulse control.

¹⁰² Baron-Cohen, ED, 110.

¹⁰³ Kimura, SC, 202.

¹⁰⁴ See Hines, BG, 191-196, Bear et al., 565, for a summary of the various findings and controversies.

¹⁰⁵ Gurian, *What Could He Be Thinking*, 12.

¹⁰⁶ See Kimura, SC, 132, Hines, BG, 192, Baron-Cohen, ED, 111. Bear et al, 565.

could lead to a variability in the data that is at the source of the controversy regarding the existence of sex based differences in corpus callosum.¹⁰⁷

Another smaller batch of connecting tissue, called the anterior commissure, appears to be less controversial in its size advantage for women. While smaller than the corpus callosum, it also links the two hemispheres of the brain. Interestingly, homosexual males were found to have a larger anterior commissure than their heterosexual counterparts; when adjusted for overall difference in size the anterior commissure of homosexual males was consistent with that of females.¹⁰⁸

To corpus callosum and anterior commissure, is added the massa intermedia, which connects the two sides of the thalamus; it is more often absent in males than in females.¹⁰⁹ This further “connective” advantage for females, in conjunction with the corpus callosum and anterior commissure, brings to the forefront two questions regarding the organization and functioning of the human brain: interconnectivity and lateralization. It appears that the two sides of the female brain are better connected than are the two hemispheres of the male brain, leading to some mode of better communication between the two sides of the brain in females. Some studies have shown that women with a larger splenium perform better on verbal fluency tests than women with a smaller splenium.¹¹⁰ Baron-Cohen suggests that greater interconnectivity would facilitate greater empathizing ability, presumably by allowing greater connection of various parts of the brain – such as those that connect emotive centers of the brain with verbal and reasoning centers of the brain.¹¹¹ Kimura notes that the most straightforward interpretation of greater interconnectivity of hemispheres in females is that such greater connection would lead to more bi-lateralization of brain function in females. Put otherwise, greater interconnectivity could lead to a situation in which tasks would be shared by and/or involve more parts of the brain in those having greater connections between different parts of the brain.¹¹²

It is worth noting that Michael Gurian’s research has led him to conclude that greater inter-hemispheric connectivity is only one aspect of greater

¹⁰⁷ Patricia Cowell and Kenneth Hugdahl, “Individual Differences in Neurobehavioral Measures of Laterality and Interhemispheric Function as Measured by Dichotic Listening,” *Developmental Neuropsychology*, 18(1) (2000): 97.

¹⁰⁸ Kimura, SC, 133-134.

¹⁰⁹ Kimura, SC, 133.

¹¹⁰ See Baron-Cohen, ED, 111.

¹¹¹ Baron-Cohen, ED, 111. Michael Gurian holds that the greater size of the corpus callosum in females is in part responsible for females greater verbal and emotional ability. According to Gurian, the larger corpus callosum allows women to connect words, thoughts, and feelings more readily. See, *What Could He Be Thinking*, 11.

¹¹² Kimura, SC, 134.

interconnectivity in the female brain. Gurian claims that the female brain tends to have more neural pathways connecting the limbic system and the verbal centers of the brain.¹¹³ To this he adds that the cerebellum, verbal centers, and tasking centers of the brain all have more robust connections in the female brain leading to a greater integration of emotion, and verbal reasoning. As a result, he also claims that females will be more adept at multi-tasking and much more able to process emotional content in the sense of understanding it and being able to verbalize its significance.¹¹⁴ The female brain also, on average, has 15% more blood flow, indicating greater general activity.¹¹⁵ Interestingly, in a study of the male and female brain “at rest,” the female brain was found to be more active in 17 of 36 areas.¹¹⁶ According to Gurian, while at rest, most of the male brain activity resides in the primitive brain stem.¹¹⁷ These findings all seem to confirm the notion of a more active and interconnected female brain.

vi. *Lateralization*: It is not exactly clear to what extent inter-hemispheric connections lead to greater bi-lateralization (i.e., to less focus in one precise area or side of the brain of a specific function performed by the brain) but it does seem relatively clear that the male brain exhibits greater lateralization than does the female brain. Greater male lateralization is a point generally confirmed by both Hines and Kimura.¹¹⁸ Moir and Jessel note that the initial hints regarding distinctions in functional lateralization were discovered by examining the distinct effects that localized brain injuries have on men and women. In studying men with brain damage to the same part of the right hemisphere of the brain, researchers found that men had much diminished spatial ability, while women’s spatial ability was relatively unaltered.¹¹⁹ Similarly, damage to the left hemisphere resulted in men with language abilities that were much more impeded than those of women with brain damage to the exact same regions. This led researchers to conclude that the male brain tends to perform both verbal and spatial skills in concentrated centers while the female brain spreads these activities in more cortical areas.¹²⁰ Kimura notes the same studies that have lead many to conclude that the female brain performs in a more bi-lateral

¹¹³ Gurian, *What Could He Be Thinking*, 58.

¹¹⁴ Gurian, *What Could He Be Thinking*, 82.

¹¹⁵ Sax, *Why Gender Matters*, 31.

¹¹⁶ Hines, BG, 198.

¹¹⁷ Gurian, *What Could He Be Thinking*, 15.

¹¹⁸ Hines, BG, 202. Kimura, SC, 140.

¹¹⁹ Jessel and Moir, *Brain Sex*, 42.

¹²⁰ Jessel and Moir, *Brain Sex*, 42-43.

fashion, but also offers that an alternative explanation is that language and spatial skills are organized differently within the same hemisphere.¹²¹

Kimura has performed interesting studies noting the extent to which the right side of the male brain develops earlier and slightly more than that of females. Hines also notes that right side of the male brain in utero develops more quickly than the left.¹²² Baron-Cohen references research that speculates that pre-natal androgens cause the right side of males to develop more quickly than the left. Thus, males will be more likely to have a right foot larger than a left foot and/or the right testis larger than the left. Females, by contrast, will tend to have a larger left foot or left breast. He adds that it seems to be almost universally accepted that the right hemisphere of the brain is more associated with spatial abilities and the left hemisphere with linguistic abilities.¹²³ Perhaps it is not surprising then that when Kimura tested those who showed more right-side development (this was tested either by measuring the relative size of the testes or the breasts or, less intrusively, by measuring the development of the right and left fingerprints) whether male or female, performed better on tasks on which males typically performed better. Those with greater left-side development performed better on cognitive tasks at which females typically excel.¹²⁴

Baron-Cohen observes another interesting fact regarding the female brain, lateralization, and language skills. In most adults, the left side of the brain is dominant for language. It appears, however, that this lateralization is something that develops over time; it does so, however, more quickly in females. As early as six months old, baby girls are beginning to show more left side dominance, manifested experimentally by greater electrical activity when listening to speech.¹²⁵ Since this lateralization is the mark of the mature brain, Baron-Cohen speculates that this difference in developmental patterns between males and females could be in part responsible for superior female linguistic (and empathizing) abilities.

Early female left-side dominance for linguistic abilities does not negate the earlier point made about overall greater lateralization and specialization for males regarding linguistic abilities. The evidence for greater localization of linguistic abilities in males is significant: the divergent effects of brain damage in males and females is one piece of evidence. Experiments were also performed in which verbal tasks are presented separately to the right ear and left ear. There is greater connectivity between an ear and the contralateral side of the brain – the right ear is

¹²¹ See Kimura, SC, 145-160.

¹²² Hines, BG, 194.

¹²³ Baron-Cohen, ED, 105-107.

¹²⁴ Kimura, SC, 163-177, Baron-Cohen, ED, 106-107

¹²⁵ Baron-Cohen, ED, 104.

more strongly connected to the left-side of the brain. Males tend to be more right-ear dominant for verbal tasks, indicating that their language ability is more localized to the left side.¹²⁶

Other experiments further confirmed this: Perhaps the most interesting is one where experimenters were able to anesthetize only half of the brain. In females, verbal fluency is impaired when either side of the brain is put to sleep. In males, impairment resulted only when the left side of the brain was anesthetized. Here again, it appears that females are devoting more parts of their brain to verbal functions.¹²⁷ Some speculate that areas of the right hemisphere that males dedicate to spatial ability are dedicated to verbal ability in females.¹²⁸

The planum parietale, which contributes to control of speech and, at least in men, to manual movement, more often shows right-side asymmetry in males.¹²⁹ The planum temporale, which is supposed to have important speech perception functions on the left side is also generally left-side asymmetric; this asymmetry, however, is thought to be less in females.¹³⁰ It is more densely packed in females.¹³¹

Finally, while there is certainly more that could be said about lateralization, it has been observed that males process facial emotions using the right side of their brain, while females use the left side.¹³² Observations such as this led Gurian to the conclusion that females tend towards verbal processing of stimuli (left-side dominant processing) while males tend towards to abstract/spatial processing of stimuli (right-side dominant processing).¹³³

There is little doubt that experimentation on the distinctions between the human male and female brains will continue to multiply. As noted above, the field is a controversial one and still, more or less in its infancy. Some current research has begun to explain earlier contradictions in terms of lack of attention to other variables at work affecting the same areas of the brain as do factors which can be attributed to sex.¹³⁴ As more work continues to be done, and, hopefully, as political factors that color the debate subside somewhat, perhaps more clarity will be gained.

¹²⁶ Baron-Cohen, ED, 104-105.

¹²⁷ Baron-Cohen, ED, 105-106.

¹²⁸ Baron-Cohen, ED, 105.

¹²⁹ Kimura, SC, 136.

¹³⁰ Kimura, SC, 136, 205.

¹³¹ Hines, BG, 197.

¹³² Baron-Cohen, ED, 107.

¹³³ This is a central theme of Gurian's, *What Could He Be Thinking*.

¹³⁴ See Cowell and Hugdahl, "Individual Differences in Neurobehavioral Measures of Laterality and Interhemispheric Function as Measured by Dichotic Listening." They note that certain aspects of sex-based differences in lateralization are also affected by age, learning disabilities, and whether the subjects are right- or left-handed. Failing to account for the

IV. THE SENSES

Regardless of one's epistemological disposition, it is difficult to deny the importance of the senses in the psychic life of the human person. There are significant differences in between males and females regarding each of the senses. No doubt, these differences are related to differences in the brain, which processes sensation. Once again, detailed analysis is beyond the scope of this work. Thus, only a brief summary of significant differences will be given here, beginning with the sense of touch.¹³⁵

1. *Touch*

Leonard Sax reports that 20 years of systematic studies on men and women have revealed fundamental differences in the ways in which they experience pain, with the general conclusion being that women are simply more sensitive to pain. This is especially the case as regards stress-based analgesic effects: in most male mammals a stressful situation will lead to a diminished sensitivity to pain. Thus, the stressed male can presumably undergo greater levels of pain. The situation is not so for females: their sensitivity to pain does not decrease in stressful situations; in fact, in some situations females become more sensitive to pain.¹³⁶

There is one notable exception to this rule: pregnancy. In this case, women do experience a natural stress-based analgesic effect. "For example, a mild electrical shock that she might find very painful when she is not pregnant may be barely perceptible when she is in her third trimester."¹³⁷ Thus nature appears to have given women some help for dealing with the discomfort of pregnancy and child birth. Males, however, appear to experience this analgesic effect more universally in the face of stressful situations. This distinction shall come to the forefront when discussing in more detail behavioral differences regarding aggression and risk taking.

2. *Sight*

Sax recounts recent studies in which very significant differences were found in the thickness of the retina of the human male and female. It appears that the difference is due to large differences in a layer of cells in the retina called ganglion cells. There are two kinds of ganglion, one being significantly larger - the

influence of these variables can lead to inconsistencies in results that, in turn, can cause some to conclude that sex based differences do not exist.

¹³⁵ There does appear to be evidence that the female sense of taste is generally more sensitive than that of males.

¹³⁶ Sax, *Why Gender Matters*, 67.

¹³⁷ Sax, *Why Gender Matters*, 67.

magnocellular or M cell – and the other being relatively small – the parvocellular or P-cell. M cells are wired primarily to the rods in the retina, photoreceptors which are sensitive to black-and-white. M cells are motion detectors and, as Sax puts it, are wired to answer the questions “Where is it now and where is it going?” P cells, however, are wired primarily to the cones, photoreceptors sensitive to color. P cells are concerned with color and texture and contribute more to answering the question “What is it?”¹³⁸

The male retina contains significantly more M cells than does the female retina, while the female contains many more P cells than does the male’s – hence the difference in the retinal thickness. This is not a small difference: in fact, the distributions do not overlap; that is, *all* men have more M cells than *all* females.¹³⁹ The differences do not end here, however:

The P cells send information via their own special division of the thalamus to a particular region of the cerebral cortex that appears to be specialized for analysis of texture and color. The M cells send their information via a separate pathway to a different region of the cerebral cortex, a region that is specialized for analysis of spatial relationships and object motion.... *Every step in each pathway, from the retina to the cerebral cortex, is different in females and males.*¹⁴⁰

Thus, according to this research, not only is the retina different in males in females, but so also is every step of the system that the brain employs to process the visual information gathered by it.

It is interesting to consider what may follow from these distinctions. Baron-Cohen recounts two experiments in which he participated. In the first, one-year-old babies were filmed to see how many times they would look at their mother’s face and to see if they would prefer to watch a film of a face or one of a car. The baby girls were found to look significantly more at their mother’s face and to prefer the film of the face over that of the car. Boys preferred the film of the car. In another study one-day-old infants were filmed in order to determine if they preferred the image of a human face or a mobile constructed from the jumbled elements of that same face image. One-day old infant girls preferred the face, while the boys displayed greater interest in the mobile.¹⁴¹ Baron-Cohen sees this as an early indication of greater

¹³⁸ See Sax, *Why Gender Matters*, 18-22.

¹³⁹ Sax, *Why Gender Matters*, 21.

¹⁴⁰ Sax, *Why Gender Matters*, 20. (Italics in original.)

¹⁴¹ Baron-Cohen, ED, 54-56.

social interest on the part of females.¹⁴² Sax sees at least part of the explanation for these phenomena in the distinct way that the eye perceives in males and females.

The pictures that boys and girls spontaneously draw are a further indication of the difference in the sense of sight in males and females. Sax summarizes these differences by saying that girls draw nouns and boys draw verbs. "Girls typically draw pictures of people (or pets or flowers or trees), arranged more or less symmetrically, facing the viewer. Girls usually use ten or more colors in their pictures."¹⁴³ He goes on to add that among the many colors that they use, girls prefer "warm" colors, such as red and green. By contrast, "Boys typically draw *action*: a rocket hitting its target, an alien about to eat somebody, a car about to hit another car. Boys typically use at most six colors and they prefer... 'cold' colors such as blue, gray, silver, and black."¹⁴⁴ In addition the perspective of the boys' picture will be that of a third-person observer. In the girls' pictures, the viewer is usually invited to be part of the picture. In the boys, they are simply a witness to the action. While, clearly, Baron-Cohen would find significant evidence here for his thesis that women are empathizers while males are systemizers, Sax makes clear that, in assessing these differences, we must consider the differences in how the male and female eye works.¹⁴⁵

3. Hearing

The difference in hearing is, in a way, simpler than that that between sight, or even, touch. It is, nevertheless, significant. Sax notes in which the effects of music therapy for infants was tested with premature infants. An interesting and unexpected result was found. The music therapy resulted in earlier discharge from the hospital, but much more so for female children. One possible explanation for this put forward by Sax is the fact that females simply hear better than do males. In the range from 1,000 to 4,000 Hz, girls' hearing was found to be substantially more sensitive than boys. This is the range of sound that is critical for understanding human speech.¹⁴⁶ As such, girls will be more sensitive to human speech as they can simply hear it more easily.¹⁴⁷

¹⁴² He also sees this as consistent with later patters exhibited by males and females in which females engage in more consistent social smiling and maintain eye-contact longer than males. Baron-Cohen, ED, 56.

¹⁴³ Sax, *Why Gender Matters*, 24.

¹⁴⁴ Sax, *Why Gender Matters*, 24.

¹⁴⁵ Sax, *Why Gender Matters*, 23-24.

¹⁴⁶ Sax, *Why Gender Matters*, 16-17.

¹⁴⁷ Sax makes interesting observations that this is possibly why a teenage girl may think that her father or male teacher is yelling at her while the seemingly culpable male will not consider himself to have been yelling. With her more sensitive sense of hearing, the girl experiences her father's voice as raised.

4. Smell

A curious study reported by Hines found that amygdala in men and women had distinct modes of reacting to unpleasant odors, with the male amygdala responding with greater right-side lateralization - i.e. male response was more isolated to the right side of the amygdala.¹⁴⁸

David Geary points out an interesting phenomenon regarding the female sense of smell and mate selection. He cites research that indicates a woman's sense of smell helps attract her to males with complementary immune systems that will benefit offspring - it appears that an offspring's immune system will be stronger if the man and woman have immune systems that are dissimilar to each other. These are men who have a dissimilar major histocompatibility complex (MHC).¹⁴⁹ Females tend to prefer the smell of men with such immune systems. Sensitivity to the scent of a male with a complementarily dissimilar immune system increases with estrogen levels. Interestingly, researchers Claus Wedekind, Thomas Seebeck, Florence Bettens and Alexander Paepke found that a woman's preference for the odor of an MHC-dissimilar male "was reversed when the women rating the odors were taking oral contraceptives."¹⁵⁰ Wedekind et al. offer a possible explanation for the effect oral contraceptives on a woman's perception of the scent of MHC-similar and dissimilar men:

The contraceptive pill seems to have a strong influence on odor preference. This indicates that steroids which are naturally released during pregnancy could change body odor preferences, leading to a preference for odors which are similar to those of relatives. This preference is probably not related to mate choice but may be comparable, to a certain degree, to the observation that female mice prefer MHC-similar individuals for communal nesting. Therefore, the contraceptive pill seems to interfere with natural mate choice. If the pill changes preferences for familiar as well as unfamiliar body odors then starting with the pill could have an influence on the stability of an already existing pair bond by influencing odor preference.¹⁵¹

Oral contraceptives create a hormonal environment similar to pregnancy; the theory is, that, in a state similar to pregnancy women are more inclined to male blood

¹⁴⁸ Hines, BG, 202.

¹⁴⁹ Geary, *Male, Female*, 133 & 19-20.

¹⁵⁰ Claus Wedekind, Thomas Seebeck, Florence Bettens and Alexander J. Paepke, "MHC-Dependent Mate Preferences in Humans," *Proceedings: Biological Sciences*, Vol. 260, No. 1359 (Jun. 22, 1995): 245. See also Geary, *Male, Female*, 133-134.

¹⁵¹ Wedekind et al. "MHC-Dependent Mate Preferences in Humans," p. 247. When Wedekind et al. speak of relatives they must be referring to blood or genetic relatives, for it such relatives who would be MHC similar.

relatives who presumably typically would assist them amidst the vulnerability of pregnancy. Further research has found that “MHC-dissimilar couples were able to conceive more quickly (in 2 months vs. 5 months) and tended to have fewer spontaneous abortions than MHC-similar couples.”¹⁵²

Summarizing the distinctions between olfaction in men and women researchers Gerard Brand and Jean-Louis Millot write: “To summarize, sex differences [in olfaction] have been shown in sensitivity-detection and recognition-identification tasks, and the superiority of women is more evident in these instances when the odors are related to a human origin.”¹⁵³ Women show an overall greater sensitivity to smell. This advantage is intensified in situations such as that mentioned above, situations in which there are social consequences.¹⁵⁴ Other examples of this include superior ability of female children to identify playmates and siblings by odor.¹⁵⁵ Some have claimed that distinct olfactory abilities can be detected as early as 13 days old.¹⁵⁶

5. Taste

Research has shown that woman *generally* have lower taste thresholds. For instance, Japanese researchers, Kumi Hirokawa, Kazuko Yamazawa, and Hiroyuki Shimizu, stated that “multiple regression analyses showed that women tended to have a lower detection threshold for caffeine than men did.”¹⁵⁷ Hirokawa et al note that their finding are consistent with earlier research: “According to Bartoshuk et al., women have more fungiform papillae and more taste buds than men do, which suggests that this biological difference may have an effect on thresholds.”¹⁵⁸ Irish

¹⁵² Geary, *Male, Female*, 134.

¹⁵³ Gérard Brand, Jean-Louis Millot, “Sex differences in human olfaction: Between evidence and enigma.” *The Quarterly Journal of Experimental Psychology*, 54B (3) (2001): 266.

¹⁵⁴ See Brand and Millot, “Sex differences in human olfaction,” 260-263.

¹⁵⁵ Brand and Millot, “Sex differences in human olfaction,” 263.

¹⁵⁶ Brand and Millot, “Sex differences in human olfaction,” 262.

¹⁵⁷ Kumi Hirokawa, Kazuko Yamazawa, and Hiroyuki Shimizu, “An Examination of Sex and Masculinity/Femininity as Related to the Taste Sensitivity of Japanese Students,” *Sex Roles*, Vol. 55, No. 5-6 (September 2006): 429.

¹⁵⁸ Hirokawa et al., “An Examination of Sex and Masculinity/Femininity as Related to the Taste Sensitivity of Japanese Students,” 432. See also L. M., Bartoshuk, V. B. Duffy, and Inglis J. Miller, “PTC/PROP Tasting: Anatomy, Psychophysics, and Sex Effects,” *Physiology and Behavior*, Vol. 56, No. 6 (December 1994): 1165-1171. Generally greater female gustatory sensitivity is also consistent findings of a Japanese taste disorder clinic; researchers found that women are twice as likely as men to report mild taste disorders. Norisha Hamada, Sohei Endo, and Hiroshi Tomita, “Characteristics of 2278 Patients Visiting the Nihon University

researchers, O. McDaid, B. Stewart-Knox, H. Parr and E. Simpson, reported differences in the way in which zinc affects taste acuity in males and females. They conclude that: “zinc is more important for taste acuity in males than females and indicate the importance of taking sex differences into account when studying taste acuity.”¹⁵⁹ My purpose is not to catalogue sex-based differences in taste, but rather to make the point that, as with the other senses, there are sex-based differences in the sense of taste.

V. DISTINCTIONS IN APTITUDE AND BEHAVIOR

I have made the point several times in connection with the brain that a distinction in behavior implies some mode of distinction in the brain. What is supposed in this proposition is that the reader will readily grant that such a distinction in behavior exists. It is, therefore, appropriate to make a brief survey of empirically verifiable, sex-based distinctions in human behavior and cognitive abilities. First, I will give a brief summary of reliable differences in physical and cognitive abilities. The distinct manner in which male and female abilities tend to vary will also be noted. Next, I survey sex-based distinction in behavior. Generally, these behaviors can be considered as distinct modes of relating to various populations. First, I consider distinct styles of play. Next, male to male relationships will be considered primarily in terms of aggression, dominance, and risk taking. Male to female and female to male relations are considered as distinct modes of behavior surrounding sexuality. Insights into distinct behavioral and relational styles can be garnered from surveying early/infant behavior and play styles. Next, I discuss distinct communication and learning styles. Finally, I offer a brief summary of Cambridge psychiatrist, Simon Baron-Cohen’s, attempt to generalize male and female modes of behavior as systematizing and empathizing. This is followed by a brief discussion of cataloger of sex differences, Michael Gurian’s, attempt to summarize sex differences.

1. Physical Abilities

Distinct developmental patterns, especially at puberty, lead to significant distinctions in some physical abilities. “The longer legs of men, relative to overall body height, allow for faster running and running for longer distances than women,

Hospital Taste Clinic over a 10-Year Period with Special Reference to Age and Sex Distribution,” *Acta Otolaryngo*, June 2002 Supplement 546, Vol. 122: 7-15.

¹⁵⁹ O. McDaid, B. Stewart-Knox, H. Parr and E. Simpson, “Dietary zinc intake and sex differences in taste acuity in healthy young adults,” *Journal of Nutrition and Human Dietetics*, Vol. 20, Issue 2 (April 2007): 103

on average.”¹⁶⁰ Boys’ initial advantages in grip-strength, jumping distances, and running speeds are augmented greatly at puberty. An even larger difference exists in throwing velocity and distance. By age 17, only the very best girls can throw as fast and far as the very worst boys. Though less pronounced than velocity and distance, males also have a significant advantage in their ability to throw accurately, and track and intercept objects thrown at them.¹⁶¹ Contributing to these differences are distinctions in the muscular/skeletal systems of males and females, such as greater arm and upper-body strength in males, as well as cognitive abilities.¹⁶² Geary adds: “[T]hese sex differences are consistent with the view that the evolution of male-male competition in humans was influenced by the use of projectiles (e.g. spears) and blunt force (e.g. clubs) weapons.”¹⁶³ Women have an advantage in fine motor skills and flexibility.¹⁶⁴

2. Cognitive Abilities

As with almost every other area concerning sex-based differences of human beings, distinctions in cognitive ability are likewise disputed and controversial.¹⁶⁵ Kimura, however, presents a reasonable and conservative argument for several consistent sex-based cognitive differences:

[L]arge reliable sex differences do exist. Favoring males these are: performance on certain spatial tasks (particularly mental rotation), throwing accuracy, and mathematical reasoning tasks; favoring females: verbal memory, and recall of object locations presented in an array. These differences approach approximately a full standard deviation (or an effect size of one) on tests like spatial (mental) rotation, and throwing accuracy; and are well over half a standard deviation on verbal memory tests and object location memory tests. Math reasoning tests show slightly smaller average sex differences, but men are strongly over-represented at the higher end of advanced math aptitude tests.¹⁶⁶

¹⁶⁰ Geary, *Male, Female*, 213.

¹⁶¹ Geary, *Male, Female*, 213-214.

¹⁶² Geary, *Male, Female*, 213-215. Male advantages in certain spatial cognitive abilities contribute to discrepancies in targeting see Kimura, SC, 31-36.

¹⁶³ Geary, *Male, Female*, 214.

¹⁶⁴ Kimura, SC, 36-39. Geary, *Male, Female*, 213.

¹⁶⁵ See, for example, Kimura, *Sex and Cognition*, and, opposing it, Lesley Rogers, *Sexing the Brain* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2001). For an interesting “thesis/antithesis” exchange in the same journal see: Tone Bleie, “Evolution, Brains, and the Predicament of Sex in Human Cognition,” *Sexualities, Evolution, & Gender*, Vol. 5, No. 3 (December 2003): 149-189, and Doreen Kimura, “Human Sex Differences in Cognition, Fact, Not Predicament,” *Sexualities, Evolution, & Gender*, Vol. 6, No. 1 (April 2004): 45-53.

¹⁶⁶ Kimura, “Human Sex Differences in Cognition, Fact, Not Predicament,” 46-47.

Put generally, males, on average, score higher on aptitude tests regarding spatial abilities, targeting, and math reasoning, while females, on average perform better on certain verbal tests and object location tests. All of these tests involve overlapping distributions of scores. This means that, for instance, there are some males who perform better on verbal memory tests than some females and some females who throw more accurately than some males.

While it is, perhaps, justified to state that men have statistical advantages regarding spatial ability, one must be precise, for, as Kimura notes, capacity regarding object locations is also a spatial ability where females outperform males. Interestingly, male and female spatial abilities appear to be related to diverse navigating styles.

The evidence so far indicates that the female advantage on object-location memory is restricted to situations where object and locus are processed together. Where location *per se* is required, men tend to outperform women.¹⁶⁷

When discussing distinctions in the hippocampus, it was noted that males tend to navigate using fixed directions, while females use landmarks. This finding is consistent with distinctions in the mode of male and female spatial abilities.

Tests with rats show that in those species where males exhibit greater roaming distance – as do human males¹⁶⁸ – male rats will also display a tendency to navigate based upon fixed directions rather than the female style of navigation, which relies upon landmarks. Navigation style can be altered by manipulating perinatal hormone levels causing males to navigate according to the female mode or vice-versa.¹⁶⁹

Interestingly, Kimura has found that certain cognitive skills can also be linked to hormone levels in humans. She states that, in both men and women, spatial ability can be systematically related to testosterone levels. Men with testosterone levels in the normal to low range will consistently score higher on tests judging mathematical and spatial ability than males with higher levels of testosterone. While males do not have anything in their hormonal life that approaches the rhythm experienced by women, there is a certain regularity in the ebb and flow of testosterone levels: levels are higher in the autumn than the spring, and higher in the morning than in the evening. Interestingly, spatial ability in men is

¹⁶⁷ Kimura, "Human Sex Differences in Cognition, Fact, Not Predicament," 48.

¹⁶⁸ Kimura, "Human Sex Differences in Cognition, Fact, Not Predicament," 46. "[N]early all writers agree that the size of territory roamed by men has been larger than that of women, for hundreds of thousands of years, and this is still the case in modern times."

¹⁶⁹ Kimura, "Human Sex Differences in Cognition, Fact, Not Predicament," 48.

better in the spring than the autumn and better in the evening than in the morning. This is consistent with the finding that it is actually the low/average ranges of testosterone that yield optimal spatial and mathematical ability.¹⁷⁰ Findings in women are consistent with those in men: women with higher testosterone - those coming nearer to the low/average levels in males - perform better on spatial tests than women with low testosterone.¹⁷¹

In women, some cognitive abilities have been found to fluctuate with the woman's menstrual cycle: when estrogen levels are highest, women tend to score better at tasks that generally favor women - for example, verbal fluency and fine motor skills.¹⁷² This, however, is the time at which they do worst at tasks favoring men, such as spatial ability tasks. Women do their best at these tasks during their low-estrogen phase.¹⁷³

A point made above also merits mention here. When speaking of lateralization, I noted that prenatal testosterone levels affect the rate of right versus left hemisphere development and possibly their organization in the human brain. Greater right-side development, as indicated by a larger right testis or breast, correlated with stronger male-typical cognitive abilities, while greater left-side development correlated with stronger female-typical abilities.¹⁷⁴

A final word on cognitive ability regards their variability. Analysis of distinctions in cognitive abilities based upon sex is done by comparison of distributions of male scores versus female scores on a given test. In addition to distinctions in the average scores, male scores tend to exhibit more variability than female scores. Thus, there tend to be more males at the extremes of the distribution. Put plainly, there tends to be more who perform at the extremes of a given test: either extremely well, or extremely poorly.¹⁷⁵

3. *Early Behavior and Play Styles*

i. *General differences:* In the literature on sexual difference in child development, an omnipresent name is that of Eleanor Maccoby. She provides a helpful summary of some of the differences in the play in groups or dyads of young boys or girls. She states: "There is now considerable evidence that the groups of dyads formed by girls, as compared with boys, differ with respect to the agendas they

¹⁷⁰ Kimura, SC, 105-122

¹⁷¹ Kimura, SC, 122.

¹⁷² Kimura, SC, 117.

¹⁷³ Kimura, SC, 122.

¹⁷⁴ Kimura, SC, 163-177. Baron-Cohen, 106-107

¹⁷⁵ Pinker, TBS, 344.

enact, and in their prevailing 'styles'.¹⁷⁶ She proceeds to summarize these differences, which, in turn, are summarized here:

- Regarding fantasy play, stories enacted and invented, and books and entertainment chosen, boys tend to prefer themes that “involve danger, conflict, destruction, heroic action, and trials of physical strength. Girls’ fantasy and play themes tend to be oriented around domestic or romantic scripts, portraying characters who are involved in social relationships and depicting maintenance or restoration of order and safety.”¹⁷⁷
- Regarding interactions between boys versus those between girls, in boys one finds more “rough-and-tumble play, competition, conflict, ego displays, risk-taking, and striving for dominance. Girls, by contrast, are more responsive to the inputs of their interactive partners, more likely to use suggestions rather than imperative demands, and more likely to construct collaborative scripts in which the actions of play characters are reciprocal.”¹⁷⁸
- Regarding friendships, Maccoby notes that boys tend to know less about their friends while girls’ friendships tend to be more intimate in that they share with each other more of what is happening in their lives. Perhaps not surprisingly, the demise of a friendship is more emotionally intense for girls.¹⁷⁹

Maccoby also notes a phenomenon that human children share with other primates, such as monkeys and apes, namely, the tendency of children to separate into same-sex groups. She notes that cross-sex avoidance and same-sex preference begin by the third year and continue throughout middle childhood.¹⁸⁰ It appears that this tendency is firmly established in both boys and girls by the third year¹⁸¹ and that this tendency happens spontaneously, without encouragement of adults.¹⁸² Maccoby recounts an interesting experiment in which a preschool child is asked to

¹⁷⁶ Eleanor E. Maccoby, “Perspectives on gender development,” *International Journal of Behavioral Development*, 24 (4) (2000): 402.

¹⁷⁷ Maccoby, “Perspectives on gender development,” 402. See also Diane N. Ruble, Carol Lynn Martin, & Sheri A. Berenbaum, “Gender Development,” in ed. William Damon, & Richard M. Lerner, , *Handbook of Child Psychology* (Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, 2002), 869.

¹⁷⁸ Maccoby, “Perspectives on gender development,” 402.

¹⁷⁹ Maccoby, “Perspectives on gender development,” 403.

¹⁸⁰ Maccoby, “Perspectives on gender development,” 402-403.

¹⁸¹ Eleanor E. Maccoby, *The Two Sexes: Growing Up Apart Coming Together* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1998), 19-31. [Hereafter referred to as TS.]

¹⁸² See Maccoby, TS, 19-21.

follow a trail of carpet. At the other end of the carpet-road, there quietly awaits a child of either the same sex or of the opposite sex. Researchers noted that children would approach closely and face that awaiting child if that child was of the same sex. When approaching children of opposite sex, the preschoolers would stop at a farther distance and turn away, even if they already knew the awaiting child.¹⁸³ While girls initiate same-sex segregation a little earlier than boys, somewhere in the third year, by the fifth year, it appears to be boys who most insistently enforce the segregation.¹⁸⁴ This practice will peak in middle childhood.¹⁸⁵ When one looks to the diverse ways in which groups of boys versus groups of girls function perhaps it is not surprising why the above-mentioned segregation occurs.

ii. *Styles of play:* Maccoby analyzes play styles according to roughness, dominance and toughness, and competition. In all of these areas, boys are found to differ from girls. Regarding roughness, boys are much more likely to engage in what is called rough-and-tumble play, such as wrestling or tackling each other, and engaging in play acts of aggression, such as shooting each other with play guns or sword-fighting. While this style of play frequently places them on the threshold of aggression, it is generally something that boys enjoy without becoming directly aggressive. "They seem to be trying out each other's strength and toughness, without letting the situation escalate into serious conflict."¹⁸⁶ Direct aggression, however, is much more frequent among boys than girls over two years old. Boys' aggression is most frequently directed at other boys. This is in part because boys are provoked more easily by other boys – a phenomenon which is likely related to their need to establish themselves in a dominance hierarchy.

Rough-and-tumble play is found almost universally in both industrial and preindustrial societies and always is more common in boys.¹⁸⁷ Psychologist David Geary notes that

The nature of boys' rough-and-tumble play also varies somewhat across cultures. In societies characterized by relatively high levels of adult male-on-male physical aggression, the play fighting of boys tends to be rougher than the play fighting found in societies with relatively less male-on-male physical aggression.¹⁸⁸

¹⁸³ Maccoby, "Perspectives on gender development," 402.

¹⁸⁴ Maccoby, *TS*, 29.

¹⁸⁵ Maccoby, *TS*, 23-27.

¹⁸⁶ Maccoby, *TS*, 34. For general discussion of roughness see pp. 33-37.

¹⁸⁷ Geary, *Male, Female*, 226.

¹⁸⁸ Geary, *Male, Female*, 226.

“Girls, by contrast, were more sociable, and showed more concern of others’ distress.”¹⁸⁹ Girls tend to be more disposed to turn-taking and less interested in testing their strength with other boys or girls.¹⁹⁰ This does not mean that girls do not display aggression. Their aggression appears, however, to have a less direct and more of a relational modality, employing tactics of withdrawal of friendship and social alienation.¹⁹¹

Dominance and toughness is a theme that will accompany the male throughout most of his life-cycle. It begins with preschool boys: “The question of who is tougher than who seems to be much more salient to boys than to girls, and more efforts to establish or maintain dominance may be seen among boys than among girls.”¹⁹² In boys, the establishment of dominance appears to be relatively stable and transitive in the sense that, if boy A ranks above boy B, and boy B above boy C, then boy A will rank above boy C without having to establish this dominance in any way. Not appearing weak is therefore extremely important for boys as toughness will establish his place in the hierarchy. While there are distinctions in leadership among girls, “their rank appears to depend less on toughness and unwillingness to back down when confronted....”¹⁹³ Boys also seem to be more aware of the operative hierarchy and their place in it. Baron-Cohen notes that, in a display of early knowledge of hierarchies, nursery school boys are better at identifying which boy is “in control” as regards getting first choice of toys.¹⁹⁴

As for competition, boys seem to be much more focused on it. Boys generally compete in relatively large, organized groups that facilitate competition.

Girls’ games involved turn-taking 21 percent of the time, while less than 1 percent of the boys’ games had this element. When in their large, same-sex play groups, boys were engaged in direct competition with other boys 50 percent of the time, while for girls in their smaller same-sex groups, direct competition occurred only 1 percent of the time.¹⁹⁵

Within teams, boys are willing to cooperate with each other for the sake of winning the game. Baron-Cohen writes: “Boys are more preoccupied with the activity itself and its competitive aspects.”¹⁹⁶ The task becomes paramount; other boys are judged

¹⁸⁹ Maccoby, TS, 36.

¹⁹⁰ Maccoby, TS, 34.

¹⁹¹ Maccoby, TS, 40. Baron-Cohen, ED, 35.

¹⁹² Maccoby, TS, 38. Also see Baron-Cohen, ED, 36-38.

¹⁹³ Maccoby, TS, 38.

¹⁹⁴ Baron-Cohen, ED, 36-38.

¹⁹⁵ Maccoby, TS, 39.

¹⁹⁶ Baron-Cohen, ED, 44.

vis-à-vis that goal. "Boys' social contacts with each other tend to occur as by-products of their joint activities."¹⁹⁷ Geary notes studies that show that males participate in group-level competitive behavior three times as frequently as girls.¹⁹⁸

It bears some mention that levels of rough-and-tumble play and competitive play appear to have some relation to prenatal androgen levels. This is manifest by studies that show that CAH girls exhibit higher levels of rough-and-tumble play than do girls not exposed to prenatal androgens. Further CAH boys engage in more rough-and-tumble play than do boys with more typical prenatal androgen exposure. Similarly, CAH girls engage in more competitive sports than unaffected girls.¹⁹⁹

Beyond the arenas of roughness, dominance, and competition, boys' and girls' play styles have also been found to differ according to their spatial range, locomotive style, and object-oriented play. A brief summary will be given of each.

The physical range of boys' play is larger than that of girls', even in the absence of parental restriction, which may limit girls more than boys.²⁰⁰ "For 8- to 11-year-olds, the unrestricted play range of boys was found to cover from one and one-half to nearly three times the unrestricted play-range of same-age girls."²⁰¹ Geary relates the wider range of boys' play to their higher incidence of gross locomotor play. This is play such as chasing, climbing, or wrestling.²⁰² Geary states:

[I]t appears that sex differences in gross locomotor activities creates neuromuscular changes that will result in men, relative to women, being better adapted for running and traveling long distances on foot. In addition to any such neuromuscular adaptations, the sex differences in gross locomotor activities result in larger play ranges for boys than for girls. Within these ranges, boys not only engage in these locomotor activities more frequently than girls do but they also explore and manipulate (e.g. build things, such as forts) the environment much more frequently than girls do.²⁰³

¹⁹⁷ Maccoby, TS, 45.

¹⁹⁸ Geary, *Male, Female*, 227.

¹⁹⁹ See, Geary, *Male, Female*, 228. And, Melissa Hines and Francine R. Kaufman, "Androgen and the Development of Sex-typical Behavior: "Rough-and-Tumble Play and Sex of Preferred Playmate in Children with Congenital Adrenal Hyperplasia (CAH)," *Child Development*, 65 (1994): 1042-1053. And, David F. Bjorkland and Anthony D. Pellegrini, *The Origins of Human Nature* (Washington, DC American Psychological Association, 2002), 308-309. [Hereafter referred to as OHN.]

²⁰⁰ Geary, *Male, Female*, 230-231. Bjorkland, OHN, 302-303.

²⁰¹ Geary, *Male, Female*, 231.

²⁰² Geary, *Male, Female*, 230. Bjorkland, OHN, 303.

²⁰³ Geary, *Male, Female*, 230-231

Thus, the range of play and locomotor activities within that range are distinct for boys and girls with boys focusing more on manipulation and exploration of the environment.

As regards object-oriented play, Geary summarizes differences between boys and girls by observing that, generally, boys engage in object-oriented play much more frequently than girls. Girls, however, play more frequently with construction objects such as puzzles, markers, and clay.

It appears that boys more frequently engage in a more restricted category of play with things, in particular, inanimate mechanical objects (such as toy cars), and in construction play that involves building (such as with blocks). Moreover, boys, more than girls, engage in the experimental manipulation of these objects, such as taking them apart and trying to put them back together.²⁰⁴

Both Geary and Bjorkland and Pellegrini note that, once again, it appears that prenatal androgen levels affect object-oriented play; as with rough-and-tumble play, CAH girls exhibit higher levels of male-typical object-oriented play than do unaffected girls.²⁰⁵

iii. *Themes of play*: It has already been noted that boys' fantasy themes center on heroic conquest, movement, and aggression while girls' fantasy tends more towards domestic themes. It is quite well known how adept young boys are at making whatever props are available into guns or swords if play versions of these weapons are not available. Whether alone or in a group, a boy's fantasy play is likely to center on some heroic struggle. In invented stories, the resolution of a conflict will likely involve struggle and destruction, and be achieved by means of the hero's physical size and power. "Boys... did not portray their characters as members of stable social groups, but rather as individual characters linked to each other through their actions."²⁰⁶ This reflects how they conceive of their own group of friends.

"Girl's pretend play is less often solitary, more likely to involve cooperative role-taking."²⁰⁷ The most common themes are domestic, involving family or teacher-child interactions. The roles in girls' pretend play tends to involve reciprocal scripts where each part is relatively well known, such as parent/child. Girls are willing to assume the play-role of father, but the role of mother is preferred and central. With this role come aspects of nurturance and household management: preparing food, entertaining guests, tea parties, and caring for the children. (Maccoby notes that boys

²⁰⁴ Geary, *Male, Female*, 237.

²⁰⁵ Geary, *Male, Female*, 237, Bjorkland, OHN, 310.

²⁰⁶ Maccoby, TS, 43.

²⁰⁷ Maccoby, TS, 41.

almost never play family roles in pretend play.) To these domestic scenes are added the glamour and romance associated with dressing up with gowns, jewelry, and cosmetics. Similarly, girls' invented stories centered on themes of social relationships and their rending and restoration. "'Home' was an anchoring locale, and characters were shown moving away from home and returning home."²⁰⁸

iv. Group dynamics: Sex selection of playmates, style of play, and theme of play are distinct for boys and girls. So also is the nature of the groups that they form: "There is evidence that boys' groups are not only larger but also in some ways stronger, that is, more cohesive, with stronger in-group identification and stronger boundaries, in that they more strongly exclude both girls and adults."²⁰⁹ As noted above in Subsection ii, it is important to boys to appear tough. In his group, a boy must therefore limit himself to activities that are sufficiently tough. Boys tend more quickly to diminish contact with their mothers and to become more responsive to peer boys. Geary highlights the fact that boys appear to take satisfaction in contributing to a coordinated, competitive group that must overcome another such group.²¹⁰ Girls, by contrast, tend to interact more with adults and to be more responsive to them. In their groups, boys will tend more towards rule-breaking, risk-taking activities. Engaging in such activities requires greater group-cohesion and more rigorous exclusion of adults. Thus, though the group is larger, it is more cohesive. As noted above, boys tend to engage social contact based upon shared interest and activity. "[G]irls choose more on the basis of personality compatibilities. Girls more often seem to arrange social occasions simply for the sake of getting together."²¹¹ This leads girls towards smaller groups that do not have the same objective focus as those of boys.

Within groups the communication styles of boys and girls also differ. Boys are more likely to use direct and imperative statements and less likely to back down from their demands. "They are more likely to reject a suggestion made by a partner, and more likely to "grandstand" by talking about their own activities without reference to what a partner is doing."²¹² As with other aspects of boys' behavior, their communication appears to be ordered to helping him establish a certain level of dominance. Thus, in conflicts boys are not likely to negotiate or seek alternate ways to resolve the conflict but rather simply to intransigently hold their position.²¹³

²⁰⁸ Maccoby, TS, 43.

²⁰⁹ Maccoby, "Perspectives on gender development," 403.

²¹⁰ Geary, *Male, Female*, 227.

²¹¹ Maccoby, SD, 45.

²¹² Maccoby, SD, 46.

²¹³ See Maccoby, SD, 47-48.

Even when in middle-childhood, boys' mode of communicating tends to be more egocentric, ignoring others suggestions, speaking over them, rendering commands, and attempting to parade knowledge.²¹⁴

Preschool girls' mode of speech is more cooperative and reciprocal. Exchanges between girls are longer and more focused on a mutual theme. They are more likely to listen to what the other girl is saying and offer a return statement that will extend the discourse and remain relevant to the topic. Agreement with the other is expressed more often and assertion is done interrogatively instead of imperatively: For example, a girl might say "Why don't we...?" instead of "Lets do..." To resolve conflict, girls are more likely to negotiate and use some compromise means of obtaining her objective instead of simply obstinately digging in their heels as do boys. Each sex seeks to achieve his or her objective; they typically employ different verbal means to that end. Girls tend to keep interaction going and discern the needs of the other, even if only to help her achieve her objective.²¹⁵ In later childhood, girls avoid conflict more so than boys. When conflict does arise they display anger more indirectly and seek to soften their positions, clarify the position of the other, and are willing to compromise and negotiate. They are also generally more willing to yield the floor to another girl and acknowledge and/or agree with what that other has said.²¹⁶

It appears that boys and girls also differ in how they attempt to enter groups of their peers. Boys try more to assert themselves and redirect the group activity, heedless of the desires of the group. Presumably, this is the boy trying to establish a high position in the group. Girls tend more towards observing the host group and attempting to fit into the established frame work. Similarly, groups of host boys are more likely to ignore a boy attempting to gain entrance into their group. Girls tend to be more considerate and receptive of a girl attempting to gain entrance to their group. The girl attempting to enter the group is usually better at reading her chance of successful entry to a group.²¹⁷

Discussion of the nature of boys' and girls' groups leads naturally to a brief consideration of friendship and communication between boys and girls. In their

²¹⁴ Maccoby, SD, 50. See also Baron-Cohen, 47-50.

²¹⁵ Maccoby, SD, 48-49.

²¹⁶ Maccoby, SD, 50. Maccoby warns that it is easy to overemphasize the differences in children's modes of speech. She notes that frequently boys and girls use gender neutral discourse: "By no means all of what children say to each other in their segregated playgroups conforms to the gendered patterns described above. In fact, most utterances fall into neutral territory." SD, 51. Her theory is that the source of boys' boasts, dares, and relative verbal abuse of each other is related to the desire to obtain social dominance.

²¹⁷ Baron-Cohen, ED, 42-43. Maccoby, SD, 50.

friendships, girls tend to be more interested in intimate one to one friendships. They take more pleasure in one to one interactions than do boys. They exhibit more eye contact, physical contact (sitting close to each other, entwining arms, combing each other's hair), and are more concerned about the status of their friendships. Friendships among girls will center more on self-disclosure than those of boys. Because of this deeper intimacy, the collapse of friendships tends to be more intense for girls.²¹⁸ Boys' friendships, by contrast, involve less personal disclosure, less affectionate physical contact, and less eye contact. Friendships among boys appear to be focused on common interests and activities.²¹⁹

Findings on diverse play in boys and girls appear consistent with other observations that predate group play. Rhoads summarizes some such findings:

Compared with one-day-old male infants, one-day-old females respond more strongly to the sound of a human in distress. One-week-old baby girls can distinguish an infant's cry from other noise; boys usually cannot. Three-day-old girls maintain eye contact with a silent adult for twice as long as boys. Girls will look even longer if the adult talks; it makes no difference to boys. Four-month-old girls can distinguish photographs of those they know from people they do not; boys the same age generally cannot. On the other hand, five-month-old boys are more interested than girls in three-dimensional geometric forms and in blinking lights. They smile and babble at them as if they were animate — a mistake that girls rarely make.²²⁰

He adds that as early as age three years of age, girls show an ability greater than boys' both to infer what others might be thinking and are at judging what might be hurtful to another. They are also better at interpreting modes of non-verbal communication, such as facial expressions and, having discerned a situation, are more likely to try to provide comfort to another.²²¹ Recall Baron-Cohen's research, mentioned above in Section IV.2, that found that infant girls tend to look at their mother more often than infant boys. Girls preferred a film of a face to a film of a car; they preferred an actual face to a mobile. Boys were the opposite. Put in Baron-Cohen's terms, the boys were more interested in a mechanical object and the girls more in a social object.²²²

²¹⁸ Baron-Cohen, ED, 43-45. Maccoby, SD, 54-55.

²¹⁹ Baron-Cohen, ED, 43-45. Maccoby, SD, 54-55.

²²⁰ Steven E. Rhoads, *Taking Sex Differences Seriously*, 25.

²²¹ Rhoads, *Taking Sex Differences Seriously*, 31-32.

²²² Baron-Cohen, ED, 54-56.

v. *Summary of Early Behavior and Play Styles*: Though Maccoby's warning of overemphasizing sex-based differences certainly must be heeded, certain themes in early behaviors become apparent. Boys' play tends to be more directly aggressive and rough. There appears to be a focus on the heroic, on the solitary hero saving the day with his superior skill and strength. Boys naturally form groups with other boys which, in the presence of a common goal or competition become quite cohesive and strictly exclusionary of girls and adults. Within these groups, boys must vie for a dominant position. Hierarchy is usually established, however, with little direct conflict and boys seem to be more acutely aware of their place in these hierarchies than are girls. Within their groups boys are likely to engage in risk-taking and rule-breaking behavior.

Girls' play appears to be consistently more focused on the relational aspects rather than group achievement of a common goal. Group activities are occasions to get together. Thus activity is for the relationship rather than relationship for the activity. As such, girls tend more towards self-disclosure with their friends and are better able to determine and respond to the needs of others. Their fantasy play thus tends to focus on domestic and relational themes such as caring for a child or entertaining guests. Boys typically have no use for such concerns.

Considering the purpose of play generally and, more specifically, of sex-based distinctions in early behavior raises interesting questions. Both Geary, Bjorkland, and Pellegrini defend the position that play has both proximate and deferred functions. More precisely, they hold that play has immediate functions in aiding development, such as physical exercise and maintenance of social relationships, but that it also has deferred functions that prepare a child for adult activities.²²³ "The delayed benefits of play are in terms of practicing those behaviors that are important for survival and reproduction in adulthood."²²⁴ Thus, for instance, across mammalian species, rough-and-tumble play is generally more common in species where social conflicts are resolved by means of physical contest; this is even more so the case in polygynous species where males must compete with other males for access to females.²²⁵ Regarding group-based competition that boys favor, Geary comments that such games "[R]equire many of the same physical, social, and cognitive competencies involved in coalition-based warfare."²²⁶ He summarizes as follows: "[T]he rough and tumble play and fighting games of boys appear to provide the activities needed to fine-tune the competencies associated with physical

²²³ Bjorkland, *OHN*, 297, 321, 330-331. Geary, *Male, Female*, 221-222.

²²⁴ Geary, *Male, Female*, 221.

²²⁵ Geary, *Male, Female*, 221-222.

²²⁶ Geary, *Male, Female*, 229.

one-to-one and coalition-based male-male competition....”²²⁷ Similarly, he notes that, in some species, frequency of play-parenting in young females can be correlated with survival rates of first-borns to these females: “[A]cross five primate species, it was found that firstborn survival rates were two to more than four times higher for mothers with early experience with infant care, obtained through play parenting, than for mothers with no such experience.”²²⁸ In a like manner, object choice could be related to later tool and/or weapon use, and distinctions in range related to hunting and/or martial excursions. With the probable relation of play styles as preparations for later behaviors in mind, it will be useful to see if early sex-based behavioral distinctions have correlates in adult behavior.

One further point should be made: given the early onset of certain play and behavior styles, their cultural ubiquity, and similarity to the play and behavior of other primates, it is very difficult – if not impossible – to maintain that such differences are due solely to cultural or environmental influences. It is rather clear that differences in early play and behavior are at least in part due to nature, not wholly due to nurture.

4. *Aggression, Dominance, and Risk Taking*

i. *Behaviors*: That men exhibit more direct aggression than women appears to be one proposition regarding sex differences that is little disputed. This is true for both industrial and preindustrial societies, though male to male physical violence is lower in industrial societies.²²⁹ Steven Pinker observes that in all cultures men are more aggressive, more prone to stealing, and more prone to the use of lethal violence.²³⁰ Geary writes:

Like male chimpanzees, men clearly have the capacity for intense and oftentimes deadly one-on-one, as well as coalition-based, competition, although men are not mindlessly driven to physical aggression nor are they biologically destined to physical combat. As with other primates, physical aggression is used when social displays or other social rituals fail to resolve issues of social dominance or other social conflicts.²³¹

He adds in a later chapter that men compete for the attainment of social status and the control of resources that lead to reproduction.²³² This is seen more clearly in

²²⁷ Geary, *Male, Female*, 230.

²²⁸ Geary, *Male, Female*, 223.

²²⁹ See Geary, *Male, Female*, 142.

²³⁰ Pinker, TBS, 346.

²³¹ Geary, *Male, Female*, 139.

²³² Geary, *Male, Female*, 317.

preindustrial societies where on average one in three young men die in competition for status or resources. It appears that, in fact, in such societies, having killed another man increases rather than diminishes a man's standing in that society.²³³ As noted earlier, in industrial societies, male to male physical violence decreases but still far exceeds female violence. In a study of a cross section of preindustrial and industrial societies, male to male homicide was 30 to 40 times more prevalent than female to female homicide. The majority of these homicides are committed by males in their late teens and mid-20s and two-thirds regard the maintaining of status, and/or disputes or jealousy regarding relationships with women. Bjorkland and Pellgrini write: "Males at all ages engage in more physical aggression than females, and the aggression that adolescent and young-adult males engage in is more likely to lead to serious injury and sometimes death than female aggression or aggression by older and younger males."²³⁴ Men also kill women much more frequently than women kill men. This also is usually for motives of jealousy and "sexual proprietariness."²³⁵

It is relatively clear that there exists a connection between male aggression and the quest for social dominance. In industrial cultures, this quest is likely to move somewhat away from physical violence and competition and refocus on other means of social status.

Men more regularly sacrifice their health, safety and precious time with family and friends to win status, money, and prestige. Men and women exhibit no difference in what psychologists call "internal competitiveness," the desire to meet personal goals and display excellence. But men score much higher in "external competitiveness," the willingness to elbow others aside to get ahead.²³⁶

This is not to say that women do not seek dominant social positions and vie for more exalted places in a hierarchy, but rather that this practice is not as pronounced

²³³ See Geary, *Male, Female*, 317

²³⁴ Bjorkland, OHN, 273.

²³⁵ Geary, *Male, Female*, 318-319.

²³⁶ Helen Fisher, *The First Sex: The natural talents of women and how they are changing the world* (New York: Random House, 1999), 30. Quoted in Rhoads, *Taking Sex Differences Seriously*, 151. See also Geary, *Male, Female*, 326: "As a group, men tend to be more focused on occupational achievement (e.g., they work longer hours, engage in more status-enhancing risk taking, and so forth) than women and are more likely than women to value such achievement more highly than they value family and other interpersonal relationships. In Western culture, occupational success is synonymous with cultural success, and, for men, the associated status striving is a manifestation of male-male competition."

and intense as it is for men.²³⁷ Baron-Cohen notes an interesting study result that states that while women are generally better at judging emotional states based on eye-contact, men score better than women in judging a threat based on eye contact and in judging position in social hierarchies.²³⁸

Men also show a greater propensity for risk taking. This begins from a young age. For example, boys die by drowning four times as often as girls. They are injured and killed on playgrounds, on bicycles, and playing sports more frequently than girls. According to Geary, this is due to the fact that boys' activities are preparing them for one-to-one and coalition based competition. Regarding risk-taking, girls' behavior is generally more conservative than boys and does not change when peers are present. Boys' behavior is generally less conservative and becomes even less so when peers are present.²³⁹ Leonard Sax recounts an experiment in which college students enter a room in which there is a pole with six rubber rings on it. The student is asked to toss the rings onto the poll. When the student asks from where he or she should stand to toss the rings he or she is told to do so from wherever he likes. The technician then leaves the student in the room alone with the rings. Women tend to stand one or two feet from the pole. Males stand five to ten feet away. Next, same-sex peers are brought into the room and the student is asked to toss the rings a second time. The girls toss the rings from the same distance as before. Boys tend to take their initial distance and double it. Not looking like a coward is more important than the increased risk of failure.²⁴⁰ Geary sums up male risk taking this way: "Risk taking is thus related to general competitiveness and often involves a form of social display (i.e., these risks are taken in full view of their peers) for boys but not for girls. Risk-taking displays, in turn, serve the function of enhancing the boy's status within the peer group, and for boys and men, activities that related to social status are typically related to male-male competition."²⁴¹

ii. *Some physiological factors:* It would certainly be an interesting study to attempt to gather all of the physiological factors that enter into males' greater tendency towards aggression, risk taking, and dominance seeking. To these three should be added the tendency in males to have less self/impulse control, i.e., less ability to keep urge from becoming action.²⁴² Possible links to testosterone have been mentioned earlier. Michael Gurian claims that a series of physiological factors

²³⁷ See Geary, *Male, Female*, 249.

²³⁸ Baron-Cohen, ED, 122.

²³⁹ See Geary, *Male, Female*, 319-320.

²⁴⁰ Sax, *Why Gender Matters*, 39-40.

²⁴¹ See Geary, *Male, Female*, 320

²⁴² See Baron-Cohen, ED, 112.

are responsible for men's lesser impulse control and aggression. Among these, he claims are more spinal fluid, which facilitates quick translation of impulse to action, and greater reliance in men on primitive brain stem, which, according to Gurian, in men is less connected to higher reasoning parts of the brain.²⁴³ Baron-Cohen indicates that some researchers infer that greater impulse control in females is related to distinctions in the manner of maturation of the pre-frontal cortex.²⁴⁴ Leonard Sax offers another aspect of explanation that focuses on the response of the male and female nervous systems to stress:

Dozens of studies over the past twenty years have consistently shown dramatic sex differences in the biobehavioral response to stress. The female autonomic nervous system has been shown to be influenced more by the *parasympathetic* nervous system, which is energized by acetylcholine rather than adrenaline and which causes an unpleasant, nauseated feeling rather than the "thrill" of the sympathetic nervous system.²⁴⁵

He goes on to observe that the consequence of this distinction will be that, in confronting the stress that risky and aggressive situations will bring, while boys are likely to get a kind of chemical high in which the external senses are sharpened and exhilaration is experienced, girls are more likely to feel a bit sick or dizzy. Thus, according to Sax, while males are more likely to receive a kind of chemical reward when confronting threat and confrontation, females are likely to receive a kind of chemical punishment.

5. Group dynamics

i. Peer Groups: Differences in the nature of groups of boys versus girls were noted above. It appears that research is not as prolific regarding adult groups.²⁴⁶ However, some salient points can be made. Geary observes that, in humans, males are the philopatric sex. By this he means that men are the sex that have tended to stay in their birth group, whereas women, throughout human history, have more often had to integrate themselves into new groups. "As with other primate species in which males are the philopatric sex, girls and women do not form coalitions to compete against groups of other girls or women... nor as they are concerned as boys and men about social dominance."²⁴⁷ Clearly, throughout much of human history, men have had to form groups for martial or hunting purposes in order to survive.

²⁴³ Gurian, *What Could He Be Thinking*, 58-61.

²⁴⁴ Baron-Cohen, ED, 112.

²⁴⁵ Sax, *Why Gender Matters*, 69.

²⁴⁶ See Geary, *Male, Female*, 275.

²⁴⁷ Geary, *Male, Female*, 249.

Thus, there appear to be differences in groups of men as with groups of boys. Geary writes “[R]elative to girls and women, boys and men to exert more intense social pressure on in-group members to adhere to group ideologies and typical group behaviors, and they appear to develop relatively more negative attitudes and behaviors toward out-group members.”²⁴⁸

ii. *Communication Styles*: As with group dynamics, so distinctions in communication styles appear to persist into adulthood. Baron-Cohen offers an interesting summary of distinctions in men’s and women’s communication styles.

Men spend more time using language to demonstrate their knowledge, skill and status. They are more likely to show off or try to impress. This leads to more interruptions by men in order to give their opinion, and to their showing less interest in the opinions of others. For women, language functions in a different way: it is used to develop and maintain intimate, reciprocal relationships, especially with other females. Women spend more time using language to negotiate, understand, to develop a relationship, and to make people feel listened to.²⁴⁹

He goes on to add that, generally, women’s discussions tend to involve more talk about feelings while men’s will focus more objects, such as sports, cars, or the latest technical gadget.²⁵⁰ These communication styles are consistent with the observation that groups of boys tend to be focused on the common activity while girls tend to gather for the sake of the interaction.

It was noted that boys’ discourse tends to be more self asserting while girls’ communication is more accommodating of others. Thus men’s humor tends to be more teasing and making fun of another while women’s is more self-deprecating. Similarly, men’s management styles tend to be more direct and less restrained in criticism of others while women’s tend to be more collaborative, softening criticism when it must be given.²⁵¹

It appears that men and women are quite aware of distinct styles of communication. Both men and women are much more likely to offer self-disclosures to a woman than to a man. Men simply are not inclined to speak intimately with another man. When women attempt to self-disclose to men, they find much less supportive interaction from the man than they offered him during his self-disclosure. Women are more likely to respond by expressing understanding and spontaneous

²⁴⁸ Geary, *Male, Female*, 249

²⁴⁹ Baron-Cohen, ED, 50.

²⁵⁰ Baron-Cohen, ED, 51-52.

²⁵¹ Baron-Cohen, ED, 52.

sympathy.²⁵² When describing female behavior, Baron-Cohen states that females are more likely to make space for the other.²⁵³ They appear to do this in their communication style as well. Males appear to tend more towards assertion.

6. *Sexual Behavior*

Steven Pinker begins his discussion of contemporary differences with an important observation; one need not be an evolutionist to see its pertinence. Speaking of the human condition for the majority of human history, he writes:

Sex meant reproduction and vice versa. There was not food from domesticated plants and animals, so there was no baby formula; all children were breast-fed. There was also no paid day care, and no househusbands; babies and toddlers hung around with their mothers and other women. These conditions persisted through 99% of evolutionary history and have shaped our sexuality. Our sexual thoughts and feelings are adapted to a world in which sex led to babies, whether or not we want to make babies now. And they are adapted to a world in which children were a mother's problem more than a father's.²⁵⁴

The general point is clear: for the majority of human history, survival and the reality of distinct roles in the reproductive and nurturing processes demanded and rewarded distinct modes of sexual behavior. Pinker goes on to outline some of the more pronounced differences.

The first area of distinction in sexual temperament and behavior regards the number of sexual partners desired and acquired. Researcher David Buss went to liberal American universities, where he thought to find the most egalitarian subjects for his study. There, in confidential questionnaires, he asked men and women about their sexual preferences. Questions were such as, "How many partners would you like to have in the next month, two years, and over your life time?" Women's answers were 0.8 for the month, one for the next two years, and four to five over their life times. For men, the average response was two the next month, eight for the next two years, and eighteen for a lifetime.²⁵⁵ Clearly, even the enlightened men of the liberal university were expressing a desire for much more sexual variety.

Next, Buss attempted to determine how long a man or women would have to know a desirable partner before they would sleep with that person. Possible responses to whether one would sleep with someone after a certain time were:

²⁵² Baron-Cohen, ED, 51.

²⁵³ Baron-Cohen, ED, 46.

²⁵⁴ Steven Pinker, *How the Mind Works* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1997), 468. [Hereafter referred to as HMW.]

²⁵⁵ Pinker, HMW, 470.

“Probably yes,” “Neutral,” and “Definitely no.” To rank as “Probably yes,” women said that they would have to know a man for a year. “Definitely no” was applied to men whom they might know for a week or less. Men, however, chose a week as the time they would have to know someone to probably sleep with that person. As for the time at which men would definitely not sleep with a desirable partner, according to Pinker, Buss was never able to determine it; he had not set his measures to go below an hour.²⁵⁶ This finding is confirmed in an interesting study. In this study, attractive males and females were asked to randomly approach a member of the opposite sex on a university campus. The actors would then introduce themselves by saying that they had noticed the person whom they approached on campus and found them very attractive. They would then follow with one of three propositions: The first requested a date that night. The second invited the other over to the solicitor’s apartment that night. The third requests a sexual liaison that night. As regards the first request – for a date – fifty percent of women accepted and fifty percent of men accepted. Regarding the invitation to meet at the solicitor’s apartment, sixty-nine percent of men accepted the invitation, while only six percent of women did so. And for the request for a same-day sexual encounter, seventy-five percent of men accepted while not one female did so. Of the males who declined, most cited an inescapable conflict, and asked if the liaison could somehow be rescheduled.²⁵⁷ Clearly, there are confounding variables in the study, such as the woman’s fear of physical harm, and the ever-present possibility of pregnancy and the many consequences that follow from it, but such vast differences cannot be explained simply in terms of other factors. Geary also notes research that a clear distinction exists in the extent to which men condone casual sex versus women. Men are much more likely to condone and seek it for its own sake whereas women are likely to seek a short-term sexual relationship only if driven by some necessity.²⁵⁸

Another means by which researchers attempt to establish men’s greater taste for sexual variety is by examining the practices of homosexual males versus homosexual females. The assumption is that the primary factor that limits the number of actual sexual partners that men have is women’s reticence. Thus, without that limiter – as is the case if men are seeking sex from other men – men would be expected to have more sexual partners. In pre-AIDS San Francisco, 28% of gay men reported having sex with more than 1,000 men. 75% reported having had more than 100 sexual partners. There were no gay women who had had more than 1,000 partners and only two-percent said they had had more than 100. “Other desires of gay men, like pornography, prostitutes, and attractive young partners, also mirror or

²⁵⁶ Pinker, *HMW*, 470.

²⁵⁷ Pinker, *HMW*, 470.

²⁵⁸ Geary, *Male, Female*, 144-145.

exaggerate the desires of heterosexual men.”²⁵⁹ Questions as to the nature of homosexuality and the extent to which it may alter sexual drive are certainly valid, but the differences between male and female homosexuals is startling and likely does reveal something about the male taste for sexual variety.²⁶⁰

Another area where men and women differ in their sexual behavior regards the ease with which sexual arousal is achieved and the means of achieving it. Pinker notes that the ease with which men are aroused by visual images of nude women. “In foraging cultures, young men make charcoal drawings of breasts and vulvas on rock overhangs, carve them on tree trunks, and scratch them in the sand.”²⁶¹ In the age of the internet, the ubiquity of pornography is evident, and is, in most part, targeted at men, not women. Pinker wryly comments that a woman whose friends have given a subscription to a pornographic magazine that features nude males will soon find herself receiving mail targeted at male homosexuals. When one follows the money, one sees that pornography supposedly for females is primarily consumed by male homosexuals.²⁶² Rhoads argues that, while pornography caters to male sexual fantasy, romance novels cater to female sexual fantasy. In such novels, emphasis is not on graphic depiction of sexual body parts, but rather on emotional connection. “The hero... is still a powerful older man, sometimes a ‘bad boy’ who actually commits.” As for the plot, “It’s all love. All the time. Getting love, keeping love, making love.”²⁶³ Regarding sexual fantasizing, men are much more likely to engage in sexual fantasies. The content also varies: “Women were two and one-half times more likely than men to report thinking about the personal and emotional characteristics of their partner, whereas men were nearly four times more likely than women to report focusing on the physical characteristics of their partner.”²⁶⁴

Criterion applied in the selection of a mate is a matter where men and women are alike more than they differ. Nevertheless, interesting differences do exist in what men and women find important in choosing a spouse. Generally, women are more selective than men, with the exception of age and physical attractiveness – two categories in which men are more selective than women. “In addition to ambition, industriousness, and social dominance, women rate the emotional stability and the family orientation of prospective marriage partners more highly than men do.”²⁶⁵ Ambition and social dominance are important to women, but

²⁵⁹ Pinker, HMW, 473.

²⁶⁰ For further research and discussion, see Rhoads, *Taking Sex Differences Seriously*, 48-52.

²⁶¹ Pinker, HMW, 472.

²⁶² Pinker, HMW, 472.

²⁶³ Rhoads, *Taking Sex Differences Seriously*, 52.

²⁶⁴ Geary, *Male, Female*, 146.

²⁶⁵ Geary, *Male, Female*, 129.

fidelity to her and her children must also be considered. Regarding fidelity, women appear to place more emphasis on emotional fidelity than sexual fidelity. In other words, women reported more distress in knowing of her husband developing an emotional attachment to another woman than in learning of a sexual infidelity. Men show more distress at their partner's sexual infidelity. Geary links this distinction in modes of jealousy to the fact that a woman is always certain that she is the mother of her children while for men, absent DNA testing, there is always some uncertainty regarding paternity.²⁶⁶ It was noted earlier that jealousy factors largely into male on female aggression; it is also a large factor in the dissolution of marriages.²⁶⁷ Interestingly, many studies have been done linking the physical characteristics that each sex finds attractive in the other with advantages in health and fertility.

7. Systemizing versus Empathizing

Certainly, more sex-based distinctions in adult behavior could be provided at this point. Those that have been provided, however, give a clear enough picture of sexual divergence in human behavior. Simon Baron-Cohen has attempted to generalize differences in male and female brains and behavior by classifying men as systemizers and females as empathizers. His theory warrants brief treatment here as it is an attempt to categorize, as he puts it, "the essential difference" between men and women.

First, Baron-Cohen's terms must be defined. Then a brief account can be given of why he sees men and women properly divided into systemizers and empathizers. "Systemizing is the drive to analyze, explore, and construct a system. The systemizer intuitively figures out how things work, or extracts the underlying rules that govern the behavior of a system. This is done in order to understand and predict the system, or to invent a new one."²⁶⁸ Systemizers are concerned with the variation/manipulation of some given factor that in turn leads to a predictable outcome. "The pay-off of good systematizing is not only being able to understand the system but also being able to predict what it will do next."²⁶⁹ The understanding of cause and effect is essential, but not simply as an end in itself, "but because discovering causes gives you control over the world."²⁷⁰ The method of discovery is inductive and empirical, based upon a third-person analysis of the situation. In many ways, Baron-Cohen appears to be describing what is commonly referred to as the scientific method. The systemizer attempts to examine and isolate variables and so as

²⁶⁶ Geary, *Male, Female*, 130, 148.

²⁶⁷ Geary, *Male, Female*, 148-150.

²⁶⁸ Baron-Cohen, ED, 3.

²⁶⁹ Baron-Cohen, ED 62.

²⁷⁰ Baron-Cohen, ED 67.

to either control or discern the outcome. “While the natural way to understand and predict the nature of events and objects is to systemize, the natural way to understand a person is to empathize.”²⁷¹ “Empathizing occurs when we feel an appropriate emotional reaction, and emotion *triggered* by the other person’s emotion, and it is done in order to understand another person, to predict their behavior, and to connect or resonate with them emotionally.”²⁷² Baron-Cohen’s claim is that the evidence is quite clear that women spontaneously empathize more readily than men. Thus, Baron-Cohen’s thesis could reasonably be restated in saying that men more naturally tend towards the understanding of objects and events, while women tend more naturally to the understanding of persons.

Baron-Cohen’s defense of this thesis relies upon behavioral observations, but also upon distinctions in the functioning and formation of the male versus female brain, and the distinct hormone environments noted earlier in this chapter. Making this argument is, more or less the subject of his book, but, only the briefest summary can be given here. However, a quick glance back at some male/female distinctions already discussed reveals that Baron-Cohen’s classification is at least plausible. A few illustrations should suffice.

A good indication of the applicability of Baron-Cohen’s distinction comes from reviewing children’s play styles, group dynamics, and communication styles. Girls (and women) consistently exhibit a communication style that is more mindful of other participants. As was noted above, they speak over each other less, are more likely to agree with or at least recognize something said by another, or, at least to soften disagreement. From early infancy, girls are better able to judge the emotional state of another, with the exception already noted earlier in this chapter, that is, judging threats. Girls are more perceptive of the state of a group when entering it and are more likely to be considerate of the feelings of a girl who is trying to enter a group. Girls’ activities tend to be an excuse to have personal contact and sharing. Steven Pinker writes: “Women experience basic emotions more intensely, except perhaps anger. Women have more intimate social relationships, are more concerned about them, and feel more empathy toward their friends, though not towards strangers. (The common view that women are more empathetic towards everyone is both evolutionarily unlikely and untrue.)”²⁷³ In addition to experiencing emotion more intensely, females are also generally able to verbalize their experience better. Baron-Cohen speculates that female advantages in verbal ability grew from a need for better empathizing.²⁷⁴

²⁷¹ Baron-Cohen, ED, 5.

²⁷² Baron-Cohen, ED, 2. (Emphasis in original.)

²⁷³ Pinker, TBS, 345.

²⁷⁴ Baron-Cohen, ED, 57-60.

In boys and men, one finds play and communication styles, and group dynamics that are significantly distinct from those of girls and women. Boys appear to be more focused on objects, exploration, and that task at hand. New boys in a group are judged by how they contribute to the common goal. Communication among boys (and men) appears to be more geared towards the assertion of one's self and one's mastery of the activity at hand. That mastery can usually be reduced to mastery of some sort of system, the employment of some sort of technique (the input) that will favorably affect the common goal (the output). As was noted earlier, from very early on, boys' play is more object oriented - preferring trucks to dolls - and more explorative, both as regards exploring an object by taking it apart and by traveling further distances and taking more risks. Even socially, men appear to be more system-based, placing more emphasis on social status and hierarchies. Perhaps it is not surprising that when Baron-Cohen developed a psychological tool to measure empathy and systemizing he found that females scored significantly higher on empathy scales and men scored higher on systemizing scales.²⁷⁵

As mentioned above, no attempt has been made here to provide the full breadth of Baron-Cohen's argument. Rather, a sample of that argumentation has been given to illustrate one theory of how best to classify the difference between men and women. Others will offer other ideas. For instance, Michael Gurian puts forward a claim similar to Baron-Cohen's in stating that men and women are influenced by distinct internal, biologically based, imperatives. He offers a relatively poignant thought for what instigated his research on sex-based differences:

At one point, in my twenties, I decided that it must not matter if I "became a man." Being an "adult" and a "person" was enough. But it wasn't. I, like all males, knew at some deep level that there is a biology of manhood - internal frameworks that drive a man just like female frameworks drive a woman. I sensed something organic and naturally male in me. I could not discover what it was. I came to believe there was no useful male nature. I was in a kind of limbo and, often, despair. I looked in the mirror many times and wondered "Who am I?"²⁷⁶

Gurian concludes that men are driven by a "performance imperative" while women are driven more by a relational imperative. Put otherwise, lacking the same natural *telos* that women have in motherhood, men are always driven towards proving themselves, towards heroic and great deeds, always outwards looking. While certainly not denying the heroic in women, he claims that women have a more natural drive

²⁷⁵ Baron-Cohen, ED, 56-57, 82-84.

²⁷⁶ Gurian, *What Could He Be Thinking*, xxi.

towards finding fulfillment in the relational sphere, in “bondedness” and intimacy.²⁷⁷

Gurian offers an array of biologically based justifications for his position, mostly centering on typical differences in the male and female brain and hormonal systems. He claims, for instance, that greater interconnectivity between higher reasoning and emotive centers of the brain, coupled with greater verbal ability and a hormone environment dominated by estrogen and oxytocin, and containing higher levels of serotonin all lead women to find a more natural sense of rest and fulfillment in relationships and the communicative intimacy that accompanies them. By contrast, the thrust of male biology leads him towards the abstract and action. The male brain is more compartmentalized, with an emphasis on the right hemisphere and spatial and abstract thinking. Considering that men possess more spinal fluid, white matter, brain functioning that is more focused in the primitive brain stem, and a hormone environment dominated by vasopressin and testosterone, men are more inclined towards impulsiveness and action; they are more inclined to act first and think later. Men are more removed from emotions and thus more inclined to act based upon abstract principles or systems, as noted also by Baron-Cohen²⁷⁸

CONCLUSION

The purpose of this chapter has been to describe as accurately as possible, the general phenomena of sexual differentiation and, more particularly, to provide an image of the human male *qua* male. As has been seen, the human male and female differ significantly in ways that extend beyond the foundational differences in genitalia. Genetic, brain, and hormonal differences are accompanied by significant distinctions in behavior and aptitude. It now will be for the various schools of thought to provide some account of these phenomena. Finally, a judgment will have to be made as to which provides the account that most faithfully renders an explanation of experience in its fullness.

In setting out the phenomena of sexual differentiation, the purpose of the chapter was also to put forward questions and problems that any account must explain. In assessing the modes in which men and women differ, Simon Baron-Cohen offers that sex-based differences must be viewed at five levels:

1. Genetic Sex: XX versus XY

²⁷⁷ See Gurian, *What Could He Be Thinking*, 38-58.

²⁷⁸ Establishing these distinctions is the argument of Gurian’s book, *What Could He Be Thinking?*, for summaries, however, biological differences, see, Gurian, *What Could He Be Thinking*, 11-16, 58-61, 82-85, & 107-109.

2. Gonadal Sex: Ovaries versus Testes
3. Genital Sex: Vagina and clitoris versus scrotum and penis
4. Brain Sex: Female typical versus male typical
5. Behavioral Sex: Female typical versus male typical²⁷⁹

Part of the challenge posed by the intersex disorder, for instance, is that individuals can be found in whom there is considerable inconsistency amidst these levels of determination. For instance, in the case of an individual with complete androgen insensitivity syndrome (CAIS), it happens that this person who is genetically male, XY, and gonadally male, having functioning testes, will, however, because of the body's complete inability to respond to androgens, have female typical external genitalia and brain formation. Androgens transformed into estrogens will even prompt the development of female secondary sex characteristics. Behavior patterns will likewise be female. Thus, while the genetic and gonadal sex indicate male, the genital, brain, and behavior sex indicate female. Which, in fact, is the essential difference?

²⁷⁹ Baron-Cohen, ED, 97-98.

Chapter 2

The Evolutionary Account of Sexual Difference

INTRODUCTION

I have dedicated significant time to presenting some of the most salient facts of sexual differentiation. Perhaps no system claims to give as complete an account of those facts as does evolutionary biology, supplemented by evolutionary psychology. The stated goal of the first part of this work is to provide various accounts of man as male. The evolutionists provide an explanation of the human male that, perhaps, comes closest addressing each of the four causes suggested by Aristotle as integral to the explanation of things physical. In particular, in his works *How the Mind Works*, and *The Blank Slate*, Harvard evolutionary psychologist, Steven Pinker, offers a kind of story of the origins of man as he is today, included in which is an explanation of *why* the human male is as he now is. Given his prominence in his field, and the breadth of his account – which spans more or less from atoms to Adam – his work will serve as the principal champion of the evolutionary account. His rendering, however, will be supplemented by the comprehensive work of psychologist David Geary in *Male, Female: The Evolution of Human Sex Differences*, and developmental psychologists David Bjorklund and Anthony Pellegrini in their joint work *The Origins of Human Nature: Evolutionary Developmental Psychology*. It appears that these authors are in general agreement on the fundamentals of the story of the genesis of sexual differentiation in humans. Beyond the evolutionary mechanics of sexual differentiation, however, Pinker also provides a broader philosophical and anthropological context that gives a greater fullness to his account than those of the other authors mentioned.

It is with that philosophical context that this chapter begins; for it is only in virtue of understanding this context that it will be possible to understand the nature

of the account of man *qua* male that will be offered. Discussion of the philosophical context of evolution in Section I is followed by a brief description of its principal mechanisms in Section II, namely, natural selection and adaptation. Next, in Section III, I begin my treatment of the evolutionary account of man *qua* male by tracing sexual reproduction back to its origins. This entails a discussion of the evolutionary pressures that most plausibly account for the shift from asexual to sexual reproduction. Further explanation is provided for the origins of sexual differentiation. With these foundational theories in place, it is possible to offer a characterization of the essential difference between males and females that applies across all species in which there is sexual reproduction. Next, in Section IV, the general principles that govern all instances of sexual differentiation are examined. In this section, the crucial concepts of sexual selection and investment in reproduction are introduced and briefly explained. These ideas introduce a governing economic metaphor, *viz.*, that of investment and valuation based upon scarcity or plenitude. The general principle derived can be summarized quite simply: that sex which has a greater investment chooses with which member of lesser-investing sex it will mate; the sex with less investment in reproduction competes for mating opportunities with the greater-investing sex. The subsequent subsections illustrate the application of this principle, examining instances in various species of sexually reproducing animals with emphasis upon primates – humans’ closest inter-species relatives. A brief discussion of the role that physiological aspects – such as hormones, and brain differences – play in mediating and facilitating the formative work of evolutionary forces.

Having established the mechanisms generally responsible for sexual differentiation and seen their application in non-human species, next, in Section V, I apply these principles to sexual differentiation in humans. Because relative levels of investment are crucial in determining selective forces, the discussion begins with consideration of the relative levels of female and male investment in human reproduction. This necessarily includes a treatment of fatherhood and so anticipates later chapters of this work. Having established relative investment levels, the concepts of choice and competition are able to be discussed in the context that gives them their meaning. By means of examining how distinct investment levels in reproduction lead to distinct evolutionary pressures on men and women, the evolutionary account is able to provide a reasoned account that explains the phenomena of human sexual difference outlined in Chapter 1 in terms of an evolutionary narrative that unfolds from the very origins of sexual differentiation itself. Thus, the chapter ends with a summary of the evolutionary account of the male *qua* male.

I. THE ANTHROPOLOGICAL CONTEXT

Pinker explains the role that evolution plays in understanding the working of the human mind. It will become clear that it is the same role that evolution plays in explaining everything human – including sexual differentiation.

It [evolutionary psychology] holds out the hope of understanding the *design* or *purpose* of the mind – not in some mystical or teleological sense, but in the simulacrum of engineering that pervades the natural world.... Darwin showed that the illusion of design in the natural world can be explained by natural selection. Certainly an eye is too well engineered to have arisen by chance.... Nor is an eye a masterpiece of engineering literally fashioned by a cosmic designer who created humans in his own image.... Natural selection is the only physical process we know of that can simulate engineering, because it is the only process in which how well something works can play a causal role in how it came to be.¹

To the question, “why is the human male as he is?”, the processes of evolution will provide the answer; it will do so by providing a similitude of design, a semblance of story telling, a mechanism that mimics the artisan’s purposeful acts, but that, in the end, is the non-random though blind workings of natural processes. Any question offered is finally reducible to a series of answers to the same question, applied over and over again: how well does it work?

Though it is taking a few steps backwards, to the foundations of his positions on the nature of the human person generally, Pinker chooses to explain the developments in science that lead him to his evolutionary account of the human person and, thereby, of the human male. Finally, Pinker’s explanation will involve a kind of homogeneity of being. He speaks of the path that leads to this conclusion in terms of the fall of four “walls” that, before the findings of modern science dissolved them, served to partition being into incommensurable categories. The fall of each of these four walls will now briefly be chronicled.

According to Pinker, the first wall to come down was that dividing the sub-lunar from the celestial.² The discovery of the telescope and the insights of various cosmologists, most notably, Newton, dispelled the idea that, somehow, the heavenly bodies were composed of a different sort of matter – the incorruptible matter proposed by the ancients. Rather, the earth and every other cosmic body were found to be made of the same stuff, each subject to the same laws of physics, none occupying some privileged place. Thus, earth and the heavens are one.

¹ Pinker, TBS, 51-52.

² Pinker, TBS, 30.

Pinker next notes the eliminating of the distinction between a creative past and a static present. This unification of past and present, Pinker attributes to Charles Lyell who showed that the forces that are currently at work shaping the earth are the same that sculpted it in eons gone by.³ Thus, past and present, celestial and terrestrial are all part of one relatively homogenous continuum. Thus falls the second wall.

The next illusory distinction to meet an inevitable demise was that between the living and non-living:

In 1628 William Harvey showed that the human body is a machine that runs by hydraulics and other mechanical principles. In 1828 Friedrich Wöhler showed that the stuff of life is not a magical, pulsating gel but ordinary compounds following the laws of chemistry.⁴

To this he adds the contribution of Darwin of Mendel who revealed that

cells did not always come from other cells and that the emergence of life did not create a second world where before there was just one. Cells evolved from simpler replicating molecules, a nonliving part of the physical world, and may be understood as collections of molecular machinery - fantastically complicated machinery, of course, but machinery nevertheless.⁵

The living no longer need be put in a category that is fundamentally separate from the non-living. Both function by the same laws of nature and are subject to the same evolutionary forces that indiscriminately "selected" some parts of matter for greater complexity. Earlier discoveries had led to the realization that neither time nor one's physical location - be it in the heavens or on the earth - has any bearing on the essential character of one's being. Neither does being alive or inert constitute a principle in term of which to fundamentally divide being, except perhaps in terms of complexity. Living cells are more complicated versions of simpler replicating molecules; there is neither great mystery nor great reason for the boasts of the living and their claim of inhabiting some loftier plane of existence. The understanding of life in terms of matter and energy is, according to Pinker, the greatest achievement of the second half of the 20th century. Life is nothing but matter and energy combined in various degrees of complexity. All matter in motion is simply matter in motion, though the complexities of these motions increase with time and the evolutionary

³ Pinker, TBS, 30.

⁴ Pinker, TBS, 30

⁵ Pinker, TBS, 30.

selection of what works best. So falls the third wall; the living and non-living need no longer be divided.

Biologist Hans Jonas eulogies well the death of this distinction between the dead and the living, and notes a fundamental change that has occurred in his field:

The earlier goal... was to interpret the apparently lifeless in the image of life and to extend life into apparent death. Then, it was the corpse, the primal exhibition of "dead" matter, which was the limit of all understanding and therefore the first thing not to be accepted at face-value. Today the living, feeling, striving organism has taken over this role and is being unmasked as a *ludibrium materiae*, a subtle hoax of matter. Only when [it is] a corpse is the body plainly intelligible: then it returns from its puzzling and unorthodox behavior of aliveness to the unambiguous, "familiar" state of a body within the world of bodies, whose general laws provide the canon of comprehensibility.⁶

Living matter is only comprehensible when it is broken down into its component parts whose movements can be charted and measured like those of planets and projectiles.

With the living defined in terms of the non-living - plus complexity - there remains only one great divide to be bridged, one last wall to fall: that dividing that material from the spiritual, the instinctual from the intellectual, cultural, artistic, and consciously intentional. This wall had proved to be more of a fortress. Nevertheless, Pinker's wrecking ball swings with force and ferocity. As such, according to him, even this stalwart partition of reality has been breached, allowing the previously divided inhabitants of the formerly disparate sides to melt into one indistinguishable amalgam of corpuscular being.

Pinker, of course, does not claim to have cleaved this gap on his own; he rather is merely chronicling the inevitable conclusions of the combined work of scientists in the fields of cognitive science, cognitive neuroscience, behavioral genetics, and evolutionary psychology. It is the collected incantations of these fields that Pinker invokes, as he would say, "to exorcise the ghost in the machine" and finally bring about the identification of thinking-matter with all other kinds of matter, and thus the unification of all matter and all being.

His first appeal is to advances in the field of cognitive science; in particular, he looks to cognitive science to explain the world of ideas and intentions in an exclusively physical, i.e., matter-in-motion, manner. According to what he calls the computational theory of mind, one need not rely upon any principles to explain intelligence beyond the *kinds* of changes that are seen in a computer:

⁶ Jonas, Hans. *The Phenomenon of Life: Toward a Philosophical Biology* (New York: Delta, 1966), 12.

The computational theory of mind does more than explain the existence of knowing, thinking, and trying without invoking a ghost in the machine (though that would be enough of a feat). It also explains how those processes can be *intelligent* – how rationality can emerge from mindless physical process. If a sequence of transformations of information stored in a hunk of matter (such as brain tissue or silicon) mirrors a sequence of deductions that obey the laws of logic, probability, or cause and effect they will generate correct predictions about the world. And making correct predictions in pursuit of a goal is a pretty good definition of intelligence.⁷

The brain stores and collects information, not unlike a database does, but, in the case of the brain, the information is “residing in patterns of activity and structure in the brain.”⁸ Thinking is simply a systematic transformation of these patterns of activity and structures. The brain receives feedback, as it were, to test these transformations vis-à-vis the external world and so learn and begin to acquire the ability to make predictions based on what patterns will allow a goal to be achieved. There is, according to Pinker, no need of a “ghost” for this, rather just stored information, feedback loops, and some mode of computation. The strides that are being made in the field of artificial intelligence are a further sign that intelligence can be reduced to and explained in terms of “information stored in hunks of matter” transformed by computational algorithms that are the natural outcome of the selective pressures that fuel evolutionary development. Pinker refers to those who resist the notion that thinking requires more of an account than some specific movements of matter as “human chauvinists.”⁹

Next in line to de-mystify the human spirit is neuroscience. It has the power to show that all mental activity can be explained by or, in fact, is *exclusively* physiological activity of the brain. Pinker quotes Dostoyevsky and the despairing words of Dmitri Karamazov as he laments the loss of his soul and the loss of God to the knowledge that all his thoughts and perceptions are simply the quivering of nerves. Pinker can forgive those who at the time – like Dostoyevsky himself! – still were not buying the bill of goods so bitterly purchased by the troubled Karamazov brother, but, with the advances of modern neuroscience, one no longer has the luxury of reasonable resistance: “One can say that the information-processing activity of the brain *causes* the mind, or that it is the mind, but in either case the evidence is overwhelming that every aspect of our mental lives depends entirely on physiological events in the tissues of the brain.”¹⁰ Every aspect of mental life either simply is brain

⁷ Pinker, TBS 32-33.

⁸ Pinker, TBS, 32.

⁹ Pinker, TBS, 33.

¹⁰ Pinker, TBS, 41 (Emphasis in original.)

activity, or conscious life is an epiphenomenon of this activity, some resultant byproduct of perturbations of intracranial matter. Thus, the contemplation of anything – love, or justice, or what one had for dinner the night before – is simply either the movement of brain matter or some after-effect thereof. In either case, the definition of thought or any object of thought would best be handled by the experimental chemist and neurobiologist.

It is, however, not only thought and consciousness that Pinker wishes to explain exhaustively in terms of neuroscience; he also draws conclusions regarding the existence of the conscious self as a unified whole. Even with the knowledge that intellectual existence is exhausted in the vibrations of matter, “it is still tempting to think of the brain... as a control panel with gauges and levers operated by a user – the self, the soul, the ghost, the person, the “me.” But cognitive neuroscience is showing that the self, too, is just another network of brain systems.”¹¹ The self, the soul, the “me”, the person... all these attempts to conceptualize what is experienced in self-reflection are illusions. To support this, Pinker points to an experiment where experimenters neutralize the corpus callosum of their subjects – recall that the corpus callosum is that part of the brain that serves as a bridge between its right and left hemispheres – and systematically manipulate and question each cleaved side of the brain: they command the right hemisphere to get up and walk out of the room. When the command is complied with, the left side is asked why it is walking out the room. It will conjure an answer: “to get a Coke”. The claim is that each side is acting autonomously, exercising its own “will” independent of the other. Thus, a unified self is an illusion that the brain strives to summon out of the separate modules that constitute it. “Cognitive neuroscientists have not only exorcised the ghost but have shown that the brain does not even have a part that does exactly what the ghost is supposed to do: review all the facts and make a decision for the rest of the brain to carry out.”¹² The brain is constituted of modules that do their best to give the impression that they are acting as one whole. Each module of the brain has its own relative autonomy in a more or less improvised system. Conscious, deliberated thought and the self itself are illusory.

Not surprisingly, Pinker references Freud; psychoanalysis showed that human race collectively suffers from the delusion that the conscious mind (or ego) is, as it were, standing over one’s actions, controlling them and making one’s decisions and behaviors. In fact, however, the conscious mind merely tells us stories that dress-up the true, subconscious, instinctual, sub-rational reasons for our actions. Pinker appears to accept this fundamental point – that the conscious mind, or “self,” is merely telling stories about one’s behavior, not determining it; he attributes,

¹¹ Pinker, TBS, 42.

¹² Pinker, TBS, 42.

however, the definitive dispelling of the myth of the responsible self, however, not to psychoanalysis, but to cognitive neuroscience. Experiments like the one recounted show that the left side of the brain – the side most associated with verbal abilities – is more than willing to spin tales regarding the origins of an individual's behavior. For Pinker, in spite of the bizarre circumstances of the experiment, there is no reason to think that this is other than the normal state of affairs in human cognition and behavior. In this case, one should conclude that the verbal part of the brain is continuously conjuring explanations to somehow justify or tell stories about what other, likely more primitive, modules of the brain have demanded. Thus, the human person is most fundamentally driven by more primitive motivations; claims to sapiential behavior are as ethereal as is the self, consciousness, or person that pretends to underpin it.

The mind, then, is a modular composite, bound in a tenuous unity. Cognitive science can show how its component parts are able to perform those tasks we associate with intelligence without having to appeal to the existence of mysterious principles such as “soul” or “spirit.” Cognitive neuroscience can show that all mental activity is brain activity, and nothing more. With this knowledge, concepts such as “the person” and “the self” meet the same epiphenomenal fate as did consciousness itself. With the person's fate sealed, the final wall brought low, all being can be united, with no piece having any claim over and against another: celestial matter is no different than terrestrial matter; ancient matter breaks and bends like contemporary matter; living stuff, finally, has no boast versus the inert; and, in the final analysis, it is only its human arrogance that leads thinking being to place itself on some astral plane above and beyond other modes of being. In the end, there are atoms and the void, and perhaps some energy – for good measure.

What remains is to explain how it is that the various computational units that constitute “the mind” came to be so made. Here, Pinker has at his disposal resources that were unavailable to Democritus, Lucretius, or any other pre-18th century atomist. On to the stage steps the master craftsman; blind and mindless though he be, he works with precision, complexity, and intricacy that far exceeds any of his “intelligent” imitators. Evolution is the final component that serves to finalize the rending of the walls dividing being. It is also the primary concern of this chapter, the purpose of which is to present the evolutionary account of sexual differentiation and, thereby, their account of the human male. It is fitting therefore, to offer a few words giving a general explanation of the principles of evolution in connection with Pinker's philosophical context before proceeding on to the evolutionary of the human male as male. Before examining how evolution shaped man as male and female, a few words on how evolution shaped the human being simply will be useful.

II. EVOLUTIONARY PRINCIPLES

In earlier remarks, I noted that evolution takes the place of an architect or story-teller. Thus presumably it is to evolution that one must put the same sort of questions that we would otherwise direct to a designer. One cannot question evolution; rather one must strive to understand its processes and from these processes tease out the “design” that was at work in making man to be as he is. Pinker states that “[e]volution is central to understanding ourselves because signs of design do not stop with the heart or the eye.”¹³ Evolution will not only explain how humans came to have complex organs, such as eyes and hearts, but will also explain his motivations, and the complexities of his behaviors and habits. It must be so, for it is evolution that has, according to its own methods, shaped the human being. To understand man, the forces that shaped him must be understood.

In order successfully to tease out of mute evolution the secrets of its design, the basic functioning of evolution must first be understood. Pinker succinctly describes the central notions of natural selection and adaptation:

What is “adaptive” in everyday life is not necessarily an “adaptation” in the technical sense of being a trait that was favored by natural selection in a species’ evolutionary history. Natural selection is the morally indifferent process in which the most effective replicators outreproduce the alternatives and come to prevail in a population. The selected genes will therefore be the “selfish” ones, in Richard Dawkins’s metaphor - more accurately, the megalomaniacal ones, those that make the most copies of themselves. An adaptation is anything brought about by the genes that helps them fulfill this metaphorical obsession, whether or not it also fulfills human aspirations.¹⁴

Natural selection simply states that those who have most successfully adapted will, over time, come to prevail in a population. Adaptation is that which allows a being to project its likeness into the future. Those who do a better job of this, come to prevail.

It is important to note that, as he says, this is something that occurs “whether or not it also fulfills human aspirations.” The metaphorically purposeful action takes place at the genetic level, i.e., at the level of that in virtue of which one’s characteristics are passed down to future generations. Even when moving to the realm of consciousness, adaptation does not essentially apply to some mode of conscious, deliberated choice in virtue of which a conscious being adjusts to a given situation. Adaptation, rather, refers to a gene’s ability to effectively replicate itself.

¹³Pinker, TBS, 52.

¹⁴Pinker, TBS, 53.

To aid in understanding the role of selection and adaptation in conscious beings, Pinker makes a distinction: there are at play proximate causes and ultimate causes. These are oriented, to a certain extent, within different time spheres; more so, each concerns a different order. As the name indicates, the proximate cause regards those things that are temporally immediate to an actor. Were a man to be asked why he is eating, he would likely reply that he is hungry. The proximate cause of his eating is his hunger. The ultimate cause, however, regards a different time sphere and different scope: the ultimate cause refers directly to the adaptability of the action, how that action will affect and advance the genetic replication of the actor. The ultimate cause of the man's eating, therefore, regards his nutrition and the prolongation of his existence in such a way that he will be able to project his genetic constitution forward in time, projecting forward with his genes likewise the tendency to feel hunger and thus the tendency to eat. This is the ultimate cause, regardless of what answer one may get from the consumer at the time of consumption, regardless of the proximate cause. Thus proximate causality regards the immediate motivation of the actor. Ultimate causality regards a distinct order; it provides the most salient explanation as to why a given reality exists.

This is not to say that ultimate and proximate causes are unrelated. Pinker states that the proximate cause is derived from the ultimate cause; hunger is somehow related to our need for nutrition. However, it is the ultimate cause that is finally relevant, for it is the ultimate cause that determines if a trait will persist or vanish from the face of the earth. Thus the ultimate cause regards how adaptive a trait is; asking the agent why he is acting in such a way may be important, because it will likely relate to the ultimate cause, but is, nevertheless, secondary.

This is consistent with what Pinker said of the cleaved brain. One part of the brain need not know what another part is doing. And, in fact, the part that is actually responsible for humans acting as they do very well might not be the part that is rendering the account as to why they are acting as such. Recall that the person in the experiment was actually getting up to leave the room because of the experimenter's prompt, even if he was telling himself that he was getting up to get a Coke. That part of the human involved rendering an account of his activity is responsible only for telling stories about what is done; it is not responsible for what is done. In an ultimate sense, it is not important why a man says that he mates in such a manner as to produce a robust number of offspring. He may offer any number of reasons. What is ultimately important is that he does produce those offspring and that they, in turn, produce offspring. The seemingly higher functions that are experienced are simply tall tales told.

In light of this evolutionary understanding of *homo sapiens*, the picture of man begins to take shape. Pinker has the following to say:

For all its exquisite engineering, an eye is useless without a brain. Its output is not the meaningless patterns of a screen saver, but raw material for circuitry that computes a representation of the external world. That representation feeds other circuits that make sense of the world *by imputing causes to events and placing them in categories that allow useful predictions*. And the sense-making, in turn, works in the service of motives such as hunger, fear, love, curiosity, and the pursuit of status and esteem.¹⁵

More insight into the higher activity of thought is garnered here; it is the brain's circuitry that imputes causality and categories in its representations of the external world. It does this at the behest of its hunger, fear, love, curiosity, and thirst for status and esteem. This, not surprisingly, is as Hume said: reason in the service of the passions. A step further, however, must be taken, for the passions are themselves derivative causes, finding their own source in the ultimate causes of adaptability. The human being is driven by deep, subconscious motivations. The source of these motivations is, at root, the megalomaniacal obsession of genes that seek to replicate themselves. Man's history then is the flow of a river whose course is not random, in that it always takes that path which keeps the flow moving, but that, nevertheless, is going nowhere except always farther. Its movement nevertheless can be marked and, perhaps, to a certain extent, its future path divined.

Summary of the foundational principles

All being is one in the sense that all being is essentially the same. And all being is essentially the same because all matter is essentially the same. Distinctions that seemed to exist between celestial and terrestrial, living and dead, thinking and non-thinking have all proved illusory. As Hans Jonas discerned, the basic element of explanation is the simplest manifestation of inert matter. Complexity is built incrementally and is the only formal distinction in being. An understanding of the human being is constructed in this way, with simple pieces of matter combining with others, progressively achieving greater and greater complexity. Beginning with replicating molecules, evolution will guide the development by selecting the best replicators. Slowly, incrementally, evolutionary pressures will sculpt matter and energy in such a way that matter will be able to predict which actions will best fulfill its desires (i.e., matter becomes thinking matter). Its desires (proximate causes) are born of the fundamental operative causes (ultimate causes) of its existence: to project its genetic constitution into the future. Thinking matter is so because it was, at some point, adaptive to be so. It will also be the case, then, that thinking matter occurring as male and female is so because, at some point in evolutionary history, it was

¹⁵ Pinker, TBS, 52. Emphasis added.

adaptive to be so. Thus, to account for male and female, the designer of male and female must be questioned: the evolutionary pressures that allowed that particular ordering of matter to prevail.

A final word by Pinker on the mind will well close this scene that set the anthropological context:

The mind is a neural computer, fitted by natural selection with combinatorial algorithms for causal and probabilistic reasoning about plants, animals, objects, and people. It is driven by goal states that served biological fitness in ancestral environments, such as food, sex, safety, parenthood, friendship, status, and knowledge.¹⁶

III. ORIGINS OF SEXUAL DIFFERENCE

Having seen the place of man generally within the evolutionary and ontological scheme – or at least Pinker’s version of it¹⁷ – the stage is set for a more focused discussion of sexual differentiation in the human species. However, in accordance with the conflation of being discussed above, the discussion’s starting point must begin well before the reality of human sexual differentiation but rather with the genesis of sexual differentiation simply. This discussion will address two fundamental questions. First, what is the evolutionary explanation for the existence of sexually differentiated reproduction? Second, granting sexual reproduction, why does it involve two non-identical parents? Those considerations lead naturally to the genesis of male and female, a marking of the essential difference between the two, and the introduction of another mechanism of evolutionary development: sexual selection.

1. *Origins of sexual reproduction*

Living things evolved from simpler replicating molecules. The existing evolutionary paradigm of reproduction, therefore, would be replication. In term of living things, this is asexual reproduction, in which the offspring, excepting random mutations, is a genetic clone of the parent. The question of the origin of sexual reproduction can, therefore, be rephrased as follows: what environmental pressures

¹⁶ Pinker, HMW, 524.

¹⁷ As was stated earlier, Pinker’s rendering of sexual differentiation is, in part, being given a primary place in this work precisely because he does place it within a philosophical context. However, it can be argued that one need not accept his materialist reductionism in order, in some way, to assent to a version of the evolutionary principles he employs. Nor should it be implied that other authors who will be utilized in this chapter necessarily agree (or disagree) with the materialism of Pinker.

led to the selection of sexual reproduction in some beings over the simpler, precedent asexual reproduction. Geary offers three theories that offer explanations as to why sexual reproduction would have been selected over asexual reproduction.

The first theory regards the compounding of harmful mutations. In asexual reproduction, a certain level of genetic mutation occurs, i.e., the offspring is frequently not an exact match of the parent. These mutations can affect the phenotype (its physiology and behavior) of the organism and thus its ability to survive. The effect is generally negative. The accumulation of such mutations generally results in sterility and thus elimination from the population. The mutation theory states that sexual reproduction will produce some offspring with many mutations and some with fewer. Those with fewer will survive and continue in the gene pool. Those with more mutations will reproduce less successfully and eventually exit the population. Sexual reproduction, however, provides a variety of mutation levels that prevents harmful mutations from necessarily being passed to the next generation.¹⁸

The second theory regards genotypic and phenotypic variety; it is relatively straight-forward. In asexual reproduction, any genetic variance results from mutation. By contrast, in sexual reproduction, there is always at least 50% of the genes that differ from parent to offspring, with subsequent phenotypic differences. If the ecology of the offspring remains essentially the same as that of the parent, then maintaining the same genotype and subsequent phenotype would appear to be more adaptive. However, in a rapidly changing ecology, laced with competition, the possibility of variation is helpful.

Two metaphors are employed to make the point. First, a lottery: if one knows the winning number, then, obviously the best course is to always produce that number. Thus, if one knows the winning genotype, the best course is to consistently provide it. This is roughly what asexual reproduction does. However, if the winning number is not known, then playing only one number every time is not the intelligent option; variance is needed. Thus, sexual reproduction provides a better chance of providing an adaptive genotype and phenotype. The second metaphor regards elbow room. In an ecology with limited resources, if all those who populated that ecology were seeking exactly the same resources, already scarce resources would be even less available leading to more intra-specific fighting over resources. However, if genetic variety lead to some variance in desire, such that not all desired exactly the same things, it would effectively created more "space" or "elbow room" for members of the same species. Such variance would aid the survival of the species by mitigating intra-specific competition. This variance is provided by sexual reproduction.¹⁹

¹⁸ See Geary, *Male, Female*, 16-17.

¹⁹ See Geary, *Male, Female*, 17-18.

The final theory presented by Geary regards pathogens and their ceaseless attacks on living organisms and those organisms' capacity for defending themselves. "Parasites such as viruses, bacteria, and worms are ubiquitous and often negatively affect the fitness of the host. Nearly all organisms are under constant threat from a variety of these potentially harmful parasites, which, in turn, creates strong selection pressures for the evolution of antiparasite adaptations, such as immune responses to viruses or bacteria."²⁰ The problem is that most pathogens reproduce much more quickly than the complex organism that it is assailing and thus can adapt to the defenses of the host organism faster than those defenses can adapt to them. Pinker describes this as a war between lock smiths and lock-pickers.²¹ In the case of asexual reproduction, if a pathogen has adapted itself to the defenses of parent, because the offspring is a genetic replica, that pathogen will also be adapted to the offspring - once the key has been obtained to open the lock of the parent's defenses, that same key will work for all of that parent's offspring. If, however, there is sexual reproduction, the genetic makeup of the offspring will necessarily be changed. Thus the adaptations that worked for breaking down the defenses of the parent will not necessarily work to compromise the defenses of the offspring. Pinker states that this genetic variation is like changing the locks on the doors every generation; having the key to the parent's system will not necessarily work for the offspring. Thus, on this rendering, sexual reproduction evolved so as to provide the immune system with intergenerational variability that counteracts parasites' greater ability to adapt subsequent to their shorter life cycles.

Whether it be to avoid harmful mutations, to provide phenotypic variance that will permit adaptation to a rapidly changing ecology, or permitting the immune system to counteract quickly reproducing parasites, what is common to these theories is that sexual reproduction provides a kind of genetic variety that asexual reproduction cannot. Thus, there were evolutionary pressures that demanded more genetic variety in complex organisms than asexual reproduction could provide. Thus, over time, random mutation and natural selection produced sexual reproduction to replace asexual reproduction in some species. For Pinker the most cogent of the three theories is the pathogen theory. Thus, for Pinker, the response to the question, "why is there sexual reproduction?", would be "germs."

2. *Origins of sexual differentiation*

The need for genetic variation proposes an evolutionary pressure that explains the need for sexual reproduction. It does not, however, explain sexual differentiation. All of the theories explaining sexual reproduction focus on the need

²⁰ Geary, *Male, Female*, 18.

²¹ Pinker, *HMW*, 462.

for variety; what is essential is that the offspring not be a genetic replica of the parent. Thus, what is needed is the contribution of two genotypes; there is no requirement, according to any of the given arguments, that the parents be different in any way other than having different DNA. Why not have two equal parents who contribute exactly equally to reproduction? The offspring would be the genetic combination of two parents and so have a unique genetic makeup, setting-back the pathogen attackers and thus adapting according to the evolutionary pressures that are proposed to be responsible for the origins of sexual reproduction.

The question could be put otherwise by asking why it is that, in sexual reproduction, there is a sperm and an ovum, instead of each parent contributing an equal reproductive cell? For Pinker, the answer to this question lies in the nature of the reproductive cells:²² The cells that will become the offspring contain more than just the parents' DNA; they also contain what Pinker calls "metabolic machinery," part of which are the mitochondria. The mitochondria, however, have genes of their own, which, according to evolutionary theory will have a maniacal obsession with reproducing themselves. If two cells combine, each containing the mitochondrial DNA, the genes in the mitochondria from both parents fight each other for reproductive ascendancy, rendering the cell resulting from the combination of the two a war zone, and leaving it in tatters for all its internal strife. In order to avoid this antagonistic state of affairs, it proved more adaptive, as Pinker puts it, for one parent to agree to "unilateral disarmament." In its germ cell, this parent has adapted so as to forego all of the aforementioned "metabolic machinery"; it donates only its DNA, without the mitochondria that would lead to internal feuding. Thus, one parent donates a cell containing only a half-set of genes; the other parent donates a cell that contains a half-set of genes and all of the "metabolic machinery" needed for the cell to grow and thrive after fertilization. The former cell is called the spermatozoon, the latter, the egg or ovum.

3. The essential difference

With the necessity of distinct reproductive cells, a critical juncture has been reached; for in that necessity lies the foundation of sexual differentiation, and the most fundamental distinction that exists between male and female. A male is that member of a species which, in the process of reproduction, contributes the simpler cell, the cell that contains only raw DNA. The female of a species, by contrast, will contribute the cell that contains not only the DNA but also the rest of the mechanisms that will allow the cell to thrive after fertilization. All other differences between males and females are subsequent to this fundamental difference, which is

²² See Pinker HMW, 462-463.

the result of adaptations due to the need for genetic variety in offspring, and potential intracellular conflict.

The sperm is a simple cell, containing the father's DNA and little else.²³ The egg, by contrast is more complex, more intricate, harder to produce, and therefore more valuable, more precious. This distinction in the "value" of the reproductive cell contributed by the mother or father is the initial difference that will lead to varying degrees of further divergence, depending upon the species. The distinction between the sperm and the egg also establishes a principle that will hold almost universally throughout the animal kingdom as regards reproduction: the female has greater investment in those things that surround reproduction. The egg is more valuable, more costly, and therefore requires more of the female than does the sperm of the male. In almost all species, this initial greater investment will be the first step in a series of adaptations leading to greater and greater female investment in reproduction.

Beginning with each germ cell, different surrounding apparatus will develop to accommodate each. The sperm is simpler, "less expensive" to the organism to produce. Therefore the organism can "afford" to produce more of them. They can also, therefore be spent more freely. Natural selection will produce the organs to achieve this. As such, male genitalia will develop: organs to produce a multitude of the simpler of the reproductive cells and the conjoined organ that is able to spread that which is more economically produced.

The ovum, on the other hand, as Pinker noted, is more precious; it, therefore, cannot be handled prodigally. It is packed with nutrients to aid its growth if fertilized. It has a protective cover to secure its integrity. The initially greater investment of the metabolic machinery leads to a greater value which in turn leads to still greater investment; packing it with food and giving it a protective cover. As the investment increases, the need to protect the investment also increases. Natural selection favors, in this case, those who do protect their investment, so, the parent who provides the more complicated reproductive cell, the female, develops organs to support and protect the ova. These are internal organs that shelter the ova. Because it is more costly to produce, there is no mechanism like that in the male that allows for its mass distribution. Rather, each egg appears to be, as it were, cherished by the organism. Thus the genitalia of the female are internal, which, in the case of humans serves not only to shelter the egg, but also to shelter, nourish, and protect the fetus after fertilization has occurred within the mother. Once again, the initial greater investment leads to yet more investment: the greater value of the egg leads to it being situated within internal organs that protect the investment. In mammals, the

²³ For a discussion of differences in the ovum and sperm and subsequent differences see Pinker, HMW, 463-464.

distinction in levels of investment becomes almost completely weighted on the side of the female: “in more than 95% of mammalian species, females can effectively provide all of the parental care and in fact do so.”²⁴

IV. THE UNFOLDING OF SEXUAL DIFFERENCE

1. *The economy of sexual difference*

Several times already the term “investment” has appeared; it will continue to do so for it is a central factor in the evolutionary explanation of the development of the sexes. The term must, therefore, be defined. As regards the role of investment, Pinker follows the thought of Robert Trivers:

Trivers has worked out how all the prominent differences between males and females stem from the differences in the minimum size of their investment in offspring. Investment, remember, is anything a parent does that increases the chance of survival of an offspring while decreases the parent’s ability to produce other viable offspring. The investment can be energy, nutrients, time, or risk.²⁵

The female, by definition, begins with more investment in offspring by the fact that the egg that she produces is more rare, more difficult and costly to produce. As discussed in Chapter 1, in humans, the number of ova produced is extraordinarily lower than the number of sperm produced. In most species, the initial greater investment in the reproductive cell will lead to greater and greater investment. And the greater the investment, the greater will be the limit that is placed upon reproduction; if the cost of producing offspring is great, that expenditure cannot be made as readily or as often.

This leads to the next crucial principle that follows from the reality of variant investment. The importance, once again, merits a lengthy quotation from Pinker:

The greater-investing sex chooses, the lesser-investing sex competes. Relative investment, then, is the cause of sex differences. Everything else – testosterone, estrogen, penises, vaginas, Y chromosomes, X chromosomes – is secondary. Males compete and females choose only because the slightly bigger investment in an egg that *defines* being female tends to get multiplied by the rest of the animal’s reproductive habits.²⁶

²⁴ Geary, *Male, Female*, 24.

²⁵ Pinker, HMW, 463.

²⁶ Pinker, HMW, 464.

This, obviously, is a statement of great importance in that it places the responsibility for sex-based differences with competition among males for nubile females and the selection of males by these females. In fact, competition and selection in regard to who is able to reproduce with whom is the principle of what can be considered a distinct mechanism of evolutionary change: sexual selection, as opposed to natural selection.

Sexual selection, in contrast [to natural selection], is not a struggle for existence *per se* but rather “depends on the advantage which certain individuals have over other individuals of the same sex and species, in exclusive relation to reproduction.”²⁷

Natural selection regards the ability to survive in a given environment. With the advent of sexual reproduction and differences between the sexes, sexual selection regards an individual member of a species’ ability to successfully compete for or be chosen by the member of the opposite sex so as to successfully reproduce.

The egg is precious and costly, produced at only a small fraction of the rates at which sperm is produced. In most species, this leads to greater investment on the part of the female, as in the case of mammals where, for the most part, the female conceives the young within her body, carries the young, gives birth, and then nurses the offspring with her own milk. The male, however, will generally only contribute a few minutes for mating and a small measure of sperm. The male, then, is able to repeat this process over and over with the possibility that he will then produce a multitude of offspring. The female does not have this same possibility: For instance, in humans, Pinker notes that a man who, in a brief period of time, has sexual relations with fifty women could possibly have fifty offspring. A woman, however, who has sexual relations with fifty men will still only have one child. If, in evolutionary terms, a male will be rewarded by having more than one mate – rewarded in the sense that he will produce more offspring who will carry on his genes – and there are a finite number of females, it follows that males will have to compete for females, with some mating with several while others mate with none.²⁸ Geary observes:

If one sex provides more than his or her share of parental investment, then members of that sex become an important reproductive resource for members of the opposite sex. Basically, the reproductive success of members of the lower investing sex is more strongly influenced by the number of mates that can be found than by investing in the well-being of individual offspring; whereas reproductive

²⁷ Geary, *Male, Female*, 21. Quotation within quotation: Charles Darwin, *On the origins of species by means of natural selection* (London: John Murray, 1859), 115.

²⁸ See Pinker, HMW, 464.

success of members of the higher investing sex is more strongly influenced, in most cases, by investment in offspring than in finding mates.²⁹

The more the female invests in reproduction and lower the rate at which she can reproduce renders her an ever-greater reproductive resource for the male. Thus, Geary makes the point that, the female, whose investment is already great, is best served by protecting that investment and caring for offspring once they exist. For the male, his energies may be better spent in finding multiple mates with whom to reproduce.

For females, the evolutionary pressure will be for greater selectivity. They do not have the almost limitless reproductive capacity of males. Therefore, they must choose wisely with whom they mate, ideally selecting a male with a healthy genetic make-up and, depending on the species and potential levels of paternal investment, with the capacity and the *likelihood* to assist her with the rearing of the offspring.³⁰

“Males compete and females choose.” Interestingly Pinker claims that this is a rule that is proved by the few exceptions that do exist. There are a few species of birds and fish where greater initial investment in the production of the egg does not lead to greater overall investment on the part of the female. Once the egg is fertilized, the male of the species plays the greater role in caring for the young. As would be predicted by the theory, in these cases, it is females who compete for males, guarding them once acquired and sometimes having harems of multiple males. It is the males, who must choose females wisely to minimize their vulnerability when they are attending to developing young.³¹ Thus, the broader principle is: those with less investment compete; those with greater investment choose. In almost all cases, this translates to: Males compete and females choose.

It will be good to take a moment to recall that which is driving the plot of the story: any distinctions that are witnessed in the development of sexual differentiation (be they due to natural selection or sexual selection) are so because they are (or were at one point) adaptive, because they allow the “maniacal genes” to replicate themselves. Having two parents allowed for a genetic shake-up that permitted an organism better to rebut a pathogen that assailed it. A differentiated

²⁹ Geary, *Male, Female*, 23.

³⁰ See Geary, *Male, Female*, 29-36.

³¹ See Geary, *Male, Female*, 24-25. He recounts the mating practices of, for instance, the red-necked phalarope. In this polyandrous species, it is the male who builds the nest and incubates the eggs. Because the male is caring for the fertilized eggs, the female is able leave in search of other males with whom to mate. As such, she can effectively mate every one week while the male can effectively play his role in reproduction only once every three weeks. In this scheme, males are the limiting factor in reproduction and so the more valuable resource. Females thus compete for access to males.

reproductive cell prevented intracellular conflict that would imperil offspring. This difference in the cells, with one being more “valuable” than the other leads to differences in those parts of the organism responsible for producing them; thus there are distinctions in male and female genitalia. And, typically, the greater initial female investment will be multiplied into further female investment in reproduction. It is this distinction in investment that creates distinct evolutionary pressures on males and females. Recall that it is those who reproduce most successfully who unwittingly write the plot of the story. What will become evident is that, in this story, what is adaptive for the member of the species with greater investment in reproduction is not necessarily adaptive for the member of the species of less investment. The environmental need for different adaptations, however, leads to distinct developmental paths.

2. *Male competition*

Male competition is a driving force in determining sexually differentiated developmental paths. Typically in nature females have greater investment in reproduction in males. While females, then, are concerned with protecting their greater investment, males will be looking for other opportunities to mate. This means they must compete with other males for access to females. In species such as primates and other mammals, female investment dwarfs that of males, rendering the females an even more valuable for reproduction and therefore even more so an object of competition. Other factors, however, also determine the nature of male-to-male competition.

For polygamy to be realized, the resources that support the species need to be clustered in space... and, in most cases members of the higher investing sex need to be sexually receptive at different times and need to be clustered together. If resources or potential mates are sparsely distributed, sexual receptivity is limited to a very short window of time, or both, then there is little opportunity for members of one sex to monopolize the reproductive efforts of members of the opposite sex. In these situations, monogamy and high levels of biparental care, if necessary, are expected....³²

Thus, while the primary determinant of competition is relative levels of investment in reproduction, other factors, such as sexual receptivity, and the distribution of resources and females, also determine if a male has the possibility of controlling the fertility of more than one female. These factors also, therefore, determine the nature of male competition.

³² Geary, *Male, Female*, 27.

Both Pinker and Geary offer a dramatic example of the effects of male competition: the elephant seal. Female elephant seals congregate at one beach; with all the females neatly tucked into one place, one male seal is able to control and mate with a large multitude of females, leaving many males with the potentially disastrous evolutionary consequence of having no females with whom to reproduce. Competition, therefore, to control the group of females is ferocious. "Success in these bouts is related to physical size, age, and residency (i.e., established males as opposed to newcomers) and determines social dominance."³³ Over time, therefore evolution selected the larger seals that presumably defeated the smaller suitors and thus hit the genetic jackpot, having a beach-full of females with whom to pass on his prize-fighting DNA.³⁴ At this point in history, as a result, male elephant seals are four times larger than females of the same species.³⁵ The intense evolutionary pressure to fight one's peers in order to be able to reproduce successfully was a pressure that existed only for males. As such, only the males were selected for what proved adaptive for the environment - in this case, those attributes which allowed him to compete successfully for the females: size, aggression, and overall ability to defeat another male elephant seal. Not having this catastrophic environmental pressure, one would not expect female seals to be selected in the same way for these attributes.

The situation is similar in gorillas where the habits of the females allow a male to control a smaller group of females, a harem of six or seven. Once again, one male with six or seven females, means many males with none. With the stakes again so high, male to male gorilla conflict can therefore be expected to be intense. And so it is. One could also predict that, therefore, male gorillas would be selected for their fighting ability, a large part of which is size. Thus male gorillas are two-times larger than female gorillas. Because female gorillas do not have to fight other female gorillas in order to reproduce, they lack this evolutionary pressure and so are not selected as much for size and strength. Thus subject to distinct evolutionary pressures, males and females follow distinct evolutionary paths.³⁶

Two more instances of this mode of adaptation will be illuminating; first, the gibbon. Females of this species disperse themselves in a manner in which it is not possible for a male gibbon to control more than one female. As such, there being more or less one female for every male, there is no pressure for males to fight

³³ Geary, *Male, Female*, 40-42. See also, Pinker, HMW, 465.

³⁴ Geary notes that less than 5% of males sire between 75% and 85% of the pups. *Male, Female*, 40.

³⁵ Pinker, HMW, 465. Geary claims that male elephant seals weigh three to eight times as much as females. *Male, Female*, 40.

³⁶ See Pinker, HMW, 465.

among themselves for control of females. Male and female gibbons therefore face the same environmental pressures and, as the same reasoning that accounted for the greater size of male elephant seals and gorillas would predict, male and female gibbons are the same size. Absent the need to fight amongst themselves for females, males have no evolutionary pressure to be better fighters than females and so display no difference in size.³⁷

Chimpanzees pose a different situation: they live in large, disorganized communities. While there is some competition for females, the size of the group makes securing access to multiple females impossible. The females have adapted to the situation by being somewhat promiscuous. A male, therefore, can never quite be sure if an offspring is his own; this makes killing the offspring of a female so that she is available for your offspring an ineffective tactic. Males, nevertheless, still compete, but not directly; it is their sperm that competes within the female genitalia. That male wins whose sperm reaches the ovum and fertilizes it. To compete most successfully, therefore, a male is served by producing a large quantity of sperm. Chimps, therefore, though considerably smaller than gorillas, have testicles considerably larger; for their sperm must compete with the sperm of other male chimps. Here again, it is environmental pressures causing the males to develop differently from females and differently from males of other species.³⁸

It must be noted, as well, that as one moves up the chain of being, more coalition-based competition is encountered. Thus, for example, unlike elephant seals where the competition is one male versus one male, with chimpanzees, various versions of coalition are used to establish and maintain social dominance. These coalitions appear to form most stably in species where males stay in groups with their kin (i.e., are the philopatric sex). Such coalitions may involve simply the presence of other males while one chimp threatens another, joint threatening, or joint attack on another individual or group. Coalition-based aggression is utilized both to establish position within a primate's own group and to establish dominance over a foreign group.³⁹ Thus, a male may form a coalition to improve his place in an intra-group hierarchy - an action that will generally increase his chances of mating with quality females. He may also form coalitions to overcome rival groups, which potentially involves control of that group's territory, resources, and females.

³⁷ See Pinker, HMW, 465.

³⁸ See Pinker, HMW, 465-466.

³⁹ Geary, *Male, Female*, 67-69.

3. Female choice and competition

Before proceeding to an examination of specifically human characteristics of sexual differentiation, a few words are in order regarding female choice and female-female competition. Geary provides a good general summary of female choice:

Across species, female choice tends to focus on those characteristics that are an honest (i.e., not easily faked) signal of male quality. These signals in turn are expressed through male secondary sex characteristics, which can range from the brightly colored plumage of the males of many species of birds, to male song, to the complex suite of behaviors necessary to build and maintain bowers.⁴⁰

Not surprisingly, across all species, females wish to mate with high-quality males. Such quality, however - especially genetic quality - cannot be directly perceived. Most choice therefore is made by means of secondary sex characteristics, which serve as markers of male quality.

This adds another aspect to the notion of male-male competition. Sometimes males will compete directly according to the criteria that females use in choosing a mate, or they may compete for social dominance which gives them access to control the resources that females need to reproduce, or they may simply control access to nubile females.⁴¹ It appears, however, that in primates, females can and will refuse the advances even of dominant males or influence the outcomes of male-male competitions.⁴²

In higher primates, Geary notes some interesting factors in female choice. In addition to selecting a dominant male or a male who could well provide for her and her offspring - especially by providing high quality food, such as meat won from hunting⁴³ - female choice appears also to have evolved to center on the male-female relationship. The formation of a relatively stable relationship with a male could provide a female with protection and social support. It appears that that the evolution of hidden ovulation and subsequent continuity of sexual receptivity on the part of the female lead to stronger male-female bonding. If the fertile time of the female is not evident, sexual receptivity of the female becomes necessarily more continuous. Thus, the male, in order to successfully reproduce cannot simply copulate during fertile periods. Forming a more stable bond with a female, therefore, becomes useful. Continuous sexual receptivity also renders it much more difficult for a dominant male to guard females and control their fertility - performing this

⁴⁰ Geary, *Male, Female*, 54.

⁴¹ See Geary, *Male, Female*, 54-55.

⁴² See Geary, *Male, Female*, 72-73.

⁴³ Geary, *Male, Female*, 90-92.

task only during a brief period of evident fertility is certainly easier than having to continuously guard a female, not knowing when she is fertile or not. Thus, male-female affiliations would be beneficial to both male and female. Geary describes the male benefits: "These benefits would have likely included preferential sexual relationships with his female friends, a higher likelihood of siring offspring in the context of these relationships, as contrasted with more casual relationships, and more direct investment in his offspring."⁴⁴ The female gains a source of protection and social support for her and her offspring. Hidden ovulation and subsequent lesser abilities of males to mate-guard also affords the female the opportunity for secondary, extra-pair sexual liaisons, which could serve to widen her male affiliations and subsequent support.⁴⁵

Regarding female-female competition this competition is generally not over mates, but rather access to high quality food sources – which, in turn, affects the health of offspring. Such competition and subsequent female-female aggression tends to have less severe consequences and to be less ritualized than male-to-male competition.⁴⁶ In primates, as with males, female-versus-female aggression is often coalition based. This occurs when females are the philopatric sex (i.e. the sex that remains with its birth group). In female-to-female competitions, such coalitions are used to defend food sources. They are also effective in defending offspring or food from stronger individual males.⁴⁷

As male investment in the care of offspring increases, however, so too will female-to-female competition for those males who provide them with better such support. Geary writes:

Female-female competition over mates would be expected in situations in which males differed in the degree to which they could invest in females and their offspring and when male were limited in the number of females in whom they could invest... Any such competition would have presumably focused on those features that females preferred in mates, such as the nature and quality of their social support or provisions provided to them and their offspring.⁴⁸

Thus, as male investment increases, so too does female competition for those males who will invest more reliably and more effectively.

⁴⁴ Geary, *Male, Female*, 91.

⁴⁵ For a discussion of the evolution of male-female affiliations see Geary, *Male, Female*, 90-92.

⁴⁶ Geary, *Male, Female*, 78.

⁴⁷ Geary, *Male, Female*, 79.

⁴⁸ Geary, *Male, Female*, 92.

4. *Culprits of distinction*

Pinker's forceful statement regarding the prioritization of the causes of sexual differentiation was quoted earlier. In the evolutionary scheme, sex differences are caused by distinct levels of investment in reproduction. All other differences - chromosomes, genes, genitalia, hormones, brains, etc., are driven by this fundamental distinction that, in turn, leads to distinct evolutionary pressures and subsequent distinct adaptations. However, this, of course, does not mean that distinctions in genitalia, hormones, brains, and the rest are not important. In fact, for non-rational animals, while the sexually selective evolutionary pressure in a given ecology may function as a kind of final cause, there nevertheless must also be efficient and material causes that are practically and proximately responsible for those differences. Before proceeding to examine sexual difference in humans - and the complications subsequent to human choice - it will be useful to survey proposed proximate causes of sexual difference in the evolutionary account.

In a section entitled "Proximate Mechanisms and Consequences of Sexual Selection,"⁴⁹ Geary outlines some of the primary biological mechanisms that, as it were, mediate sexually selected adaptations. All of these items will be familiar from the first chapter of this work. Geary's discussion centers on hormones and their effects on the brain and behavior. Not surprisingly, the discussion centers on controversial testosterone. In non-rational animals, however, its effects are not so controversial; this makes the instrumental role of testosterone in achieving evolutionary ends in non-human animals a good starting point.

In animals such as various species of birds, testosterone is related to the development of secondary sex characteristics, such as bright plumage, which evolved due to female choice (i.e., sexual selection of those traits). The relationship, however, is far from a simple one as many other variables are at play in the equation; nutrition, genetic quality, activity of the immune system, and parasites in conjunction with sex hormones all play roles in the expression of secondary sex characteristics. According to Geary, however, the principal relationship is that between the quality of the immune system and testosterone levels.⁵⁰

The relationship is complicated. Parasites cause increased activity of the immune system, which can suppress testosterone levels. Less testosterone leads to less developed secondary sex characteristics. Thus, the under-development of secondary sex characteristics can be an indicator of previous parasite infection. There are, however, further complications, for the testosterone levels associated with healthy development can, in fact, suppress the immune system, leaving the male more vulnerable to disease. The suppression of the immune system is not equal for

⁴⁹ Geary, *Male, Female*, 45-53.

⁵⁰ Geary, *Male, Female*, 46.

all males, though. Some males, high-quality males, maintain a more robust immune system in spite of higher testosterone levels. Thus, they are able to maintain testosterone levels that lead to developed secondary sex characteristics –which, in turn lead to selection by females – while, at the same time, maintain a strong immune system that is able to combat parasites that would cause more intense activity of the immune system and suppression of testosterone in a lesser quality male. The strength of the immune system is likely a result of a good genetic inheritance. So, while the development of secondary sex characteristics is, in some ways, most directly a function of testosterone levels, these levels can only be sustained if the genetic quality of the male, manifested in his immune system, permits such elevated levels of testosterone. However, even genetics and hormones can be undermined if sufficient nutrition is not available. Inadequate nutrition leads to suppression of testosterone and the immune system.⁵¹ So, for instance, when a female barn swallow chooses to mate with a conspecific male because of the length of his tail feathers, she is choosing a male whose genetic make-up provided an immune system that was able to ward off parasites while sustaining higher levels of testosterone that, in lesser quality males, would have weakened the immune system to the point of contracting disease, which, in turn, would lead to underdeveloped tail feathers. Though she chooses via tail feathers, the ultimate evolutionary cause of her choice is the genetic health that, through the sex hormone testosterone, leads to those feathers.

The interplay of genetic health, hormone levels, and final reproductive success appears to be even more complex in primates; it also provides a fascinating example of the interaction of ecology and biology. In some primates, there is a clear relationship between the social position as dominant male and the number of offspring. It appears that the relationship extends also to the quality of the immune system, and hormonal system; dominant males have superior immune and hormonal systems. The relationships between health, hormones, and reproductive success, however, are complex. Geary notes that “In wild olive baboons, for instance, dominant males in stable social hierarchies have relatively low levels of stress hormones, are in better physical condition, and appear to have better functioning immune systems than subordinate conspecifics.”⁵² The question of testosterone is an interesting one; generally, dominant males have equal levels of testosterone as subordinate males. However, in situations of conflict, testosterone levels of dominant males rise more quickly. Moreover, after the conflict passes, levels of testosterone and stress hormones return to normal more quickly in dominant males. Thus, while base-line levels of testosterone are not higher in dominant males, these

⁵¹ See Geary, *Male, Female*, 46-47.

⁵² Geary, *Male, Female*, 65.

levels spike more quickly when needed, and then subside more readily when not needed, generally pointing to a more precisely balanced hormonal system in dominant males.⁵³

The situation, however, is even more complicated, for it appears that changes in social position can lead to diminution or loss of some secondary sex characteristics. Geary recounts how a gelada baboon that has lost his harem will age over night, losing, in one fell swoop, the coloring and demeanor of a harem-holding male. This loss is permanent. Of the New World monkey, he writes: "When dominated by other males, subordinate males experience a severe drop in the level of those hormones (e.g., luteinizing hormone) responsible for testicular development and the maturation of sperm, which effectively results in socially induced sterility."⁵⁴ Thus it appears that social position may cause certain hormonal and physical differences as much as these differences cause social position.

Geary, goes on to remark that is very difficult to determine exactly which change precedes which. Thus, as Pinker stated earlier regarding testosterone, it appears that there is a reciprocal relationship between hormonal and environmental factors. It likewise appears clear, however, that sex hormones are indeed proximate causes at the service of ultimate evolutionary causes. While determining the exact relationship between sex hormones and certain secondary sex characteristics and behaviors is proving to be difficult, it appears clear that a complex, reciprocal relationship does exist.

The effects of testosterone on brain development provide other examples of how hormones mediate the effects of sexual selection. Geary gives several examples.⁵⁵ While in some birds plumage is the perceivable sign that indicates male quality and subsequent mating success, in others it is the quality of their song that will both elicit female choice and mark territorial dominance. The quality of the song is mediated by the functioning of certain areas of the brain, which, in turn, are influenced by sex hormones. In some bird species, the parts of the brain related to song are three to six times larger in males than females. Manipulating testosterone levels in males and females can lead to augmentation or diminution of these areas of the brain. In some species, there are also environmental factors, such as a young male hearing the song of his father, that work in tandem with sex hormone driven brain development.⁵⁶

In Chapter 1, prairie voles and montane voles were discussed regarding the importance of oxytocin and vasopressin. The meadow vole and prairie vole provide

⁵³ Geary, *Male, Female*, 65.

⁵⁴ Geary, *Male, Female*, 65

⁵⁵ See Geary, *Male, Female*, 48-53.

⁵⁶ Geary, *Male, Female*, 48.

another interesting opportunity for comparison, this time, however regarding parts of the brain that pertain to spatial ability. As with the montane vole, the meadow vole is polygynous, while the prairie vole is monogamous. Female meadow voles are geographically dispersed, therefore males must cover significant geographical distances to find multiple females with whom to mate. Thus, male meadow voles have home ranges – the home range is the geographic area that an animal can cover in the course of its normal activities – four to five times larger than the female meadow vole. This difference exists only in mating season. For the monogamous prairie vole, male and female home ranges are the same. As might be anticipated, experiments showed that the spatial ability of the male meadow vole was superior to that of the female meadow vole and that of the male and female prairie vole. Interestingly, the hippocampus of the male meadow vole is larger than that of the female, and the male and female prairie vole. It appears that this difference is influenced by sex hormones.⁵⁷ Geary adds that in polygynous rats, males and testosterone treated females showed superior spatial ability than castrated males and normal females. It was also found that males and testosterone-treated females tend to use geometric cues to navigate while females use landmarks plus geometric cues. The former serves better for unfamiliar landscapes while the latter is more suited to navigating familiar landscapes.⁵⁸

Both in the case of hormone mediated-differences in the brains of birds related to song quality, and in the brains of voles regarding spatial ability, differences in the brain are at the service of sexual selection. With the meadow vole, the fact that greater testosterone levels lead to a larger hippocampus, which, in turn allow him a wider range of locomotion is ordered to the fact that such differences allows the male meadow vole to reproduce more effectively. In fact, Geary notes a species of bird where the female has better navigational abilities because she lays her eggs in the nests of other birds and must be able to keep track of many different nests. Thus, as PINKER stated, biological and anatomical sex-based differences are driven by the principles of sexual selection.

V. SEXUAL DIFFERENTIATION IN HUMANS

1. Introduction

As observed at the beginning of this chapter, to understand the evolutionary account of human sexual differentiation, in some ways, is to understand a story. It is a story without an author, but, at the same time, is a non-random series of steps, one leading to the next. In living things, the path is set by random genetic and ecological

⁵⁷ Geary, *Male, Female*, 48-51.

⁵⁸ Geary, *Male, Female*, 51-52.

changes and that which best suits survival and reproduction. Once the conditions are set, however, the results are predictable and cogent. The case for sexual reproduction has already been made: genetic variation was needed in order either to avoid the accumulation of maladaptive mutations, adapt to rapidly changing ecologies, or fend off encroaching parasites. Battling mitochondrial DNA accounts for the origins of sexual differentiation. With the initial difference in the germ cells, generally, throughout the animal world, a series of adaptations is initiated that winds and finds its way to escalating levels of female investment in reproduction. By the time the more recent stages in the series are reached – specifically primates for which there is internal conception and gestation of the young, and feeding of the young with mother’s milk – female investment far exceeds male investment.⁵⁹

While it would be most interesting to follow the history of sexual reproduction, in all its permutations and adaptations from its first and simplest instances to its complex expression in human beings, such an endeavor is far too ambitious for the scope of this work.⁶⁰ However, in the preceding sections of this chapter, the principles necessary to understand the evolutionary account of human sexual differentiation have been established. Sexual selection regards the favoring of those traits – be they physical, psychological or behavioral – that touch upon the effective reproduction of the male or female of a given species. Thus, for instance, the size of the male elephant seal, relative to the female, is a sexually selected characteristic; male seals were selected for size because greater size lead to greater reproductive success in virtue of the advantages it gave in intra-species, male to male conflict – a selective pressure that did not exist for females. Within the mechanism of sexual selection, there appears to be relative accord among evolutionists that the forces that drive this selection center on the varying levels of investment in reproduction found in the male and female. The sex that invests more in reproduction will always be the limiting factor of reproduction, and hence the more valuable resource in reproduction. This being the case, the lesser-investing sex will compete for access to this resource. Thus is established the fundamental principle that the greater-investing sex chooses or limits reproduction while the lesser-investing sex competes for access to the fertility of the greater-investing sex. In almost all species, the female is the greater-investing sex, and the male is the lesser-investing sex. Thus, the principle can generally be translated that females limit reproduction, and males compete for access to females. Depending on the level of investment by males, a counter-dynamic can also exist in which females compete for higher quality males and males take up the position of choosing females.

⁵⁹ See Bjorklund and Pellegrini, OHN, 221.

⁶⁰ The first three chapters of Geary’s work provide an interesting tour of the highlights of this development. See Geary, *Male, Female*, 3-96.

A corollary can be added regarding the focus of sexual behavior; it follows from the large inequalities witnessed in investment levels in reproduction in primates.

Male investment can theoretically end following copulation. As such, males have higher potential reproductive rates, in that, following insemination of a female, they can seek additional mating opportunities; in contrast, once conception has occurred, females' mating opportunities end (at least temporarily) and their parenting efforts begin. The end result is that males typically invest more in mating than parenting, whereas the reverse pattern is found for most females.⁶¹

Males are likely to attempt to maximize reproductive success by seeking new mating opportunities. Female primates, subject to internal conception, gestation, and lactation do not have this same reproductive option and are better served by preserving an existing reproductive success through parenting. In males, there is a bias towards focusing on mating opportunities; in females there is a bias towards preserving existing offspring by parenting.

These principles suggest an order for discerning the evolutionary account of human sexual differentiation, and, thereby, an account of the human male as male. As the critical element in all sexual selection is varying degrees of investment in reproduction, the first step in providing the evolutionary account of sexual differentiation is examining varying levels of investment in reproduction in humans. Next, humans must be examined in terms of female choice and limiting, and then of male-male competition. Finally, given the significant level of male investment in reproduction, female-female competition must be considered along with male choice. It is worth noting that the discussion of female and male investment in reproduction necessarily leads to a discussion of motherhood and fatherhood and thus anticipates later chapters of this work.

As noted it would be of great interest to attempt to trace human sexual differentiation in an unbroken developmental chain back to the origins of sexual reproduction itself. In this section, however, the story is re-joined having already arrived at the species of modern man, *homo sapiens*.⁶² For those beings that will eventually develop into humans, evolutionary forces push the female to develop internal genitalia that will protect the more precious egg. Males develop external genitalia that will most effectively spread the more economical and mass-produced

⁶¹ Bjorklund and Pellegrini, OHN, 221.

⁶² It is worth noting that an attempt is made here not to assume certain aspects of modern western culture. In fact, some aspects of modern culture, such as birth control, and baby formula introduce variables that were not present for the vast majority of evolutionary history.

reproductive cell that he bears. In virtue of the relative value of the egg and sperm the fundamental internal/external split is made. The more precious egg warrants internal organs to protect it. The more plentiful sperm suggests an external organ to spread them. The impact of this internal/external split serves to increase female investment in the ancestors of modern man; for the protective environment that secures the well being of the egg, also proves to be well suited to nurture the fertilized egg. Internal gestation enters the picture and, once again, female investment in reproduction increases: the female now must deal not only with what will become in humans the troublesome monthly cycle of presenting ova for potential fertilization, but now she must confront the immensely significant reality of pregnancy. As if this added investment were not enough, in the case of mammals, to the greater initial investment in the ovum, and the increasingly higher investment that follows from the reality of pregnancy, the necessity of nursing the young must be added. Building upon the greater investment resulting from pregnancy, evolutionary mechanisms determined that the female would remain connected to her newborn young in virtue of the need to feed them.

2. *Female Investment*

As with all other females, the human female begins with greater investment in reproduction in virtue of greater investment in the reproductive cell. Clearly there is more investment in the production of the ovum in the simple fact that the cell is more complex, leading to far less production than the sperm and to its protected situation within the female body. In Chapter 1, the elaborate endocrinological system that accompanies ovulation was outlined. The human female menstrual cycle is something which in and of itself represents a significantly greater female investment in reproduction.⁶³ Clearly, this cycle is something to which a woman must adapt, both physically and psychologically.

The significance of the monthly menstrual cycle pales in comparison to the momentous reality of pregnancy. To further protect the already-large investment in the ovum, once fertilized it remains within the protective confines of the woman's body; the new mother now faces nine months of providing everything for her

⁶³ The fact of greater investment does not negate the phenomenon that women can have a psychologically positive experience of menstruation. For a discussion of the female experience of menstruation see Anne E. Walker, *The Menstrual Cycle* (New York: Routledge, 1997), 1-10. Recall that investment regards any expenditure of time or resources that is dedicated to the production or care of offspring that negatively impacts the production of another offspring. Thus, while the female cycle is devoting a monthly cycle to one ovulation, the presenting of *one* ovum, the male reproductive system, by contrast, will produce a multitude of sperm, all of which could potentially produce offspring.

offspring as the child develops within her, affecting almost every aspect of her life, and culminating in the dangerous experience of childbirth. During the pregnancy, a woman's body must expend a large amount of resources in order to support the developing child. Her entire system is affected and her psyche as well can be more or less consumed with the reality of another being growing within her. It is hard to surmise what must have been the pressures placed upon our earliest ancestors regarding the difficulties associated with bearing children. Illness and lesser mobility and agility as the pregnancy proceeded would no doubt place unique pressures and vulnerabilities on the expecting woman. Once pregnant, the woman's investment is complete: she must provide everything to the child within her in such a way that the production of other offspring is precluded. While a male who has impregnated a woman has the ability to impregnate dozens more women during the space of the woman's pregnancy, the pregnant woman obviously cannot become pregnant again until the child currently within her is delivered.

This brings to the forefront the question of the baby's arrival. Here again, the distinction in levels of investment could not be sharper. Though there are tales of men fainting during childbirth, there is little doubt as to who has more investment in this vital event. Historically, women have suffered great risk in the process of childbirth, regularly facing the prospect of death while attempting to bring another into the world. For the vast majority of human history - and still now in the developing world - women literally had to risk their lives in order to reproduce. In evolutionary terms, this is the ultimate investment, for it completely negates the possibility of any further offspring.

Once she has run the gauntlet of childbirth, her investment does not end: she must first recover from birthing the child and then begin the almost ceaseless job of attending to her new child, with her primary and unique task being nursing the infant. It was not until very recent times that a woman could feed her child formula, and only the wealthy could turn an infant over to a wet nurse. Natural selection "chose" to augment female investment by fitting the female with means to continue the nurturance of the offspring even after they are born. Typically, a woman could count on two to four years of nursing a baby, during which time the child could not be far from her for long.

The newborn is not only helpless as regards feeding itself; the human infant is more or less helpless simply, requiring the assistance of some more capable presence for every necessity of life and for every aspect of life which, superadded to the necessities of life, will lead to a life that is flourishing: the child must not only be fed and kept warm and safe, he or she must also be educated and initiated into the various tasks and stages of life will allow him or her eventually to successfully reproduce. Because of her necessary proximity to the child - the proximity necessitated by the fact that she must feed the child - and the greater investment she

has already made in the child, the mother naturally becomes the first one to provide for all of the necessities of the helpless new human. As such, the primary responsibility for the care of children has historically fallen to woman.

Empirical studies verify that greater female investment in reproduction continues after the birth of a child.

For example, in a study of six cultures (Kenya, India, Mexico, the Philippines, Japan, and the United States), children were in the presence of their mothers between 3 and 12 times more frequently than in the presence of their fathers. This pattern persists in Western societies in which women work outside the home and has even been found for a group of fathers in Sweden who requested paternal leave from their jobs to be the primary caretaker for their newborns.⁶⁴

Bjorklund and Pellegrini go on to note that, in modern western societies the difference in time spent with children between mothers and fathers does appear to be lessening, but nevertheless do not seem to be disappearing. Later, they suggest a principle that, at least in part, explains why such differences are not likely to be easily extinguished: "Modern women nonetheless possess the same evolved psychology as their ancestral grandmothers and contemporary women in traditional societies."⁶⁵ Thus, even if cultural ideologies change, an inherited, evolved psychology remains to which certain persistent patterns of behavior can be attributed.

It is good to keep this principle in mind in considering another aspect of maternal investment from the evolutionary perspective. Bjorklund and Pellegrini refer to this as the "calculus of maternal investment."⁶⁶ Pinker observes how, in many species, parents' reproductive tactics center on the production of as many offspring as possible, allowing the strongest to survive, while the weaker perish. Little investment is placed in parenting while more is placed on seeking new mating opportunities. "All organisms therefore face a "choice" of allocating their time, calories, and risk to caring for an existing offspring and upping its odds of survival, or cranking out new offspring and letting them all fend for themselves."⁶⁷ As with all evolutionary outcomes, which strategy a given species employs depends upon which is more effective in producing the greatest number of fit, reproducing adults in a given ecology. Birds and mammals have evolved to provide significant levels of parental care for their young.⁶⁸

⁶⁴ Bjorklund and Pellegrini, OHN, 221.

⁶⁵ Bjorklund and Pellegrini, OHN, 228-229.

⁶⁶ Bjorklund and Pellegrini, OHN, 227-235.

⁶⁷ Pinker, HMW, 441.

⁶⁸ Pinker, HMW, 441.

Being a species which invests in parenting and a species in which the greater part of parenting responsibility falls to the mother, a certain calculus ensues as to how much maternal investment is optimal to maximize overall reproductive success. Complete investment in one offspring can preclude the effective production of another offspring. However, premature revoking of investment in an offspring can lead to the loss of *all* or part of the investment provided up to that point if that offspring fails to survive and flourish. Thus, according to both Pinker and Bjorklund and Pellegrini, a mother's first choice must be whether a given offspring merits the investment it will require:

Parents of all species face the choice of whether to continue to invest in a newborn. Parental investment is a precious resource, and if a newborn is likely to die there is no point in throwing good after bad by fledging or suckling it. The time and calories would be better spent on its littermates or clutchmates, in starting over with new offspring, or in waiting until the circumstances are better. Thus most animals let their runtish or sickly offspring die. Similar calculations enter into human infanticide. In foraging peoples, women have their first child in their late teens, nurse them on demand for four infertile years, and see many die before adulthood.⁶⁹

Infanticide is the result of a decision that investment in a given newborn is not an effective use of parental resources. Bjorklund and Pellegrini note that “[i]nfanticide is sanctioned in many traditional societies and, in fact, is expected by most members of some societies, including parents under certain circumstances.”⁷⁰ Even in developed cultures, a child of less than one year of age is seven times more likely to be killed by a parent than by a stranger. The likelihood of a parent killing a child drops precipitously after the first year, while the likelihood of being killed by a stranger rises as age increases and spikes in the late teens.⁷¹ Thus Pinker claims that parents may delay emotional attachment to children until some time passes and reveals if the child's fitness and the current ecology will support its survival.⁷² He also offers that the phenomenon of postpartum depression may be a residue of the not-so-distant evolutionary past when infanticide was a looming reality for women:

Postpartum depression has been written off as a hormonal delirium, but as with all explanations of complex emotions, one must ask *why* the brain is wired so as to let hormones have their effects. In most of human evolutionary history, a new mother

⁶⁹ Pinker, HMW, 443.

⁷⁰ Bjorklund and Pellegrini, OHN, 229.

⁷¹ Bjorklund and Pellegrini, OHN, 230-231.

⁷² Pinker, HMW, 444.

had good reason to pause and take stock. She faced a decision between a definite tragedy now and a chance of an even greater tragedy years hence, and the choice was not to be taken lightly. Even today, the typical rumination of a depressed new mother – how will I cope with this burden? – is a genuine issue.⁷³

The weight of the heavier investment falls more squarely upon the new mother who must ask herself if she can bear the continued investment that raising the child to maturity will require. If the child appears not to have the mettle needed to benefit from this investment, then perhaps losses are best cut at the beginning in the hope that another, better opportunity will arise.

Bjorklund and Pellegrini would say that this calculus of “loss cutting” is somewhat confirmed in noting the mother’s age in relation to the likelihood of infanticide and child abuse. A young, fertile woman is likely to have many future opportunities to mate. Therefore, for her, a child is a more expendable resource because the likelihood of being able to recoup a loss is higher. For an older woman, however, the prospect of recouping a loss becomes less and less likely as her reproductive years dwindle. There is, therefore, more pressure to maintain investment in existing offspring.⁷⁴ Thus, evolutionary logic would predict that younger mothers are more likely to abandon, abuse, or kill their children. Statistically, maternal age is the best predictor for abuse, neglect, and infanticide. A study showed that, in Canada, teenage mothers are more than four times more likely to kill their infants. This tendency was confirmed in infanticide rates among nomadic foraging tribes in Bolivia and Paraguay.⁷⁵

While infanticide is obviously the most profound and absolute manner of terminating investment in a given offspring, it is not the only mode of reduced investment. Bjorklund and Pellegrini observe that, even in modern societies, children with serious developmental or physiological deficiencies, such as mental retardation, or a cleft palate, are two to ten times more likely to be abused.⁷⁶ In another study, involving premature twins, observations of interactions between the new mother and her twins revealed that mothers exhibited more positive interaction with the *healthier* twin. The implication is that evolution has fitted the psychology of the mother to invest more in the child that has a better chance of surviving and reproducing and thus carrying on the mother’s genetic line.⁷⁷

In all of these cases – abuse, neglect, infanticide – there exists conflict and calculation. At odds are the natural desires of the child, who wants to exist and

⁷³ Pinker, HMW, 444.

⁷⁴ Bjorklund and Pellegrini, OHN, 231-232.

⁷⁵ Bjorklund and Pellegrini, OHN, 231-232.

⁷⁶ Bjorklund and Pellegrini, OHN, 229.

⁷⁷ Bjorklund and Pellegrini, OHN, 228-229.

thrive, and therefore seeks the resources needed to do so, and the mother who also must survive and optimize her finite reproductive capacity. In fact, according to both Pinker, and Bjorklund and Pellegrini, this conflict begins not at birth but at conception. Pinker writes: “a woman with an unborn child seems like a vision of harmony and nurturance, but beneath the glow a mighty battle goes on inside her.”⁷⁸ Bjorklund and Pellegrini follow innovative evolutionist Robert Trivers in stating that the in utero situation between mother and fetus is like a “tug-of-war” for valuable resources.⁷⁹ Pinker cites research that shows how the fetus hijacks maternal insulin leading to increased blood sugar, which the fetus can utilize. The mother responds by secreting more insulin; the fetus, in turn by secreting more of the hormone to neutralize the insulin. This leads to an escalation that ends with hormone levels a thousand times their normal concentration. A similar dynamic, according to Pinker, occurs regarding the new mother’s blood pressure.⁸⁰ Bjorklund and Pellegrini describe these phenomena as the fetus “strong-arming” the mother into providing adequate resources, “even though these fetal manipulations may be harmful, in some cases to the mother.”⁸¹ Thus the somewhat antagonistic “calculus,” which appears to be at the heart of the evolutionary explanation, is established at conception: the offspring is seeking to maximize the resources at its disposal to ensure its healthy development, while the mother is seeking to preserve herself and her own future mating possibilities.

Once a mother has decided to continue her investment in a child, the question becomes at what point to curtail investment in one offspring so as to free resources to be invested in a new offspring. “A parent should transfer investment from an older child to a younger one when the benefit to the younger exceeds the cost to the older. The reckoning is based on the fact that the two children are equally related to the parent.”⁸² Pinker goes on to note that the problem is that, while the child – like the parent – is related 50% to its sibling, it is related 100% to itself. Thus, the first child resists any reallocation of resources from itself to a new sibling. This, according to the evolutionists, is the heart of sibling rivalry – the competition for the limited resources of the parent. For the greater-investing mother, whose reproductive capacities are limited by rapidly diminishing ovarian follicles, in the realm of ultimate, evolutionary causality, she must “calculate” at what point the focus of investment can be shifted from a first child to second in a manner that will best benefit the survival of each.

⁷⁸ Pinker, HMW, 442.

⁷⁹ Bjorklund and Pellegrini, OHN, 233-234.

⁸⁰ Pinker, HMW, 443.

⁸¹ Bjorklund and Pellegrini, OHN, 234.

⁸² Pinker, HMW, 441.

Thus, in humans, maternal investment is a complicated matter. Clearly it is significantly greater than paternal investment – a phenomenon which continues even in “progressive” western cultures. Nevertheless, this investment is not absolute. It is limited by a “calculus” the object of which is maximize her reproductive success, not in the sense of having given birth to the largest number of babies, but rather in having the largest number of babies who are then able to survive into adulthood and so then reproduce themselves. It is in this way that the genetic inheritance of the mother is most forcefully projected into the future.

3. *Male Investment: the enigma of human paternity*

According to Geary, in more than 95% of mammalian species, males provide little to no parental investment.⁸³ This observation prompts a question from Bjorklund and Pellegrini: “Although in contemporary culture it may be appropriate to ask why men do not spend more time with their children than they do, from a broader, species perspective, the better question is, why do men contribute to the care of children at all?”⁸⁴

The question of paternal investment – its nature and the nature of its exigency – is the question of this work. This section, therefore, provides an outline of arguments that will later be expanded. First, a likely explanation for human paternal investment is offered as part of an evolutionary narrative. Next, a theory of the evolutionary progression that led to human paternal investment as it is now experienced is proposed. Finally, in light of greater knowledge of paternal investment, a brief contrast between maternal and paternal investment is offered.

In light of the overwhelming tendency for mammalian fathers to provide little to no investment in parenting, the challenge to the evolutionist becomes how to explain the significant levels of paternal investment that are found in most human societies. As with all cases of evolutionary progression, the answer lies in discerning in how a given adaptation proved to augment the reproductive success of the entity in question in the ecology in which the adaptation was likely to have evolved. In this sense, as was done for maternal investment, the calculus of paternal investment must be evaluated in terms of costs and benefits to the potentially investing father. Thus an analysis of the adaptive character of fatherhood can be done in terms of the relevant costs and benefits.

Costs: As paternal investment is so rare in mammals, evidently there is either considerable risk, little potential benefit, or some combination of the two such that, generally, the cost of paternal investment is greater than the benefit. Perhaps the

⁸³ David C. Geary, “Evolution and Proximate Expression of Human Paternal Investment,” *Psychological Bulletin*, Vol. 126, No. 1 (2000): 55.

⁸⁴ Bjorklund and Pellegrini, *OHN*, 235.

greatest single risk in paternal investment regards the uncertainty of paternity.⁸⁵ Unlike some birds and fish, where ovulation and fertilization by males occur outside the female, in most mammals, ovulation and fertilization are concealed within the mother. Thus, a given male cannot be certain of his paternity, for he cannot see himself fertilizing the ova. This uncertainty leads to a significant risk in investing in any given offspring, for there is always the possibility that he might be investing time, energy, and other resources in offspring who are not his own, thus aiding the genetic legacy of a rival. This risk strikes at the heart of evolutionary logic for it carries with it not only the possibility of wasting one's own limited resources and thus harming one's own genetic legacy, but also of expending oneself precisely so as to benefit a rival. As the mother can always be certain of her maternity, this is a risk she does not run. For this reason, Geary comments that the notion of equally split maternal and paternal investment in any mammal where there is concealed ovulation and fertilization is improbable at best.⁸⁶

Another hurdle to paternal investment is the opportunity cost associated with it. It has already been noted that, unlike the female - who once she is impregnated, at the very least for the next nine months, has no further reproductive potential - the male, after having impregnated one female, has equal capacity to impregnate many others. He must, though, seek and win these opportunities. If, however, he is placing a significant amount of his time and resources into an already existing offspring, he effectively forfeits his ability to seek other mating opportunities. Thus, by investing in his offspring, he pays the cost of lost reproductive opportunities with other females.⁸⁷

Pinker adds an additional, interesting point: "The embryo does most of its growing inside the mother, where the father can't get at it to help directly."⁸⁸ Everything is taking place inside of the mother, away from the father's ability to see, feel, or sense in any way that approaches the experience of the mother. This sentient distance seems to lead to a psychological distance, which, in turn, makes it easier for the male to walk away from a child once begotten. Throughout the vast majority of our history - before the availability of abortion - a woman simply could not walk away from a pregnancy: the child was within her; for her it was impossible simply to remove herself from the situation; the "situation" was within her. For the male however, even if he has relative certitude that the child is his, all of the growth and development of the pre-natal child is happening outside of him, with nothing physical precluding him from impregnating other women or abandoning the

⁸⁵ Pinker, *HMW*, 466. Geary, *Male, Female*, 98. Bjorklund and Pellegrini, *OHN*, 236-237.

⁸⁶ Geary, *Male, Female*, 118.

⁸⁷ Bjorklund and Pellegrini, *OHN*, 235, 239. Geary, *Male, Female*, 118.

⁸⁸ Pinker, *HMW*, 466.

expectant mother. Thus, the “distance” of the father places another hurdle to paternal investment.

Benefits: In combination with the primate realities of internal gestation and lactation for females, and the costs and obstacles to paternal investment outlined above, there must be significant adaptive benefits to paternal investment for it to have taken hold in the human species. First I examine the physical benefits to children, followed by social and emotional benefits.

In order to attempt to examine the effects of paternal investment in an ecology more like the one in which human paternal habits likely evolved, Geary looks to a forest dwelling tribe, the Ache. Ache children without a father have a mortality rate more than two times greater than children who have fathers; they are three times more likely to die of illness. They also have two times the risk of being killed or kidnapped by a fellow Ache. The mortality rate is likely due in part to the provision of high quality food gained from hunting. A sign of this is that the mortality rate of the children of good hunters is lower than that of the children of less skilled hunters. This may be in part due to the prestige and concomitant social accommodations that also benefit and effective hunter’s children. Geary adds: “In many other preindustrial societies, fathers directly provision for their children, typically with meat obtained through hunting, and a man’s skill at providing this resource can significantly influence child mortality rates.”⁸⁹

Sadly, Ache children who lose their father, be it through death or divorce, are likely to be killed by the tribe.⁹⁰ In fact, Geary points out that, in many cultures, lack of paternal support is considered legitimate justification for infanticide. In a study of 60 societies, in six of these societies, infanticide occurred if no man either admitted paternity or accepted the obligation of supporting the child. In fourteen societies, infanticide was permitted if the woman was unwed. The authors of the study go on to say that this is likely due to the assumption that, without a husband, the woman would not be able to adequately provide for her child.⁹¹

Though perhaps not as dramatic as in hunter/gatherer societies – in which child mortality rates range from 40 to 64% – the efficacy of paternal investment continues into industrial societies. Geary quotes a 25 year study that concludes that “a man’s SES [socioeconomic status] is a strong predictor of his offspring’s survival to adulthood.”⁹² Further it appears that, across cultures morbidity (incidence of disease) and mortality are related to SES. And a family’s SES, even now, is related to the involvement of the father: “Across industrial societies, paternal income and

⁸⁹ Geary, *Male, Female*, 111. Also, see Pinker, *HMW*, 466.

⁹⁰ Geary, *Male, Female*, 111.

⁹¹ Geary, *Male, Female*, 110-111.

⁹² Quoted in Geary, *Male, Female*, 112.

occupational status are an important, and sometimes the sole, determinant of the family's SES, and, given this, paternal investment in the family can affect the physical well-being of children in important ways."⁹³ Thus, not only in preindustrial societies, but also in contemporary societies, paternal investment pays dividends regarding the health and survival of offspring; this is a fundamental variable in the calculus of paternal investment.

Physical health and survival is foundational. Paternal investment, however, also contributes to the social and emotional well being of offspring, which, in turn affect those offspring's reproductive success. In the United States, a father's active support is associated with academic achievement, social competence, and emotional regulation.⁹⁴ These are all aspects of development that clearly go beyond mere survival and indicate a paternal role in personal and social flourishing of offspring. Geary observes that paternal involvement leads to greater social competitiveness in offspring. This advantage can be particularly operative in times of great stress, such as during a famine or other crisis, and so can bear on survival and reproductive success.⁹⁵ Further, children whose fathers engaged in rough-and-tumble play with them are likely to be more socially popular - a fact that has clear implications for their reproductive success. Because mortality rates are already much lower in industrial societies, paternal investment cannot have the same dramatic impact that it does in preindustrial societies. Nevertheless, it has other positive benefits touching upon the fitness of offspring that render paternal investment in offspring adaptive.

This is especially the case given the protracted nature of the development of human offspring. A longer period of development means a longer period of vulnerability. This vulnerability, however, could be sustained only with paternal investment.

The period of dependency for humans is vastly extended relative to other mammals. In addition to the 2- to 4-year period in which mothers (in the days before baby formula) provide infants their only source of calories via nursing, dependency is extended for another several years, when children are unable to eat an adult diet but must have food specially prepared for them. Under these conditions, paternal provisioning increases the chance of survival for their offspring, and, in most contemporary hunter-gatherer societies, fathers provide the majority of calories consumed by their offspring and their mates. In fact, the extended period of immaturity for humans and paternal investment likely coevolved. A slow-growing, dependent, large-brained creature, who requires a long

⁹³ Geary, *Male, Female*, 112.

⁹⁴ Bjorklund and Pellegrini, *OHN*, 237.

⁹⁵ Geary, *Male, Female*, 114.

time to master the demands of a complex social community, could not likely have evolved without paternal support.⁹⁶

The protracted development of human offspring, facilitated by paternal investment, allowed these offspring time to acquire and master skills that were impossible to those whom necessity required to develop more rapidly.⁹⁷ Thus, an earlier point is made stronger: not only was it the case that paternal investment increased survival rates in offspring, but the claim is being made that the security provided by paternal investment in offspring was intertwined in the evolution of the human developmental process, allowing for protracted development and thus for more complete development. Thus, paternal investment is a key element in the very nature and higher capacities of the human person.

More can, must, and will be said on the nature and efficacy of paternal investment. The point here is to note levels of paternal investment with a view to exploring how such investment affects and is an effect of the mechanisms of evolutionary change – in this case, more precisely, sexual selection. With that in mind, a few words about the likely incremental process will be helpful.

Levels of paternal investment are not identical across all human societies. Thus, something of the ecology that promotes paternal investment can be gleaned by examining paternal-absent versus paternal-present societies. “Father absent societies are characterized by aloof husband-wife relationships, a polygynous marriage system, local raiding and warfare, male social displays – verbal and with ornamentation – and little or inconsistent direct paternal investment in children.”⁹⁸ Geary goes on to say that father absence is likely to occur in mid-range societies, that is, where low-level agriculture is practiced and natural resources are abundant. If natural resources are abundant, one of the primary potential benefits of an involved father – providing high-quality food – is mitigated in light of readily available alternatives to his provision. Thus, child mortality will not be impacted as greatly by the absence of paternal investment. As would be anticipated, men in these circumstances focus their energies on finding other mating opportunities rather than assisting existing offspring. Thus, there is greater emphasis on achieving social dominance and acquiring more wives.⁹⁹

Father present societies, by contrast, are found in less stable, harsher ecologies where providing for more than one wife is difficult. Male energy must therefore be focused on preserving existing offspring, for, in harsher conditions, lack

⁹⁶ Bjorklund and Pellegrini, *OHN*, 235-237. See also Geary, *Male, Female*, 118.

⁹⁷ Geary, *Male, Female*, 118.

⁹⁸ Geary, *Male, Female*, 108.

⁹⁹ Geary, *Male, Female*, 108-109.

of such care has dire consequences. Thus, ecology can promote a manner of monogamy in which a male's reproductive success is best served by assisting his offspring and their mother. Interestingly, in most large, stratified, and industrial societies, monogamy is socially imposed. Thus, paternal investment increases.

Although the factors that have led to the cultural evolution of socially imposed monogamy are not fully understood, the net result is a relative shift in men's reproductive efforts, from mating effort to parental effort. Whether monogamy is ecologically or socially imposed, these father-present societies are generally characterized by high levels of spousal affiliation and intimacy, low levels of warfare or professional military, which results in fewer men being socialized for intergroup aggression, and relatively high levels of men's provisioning of their spouse and children.¹⁰⁰

Thus, the cultural imposition of monogamy contributes to the augmentation of men's investment in both their spouse and their children.

Hints of this effect were seen in the effects of concealed ovulation and fertilization, and continuous sexual receptivity in bonobos and olive baboons.¹⁰¹ Geary offers a schema that could account for the development of paternal investment throughout primate evolution. It begins with female choice. Given the benefits associated with paternal investment, those females who selected to mate with males who provided some investment in offspring would reproduce more effectively and thus come to prevail in the gene pool. Thus, sexual selection would "choose" males who were inclined to provide some paternal support. Thus, for males, offering paternal investment is a mating strategy, employed because it became a principle of female choice. With some paternal investment, female sexual receptivity increases in order to prolong male investment. This leads to male-female friendships in which males limit investment to offspring of female "friends." With concealed ovulation and continuous sexual receptivity, male investment is further encouraged as females tend to limit sexual access to those with whom they have bonds of friendship. Males, then, seek sexually exclusive relationships and limit their investment to offspring of such relationships¹⁰² - such exclusivity is needed in order for the male to have some certainty of paternity. The process is initially driven by female choice and her limiting sexual access to those males who were willing to commit to the well being of their offspring. "In other words, the initial evolution of paternal investment was more likely to have been related to female choice of mating

¹⁰⁰ Geary, *Male, Female*, 110.

¹⁰¹ See Geary, *Male, Female*, 91.

¹⁰² Geary, *Male, Female*, 117, Figure 4.2.

partners that invested in her children than in a male-initiated shift from mating to parental effort.”¹⁰³

The evolution of some paternal investment, however, does not imply the evolution of total paternal investment – the calculus of cost and benefits is still at play. In fact, human paternal investment is described as affiliative rather than intensive. Intensive caregiving, as might be found in males of primate species that are completely monogamous, entails holding, grooming, feeding, and protecting offspring. Affiliative care involves frequent proximity to the offspring associated with a friendship with offspring’s mother. With this proximity comes protection of and provision for the offspring that may also include play with and some grooming of that offspring.¹⁰⁴ Typical human investment is significant, but not intensive. This is no doubt due to several factors: the primary efficacy of male investment initially consisted in the provision of high-quality food that was the fruit of hunting. This activity precludes the intensive caregiving. Further, as mentioned earlier, concealed fertilization always leads to a doubt of paternity, which situation in and of itself favors maternal over paternal investment.

It must be added as well that monogamy is not, in evolutionary terms, a mandated norm; the calculus is more complicated. Thus, while friendly affiliation with an offspring’s mother and investment in that offspring may be *an* adaptive behavior, a male’s reproductive capacity may be maximized by hedging his bets; he might do well to focus on investing in offspring that he has with a female with whom he has a sexually exclusive relationship. In this way, he can minimize his risk of raising another man’s child and secure the survival and social well being of his own offspring. In this way, he invests in a parenting strategy. However, not every fatherless offspring perishes. Thus, he may also place some capital in a mating strategy and seek other mating opportunities in which no further investment is intended. Pinker describes the strategy this way:

Suppose a foraging man with one wife can expect two to five children with her. A premarital or extramarital liaison that conceives a child would increase his reproductive output by twenty to fifty percent. Of course, if the child starves or is killed because the father isn’t around, the father is genetically no better off. The optimal liaison, then, is with a married woman whose husband would bring up the child. In foraging societies, fertile women are almost always married so sex with a woman is usually sex with a married woman. Even if she is not, more fatherless

¹⁰³ Geary, *Male, Female*, 118.

¹⁰⁴ Geary, *Male, Female*, 105.

children live than die, so a liaison with an unmarried partner can increase reproduction, too.¹⁰⁵

Thus affiliative paternal investment is part of reproductive strategy for the human male, but is not the whole story; to optimize his reproductive capacity, a man may well seek alternative mating strategies that, though riskier, nevertheless increase his overall reproductive production.

In summary, like maternal investment in reproduction, paternal investment is a matter of an evolutionary calculus in which potential reproductive costs are weighed against potential reproductive gains in a given ecology to render the final level of investment most suited to that ecology. The most fundamental cost of paternal investment is rooted in the uncertainty of paternity, which leads to the possibility of investing in an offspring other than one's own - an evolutionary disaster unless by so doing the male secures for himself high-quality, reliable future mating opportunities. Counterbalancing this cost is the highly significant positive effect that paternal investment has on the survival and thriving of offspring, this especially in more challenging ecologies. Thus females make a male's willingness to invest in offspring a principle of mate selection driving males to offer this investment as a condition for receiving mating opportunities. In return, however, a male needs a sexually exclusive relationship with that female if he is to reduce the risk of cuckoldry. Thus human mating strategies have evolved to minimize this risk making the benefit of some level of paternal investment outweigh the risk. This risk of raising another man's child, however, remains, for, in addition to providing for offspring produced with a woman with whom a man has a sexually exclusive relationship, it is also genetically wise to seek mating opportunities with other women, ideally married, whose husbands will then provide for his offspring. It is for this reason that jealousy has evolved in the human male.¹⁰⁶ Thus, in the end, human paternal investment in reproduction is the result of a relatively complicated calculation of risks and potential gains. The net result is limited investment that is best supplemented with more casual liaisons when possible.

The primary variable that drives sexual differentiation is the level of investment in reproduction. While it is true that men dedicate well above the minimum level of investment demonstrated by most male primates, they still invest

¹⁰⁵ Pinker, HMW, 469. See also Geary, *Male, Female*, 119. On the woman's part, she might seek to marry a reliable man who will care for her children but is perhaps not the best genetic specimen. She might then seek an extra-marital liaison with a dominant male who is less likely to commit to paternal investment but is genetically more robust. She may also trade sexual favors for resources. See Pinker, HMW, 479-480.

¹⁰⁶ Pinker, HMW, 488-489.

significantly less than women. Geary comments upon this fact: "When considered in terms of mammalian reproduction, it is unremarkable that - throughout the world - mothers show a much greater availability for and engagement with their children than fathers do."¹⁰⁷ It appears empirically clear and consistent with the proposed evolution of the human species that women invest more in offspring than men. This leads to the subsequent essential variables that drive sexual selection and thus sex-based differences: female choice, and male competition. It is to these that we now turn our attention.

4. *Female Choice*

The mechanisms of evolution will select those who reproduce most effectively. This reality of natural and sexual selection applies to habits and behaviors as well as to physiological attributes. Thus, a woman who chooses a mate well will reproduce more successfully than one who chooses poorly. Her tendencies will to a certain extent be passed on to her daughters and so, over time, those principles of mate selection which proved to be the most effective come to be dominant in the population. Over time, women who chose well would be awarded genetically as their offspring flourished while those who chose poorly would see their offspring struggle.

The notion of sexual differentiation comes to play here, for that which is a wise mating strategy for a man likely is not for a female. Consideration of human female choice presumes the distinct levels of investment in reproduction discussed above. It is these distinct levels of investment that lead to a divergence of effective mating strategies. Thus, given her significantly greater investment in reproduction, discerning how women have come to choose and limit their mates is a matter of discerning the principles that would lead to the most effective reproductive outcome.

As would be expected, with the exception of physical attractiveness, women are generally more selective than men.¹⁰⁸ For the vast majority of human evolutionary history, sexual activity meant the very real possibility of reproduction. The significantly distinct levels of investment in reproduction having been noted, it is therefore clear that there are distinct possible consequences of a sexual liaison. A female who showed the same willingness as males to enter into a sexual relationship, for the vast majority of our evolutionary history, had much more to lose than did the male, who could simply walk away from the situation if the woman became pregnant. If it is the case that some men impregnate women and then abandon them, while others remain to help with the care of and provision for the child, it then becomes extremely important that the female choose to mate with a male who will not leave her pregnant and alone. A female whose appetites and passions led her

¹⁰⁷ Geary, *Male, Female*, 116.

¹⁰⁸ Geary, *Male, Female*, 129.

to indiscriminate copulation would likely find herself having to care for herself and a child by herself. This is far from the most effective way to raise helpless human offspring. As such, whatever genes inclined a female in this direction would likely make a quick exit from the gene pool. It is in the female's best interest prudently to limit sexual access to those males who would not abandon her if a child comes; genes that carried with them traits that inclined her to do so would gain ascendancy in the gene pool.

The same dynamic can be understood in economic terms: the female has a commodity that males want and are driven to acquire. Females control the supply of this commodity. If they choose to make the supply plentiful, the value of the commodity drops, and, with it, their bargaining power. If however, they choose to cut supply, males would then have to offer them more to accomplish an acquisition. If the female requires nothing of the male, as the study of college students mentioned in Chapter 1 implies, he will likely be willing to take the opportunity to copulate; for even if a child conceived does not have the benefit of paternal investment, it still has a chance at survival and subsequent reproduction. The male has little to lose in this transaction. (Recall that the proximate cause or causes fueling the action of either the male or female is of secondary importance to the evolutionary biologist; what is of concern is the ultimate cause, the adaptive nature of the act.) It is males, therefore, who benefit if females choose to glut supply.

One could predict, therefore, that natural selection would favor those females who were more discerning regarding when and with whom they mated. If a male chooses poorly, with little biological impedance, he can simply move on to the next female. If, however, the female chooses poorly, the potential consequences are much greater: nine months of pregnancy, subsequent care of the infant, etc., all without help from the father. During all of which time she is unavailable for mating with more suitable partners. She also becomes less attractive to more suitable males who, in exchange for paternal investment, require sexual fidelity so as to minimize the risk of being cuckolded. Female reproductive success, instead, is maximized when they reserve access to their fertility to those males who are willing to provide for any children that may come. If, at the same time, they can select a male who, in addition to resources and commitment, also brings to the table a good, healthy set of genes, she will have optimized her reproductive capabilities: she has mated with a male who will help her with the difficult task of raising the child and given herself the best possibility of having a genetically healthy child. According to both of these considerations, her offspring's chances of surviving and thriving are maximized. Thus, Geary writes: "The common theme across these contexts is that women

generally prefer mates who can and will help them to organize social and material resources in ways that enhance the well-being of their children.”¹⁰⁹

In a hunter-gatherer society, where wealth cannot easily be accumulated, this would likely be a man of high social status – a tribe leader, or superior warrior or hunter. As was seen with the Ache tribe, children of men of higher status have greater survival rates. This tendency appears to hold true today even in modern, Western cultures where college women desired that a mate would be in the 70th percentile of all males regarding his earning capacity.¹¹⁰ In selecting a mate, women also value ambition, industriousness, and social dominance more than men. This is coupled, however, with greater value being placed upon a man’s emotional stability and family orientation.¹¹¹ This later requirement is perhaps a necessary complement as socially dominant men, perhaps because they are attractive to women, tend to be arrogant and follow their own reproductive agendas.¹¹²

As for seeking emotional intimacy, Geary claims that this is something more specific to upper middleclass Americans and Europeans. In more rugged settings, emotional intimacy must pale in comparison to more immediate needs, such as a man who can provide food, shelter, protection, and clothing. Intimacy, however, does seem to factor into the equation insofar as it can be an indicator of a man’s willingness to commit. Thus, an often quoted study found that women exhibited more distress at learning of her mate’s emotional attachment to another woman than in discovering his sexual infidelity. The presumed cause of this somewhat surprising finding is that emotional attachment to another woman more so than an extramarital sexual liaison could forebode withdrawal of commitment to her and her offspring. In evolutionary terms, this is more catastrophic than sexual infidelity. Interestingly, female distress at sexual versus emotional infidelity varies with her menstrual cycle. When estrogen is highest – at ovulation – she is most concerned with emotional infidelity. When estrogen is lowest, her distress becomes more like males, who are more distressed by sexual infidelity.¹¹³

While seeking a mate who will provide for her and her children when they are most vulnerable is perhaps the most important variable of female choice, it is not the only variable, for, like all other sexually reproducing creatures, women seek to mate with a genetically robust mate. As in birds, plumage indicates genetic fitness, so women are attracted to certain physical attributes that are indicators of genetic health. In men, women find attractive a hip to waste ratio of 0.9:1, broad shoulders,

¹⁰⁹ Geary, *Male, Female*, 124.

¹¹⁰ Geary, *Male, Female*, 128.

¹¹¹ Geary, *Male, Female*, 129.

¹¹² Geary, *Male, Female*, 128.

¹¹³ Geary, *Male, Female*, 128

and symmetric body and facial features. These later are indicators of genetic variability, which is important for disease resistance, lack of serious illness during the formative years, and lack of current illness.¹¹⁴ Via pleasure or displeasure taken in a man's scent, women not taking birth control are attracted to men who have immune systems dissimilar to their own - this promotes the genetic variation that thwarts pathogens. Some studies have shown couples with dissimilar immune systems are more fertile.¹¹⁵

It appears evident, therefore, that the optimal mating strategy for a female would be to be the exclusive mate of a wealthy, socially powerful male who was also an optimal genetic specimen, and willing to invest in his offspring. Being his sole spouse would assure all resources were directed towards her offspring. Thus, both by his genes and his provisioning, her children would have the best possible chance of survival and subsequent reproduction. This ideal situation, however, is the lot of few women; thus, alternative strategies may have to be employed so as to optimize reproductive success.

It was already mentioned that the socially dominant man may, perhaps due to his desirability, be likely to pursue his own reproductive agenda. Thus, a woman may profit by forming a stable relationship with a reliable male and seek other benefits through extramarital sexual liaisons. This would be done either to seek greater resources in return for sexual favors, or to mate with a male of higher genetic quality than her stable mate.¹¹⁶ In either case, she is better off if her regular mate believes that a child conceived from her extramarital liaison is his own. Thus Geary notes that women tend to cheat on their husbands near the time of their ovulation and within a few days of having copulated with their regular mate. This promotes sperm competition, as in chimps, and, obviously, minimizes suspicion on the part of her spouse should she become pregnant from her liaison. He also notes that, statistically, women tend to have affairs with physically attractive, socially dominant males. Thus, while such males are, perhaps, unattractive as spouses due to their unwillingness to commit to paternal investment, they can provide stronger genes and more variability to a female's offspring.¹¹⁷ So, evolution seems to have favored a certain level of discreet infidelity in females.

Polygamy may be another viable option for women. If the disparity, for instance, between the wealth of a man and his "peers" is such that a wealthy man could provide more for a second or third wife than a woman could expect from any man for whom she would be the only wife, it could be in her best interest, in terms

¹¹⁴ Geary, *Male, Female*, 132.

¹¹⁵ Geary, *Male, Female*, 133-134.

¹¹⁶ Pinker, HMW, 479-480, Geary, *Male, Female*, 134.

¹¹⁷ Geary, *Male, Female*, 135.

of the thriving of her offspring, to be the second or third wife of a powerful man rather than the only wife of a pauper. Some, in fact, argue that monogamy hurts women in terms of sexual economics. If a society sets down that each man can marry only one woman, the pool of men who will be good providers now drops significantly: if a woman can choose to become the second wife of a wealthy man, the less-wealthy man now must do more to secure access to this female. If, however, this option is taken away from the female, she is now in a weaker bargaining position in relation to other suitors. In this capacity, monogamy favors males by limiting their competition.¹¹⁸ Having adapted a capacity to abide this situation is also consistent with the finding that women are more distressed at emotional infidelity than sexual infidelity.¹¹⁹

Up to this point, the discussion of female choice has been somewhat abstract, not considering the point that very frequently in human history, female choice of mate selection was significantly controlled by a nubile female's kin. A young woman is often viewed as a commodity whose reproductive capital can serve the political and economic interests of her kin. This sociological reality need not work contrary to the evolutionary logic provided above - in fact, the family likewise has a definite genetic interest in the reproductive success of a female family member.¹²⁰ It does, however, add another variable in the equation of female choice.

5. Male-male competition

The male has less investment in reproduction. As happens in the rest of nature, the human male will therefore have to compete with other males for access to mating opportunities with females. Earlier, the effects of male competition in other mammals were discussed. From the principles established in these studies, biologists can conclude something of the evolutionary past of the human male. If a male can control the fertility of more than one female - something which will depend upon how the females of species distribute themselves, distribution of resources, and sexually receptivity - he will likely have to physically fight other males for this access; as such, evolution will select males for their size and fighting ability - recall the elephant seal is four-times the size of the female and the male gorilla at two-times larger than the female. The human male is 15% larger than the female. This indicates that, in the evolutionary past of humans, some males were able to

¹¹⁸ Pinker, HMW, 476-477.

¹¹⁹ See Pinker HMW, 488.

¹²⁰ Geary, *Male, Female*, 124. See also Pinker HMW, 429-451, for a discussion of the role of kin in the calculation genetic benefits.

secure access to more than one female and that they had to fight each other physically to do so.¹²¹

Apparently, biologists are able to amass a fair amount of evidence for the reality of male-to-male conflict. Perhaps the most interesting regards the amount of variance in the DNA in the mitochondria versus DNA from the Y-chromosome. Mitochondrial DNA shows greater variance than does DNA from the Y-chromosome. It is inherited only from the female while DNA from the Y-chromosome is inherited only from the male. Greater variance in mitochondrial DNA indicates a larger number of females contributing to this DNA than males contributing to the DNA in the Y chromosome.¹²² This in turn indicates that, throughout the evolutionary past of humans, there has been participation in reproduction by a greater number of females than males. Since the number of females in a population will roughly equal the number the males, the logical conclusion is what evolutionists would predict: some males mated with several females while others mated with none. In this scenario, roughly all of the females will mate – leading to the greatest possible genetic variance on the part of the female – while the most powerful males will secure for themselves the greatest possible number of females, leaving other males with no contribution to the gene pool, resulting in less genetic variety from males of the species.¹²³

This greater genetic variance from the part of our female ancestors seems to prove that more females have contributed to the gene pool and thus that males competed in such a way that some had many and others had none. Presumably, however, the mode of competition would change depending upon both the arena of competition and the mode of acquisition, i.e., both upon the nature of the society in which the competition is taking place – a foraging versus an agricultural society – and upon whether, for instance, a woman was won in marriage or stolen from another tribe in a hostile raid. To discern better the nature of male-male competition, first the motives for such competition are examined, beginning with preindustrial societies and then exploring how such preindustrial motivations express themselves in modern societies. Next, the nature of the conflict is discussed,

¹²¹ Pinker, HMW, 468.

¹²² Pinker, TBS, 347.

¹²³ Pinker comments that the man known to have the most offspring was a Moroccan tyrant known as Moulay Ismail the Bloodthirsty. He is recorded to have had 888 children. Clearly, if one man had enough mates to produce 888 children, this left many men in Morocco in search of a mate. Pinker, HMW, 477. This also seems to verify the evolutionary account that states that males will have a near limitless taste for sexual variety which is only practically curtailed by the number of females he can find to oblige this desire. A tyrant, who has amassed great wealth and coupled it with ruthless expression of his power can coerce families to give up their daughters to be his wives or concubines.

with emphasis placed upon importance of collaborative conflict and the subsequent diversity of traits – such as shrewdness, or technical know-how – that can lead to positions of social prominence. Finally, a few words will be offered regarding the “material” – hormonal, morphological, etc. – distinctions that serve men’s quest for social dominance in competition.

Why is there is male-to-male competition and conflict? In Chapter 1, the empirical evidence was outlined marking the obvious point that, throughout history, males have been the more physically aggressive sex, accounting for the vast majority of violent crime and almost always being the instigators and executioners of warfare. To what is this attributed? Geary offers the following trans-temporal, trans-cultural explanation: “In many societies – and arguably throughout human evolution – men have competed for sociopolitical power and, when possible, for material resources, and they have used their power to control the sexual behavior of women and other men, independent of female choice.”¹²⁴ Pinker reduces such competition to what might be called the tail-feather phenomenon. Just as certain male birds compete for females in virtue of the length of their tail feathers or the brilliance of their plumage, so human males will compete with each other for access to females. The exact nature of what will constitute good “tail-feathers” may change from ecology to ecology, but one constant is prestige or social status. Just as bright feathers are a sign to a female bird of the genetic worth of a male suitor, so social dominance is a sign to a human female (or her kin) of a man’s worth. Thus, males will compete intensely so as to be able to display this sign.¹²⁵ As such, this competitive aspect in males is a matter of sexual selection, not natural selection; males are selected in virtue of success in competition because such success leads to reproductive success.

Geary notes that, at times – mostly in severe times, such as draught or famine – natural selection can fuel violent competition as men may attack and kill other men for access to food. Most frequently, however, competition regards social dominance and the resources to support reproduction. Social dominance leads to access to more females. More females lead to more children. More surviving children lead to prolongation of a given trait.¹²⁶ Pinker writes: “Sociologists have long been puzzled that the largest category of motives for homicide in American cities is not robbery, drug deals gone sour, or other tangible incentives. It is a category they call ‘altercation of relatively trivial origin; insult, curse, jostling, etc.’”¹²⁷ Males will fight and kill each other to maintain their reputation and prestige. This is because,

¹²⁴ Geary, *Male, Female*, 139.

¹²⁵ See Pinker, *HMW*, 493-494.

¹²⁶ Geary, *Male, Female*, 140.

¹²⁷ Pinker, *HMW*, 496.

traditionally, without it, they lose their opportunity to mate, which, in genetic terms, is destruction.

It must be kept in mind that this discussion is in the order of ultimate - not proximate - causality. Thus, the humiliated man who returns with a gun to kill the man who publicly insulted him is likely acting on blind rage rather than reasoning that the insults he publicly bore are likely to lower his social standing and thus lower his ability to effectively reproduce. The proximate causes of the man's action, however, are not so important. What is important is that men who easily ceded their social position were likely, over time, to become less prevalent in the gene pool as such men were seen as less desirable mates. This is the ultimate cause for the prolongation of men's willingness to fight over their honor, whatever their proximate cause may be at the time of entering the fray. Whatever the proximate causes may be, the fundamental *why* of male competition is that men compete for those things that lead to more mating opportunities; it is this that plays the surrogate role of final causality.

Brief exploration of the nature of male-to-male competition in preindustrial and industrial societies will help enrich the understanding of motivations for male-male conflict. In addition to pre- and post-industrial, it will be helpful to divide male-male competition according to intra-group and inter-group competition, though, it will be seen, that efficacy in the latter often leads to ascendancy in the former.

Intra-group competition: Human male-to-male competition is unlike any other instance of such competition in the animal world. In species such as the elephant seal, the most dominant male will almost certainly be the fiercest in a fight. The reality of coalitions changes this dynamic. Pinker comments:

You would think that the second-, third-, and fourth-strongest elephant seals would gang up, kill the strongest male, and divide his harem among them, but they never do.... [O]nly humans, chimpanzees, dolphins, and perhaps bonobos join up in groups of four or more to attack other males. These are some of the largest-brained species, hinting that war may require sophisticated mental machinery.¹²⁸

The reality of the power of a coalition versus any one fearsome warrior, in and of itself, changes the equation as to what will necessarily constitute dominance, even in more primitive human societies. Simply being the biggest and toughest is not enough, for a group of ten males can form an alliance and decide that the brute force of one powerful man must be neutralized. Different balances of power and status will therefore begin to take shape as sexual selection chooses not only those individuals who are most physically powerful but, with the reality of social alliances

¹²⁸ Pinker, HMW, 513.

and the power thereof, also those who are able to gain ascendancy by other means within a given social structure. Skills other than fighting become effective means of providing defensive security and offensive efficacy to one's community and thus earn status in that community. "Even the most bellicose societies did not award the best warriors or captains their highest positions of status or leadership. Instead, these rewards were reserved for men who, although they were often expected to be brave and skilled in war, were more proficient in the arts of peace."¹²⁹ What is clear is that men will attract women by competing with other men to acquire wealth and status.¹³⁰ With the complexities of human societies, the venues of these competitions vary.

In speaking of paternal investment, it was mentioned that the children of good hunters had better survival rates than those of poor hunters. The reasons for this goes beyond the obvious fact that he brings more food home to his family; being a good hunter also elevates a man's status in the community and brings with it more deference and assistance from other community members.¹³¹ Similarly, Pinker notes that shrewdness and discretion can also win status and subsequent reproductive success in foraging societies.

A man named Kaobawä, though no wimp, earned his authority by leaning on the support of his brothers and cultivating alliances with the men with whom he had traded wives.... His quiet leadership was rewarded with six wives and as many affairs. In foraging societies, status also clings to good hunters and knowledgeable naturalists. Assuming that our ancestors, too, practice occasional meritocracy, human evolution was not always survival of the fiercest.¹³²

In human societies, men compete not only according to their raw fighting ability, but also according their ability to help their communities in a variety of ways.

This is not to say that raw fighting ability does not have its rewards in preindustrial societies. As will be seen in discussing inter-group conflict, fighting with one's neighbors is a way of life for foraging cultures. The effective warrior is an essential element of a functioning society and therefore to be rewarded with status in that society. "In the Yanamomö, about two out of five men have participated in at least one murder, and those who have killed have a higher social status than those who have not killed, and two and one-half times as many wives, and about three

¹²⁹ L. H. Keely, *War Before Civilization: The Myth of the Peaceful Savage* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), 144. Quoted in Geary, *Male, Female*, 139-140.

¹³⁰ Pinker, HMW, 498.

¹³¹ Geary, *Male, Female*, 111.

¹³² Pinker, HMW, 499.

times as many children on average.”¹³³ In any society, the ability to defend oneself, one’s honor, and one’s family is essential. In foraging societies, which tend not to have organized police forces, the ability to do so with one’s own hands is of great importance. “High ranking men are deferred to, have a greater voice in group decisions, usually have a greater share of the group’s resources, and always have more wives, more lovers, and more affairs with other men’s wives. Better fighters have higher rank, and men who *look* like better fighters have higher rank.”¹³⁴

Ultimately, females choose males based upon their fitness. In human societies, social status is a sign of that fitness. So too are there signs of social status. Just as bright plumage is a sign of fitness in some birds, so human’s have their signs of social dominance and thus fitness. Pinker recounts how the chiefs of some tribes of the Canadian Pacific engage in extravagant displays, wasting valuable resources. The logic of such displays is that it tells all who can see these chiefs’ wealth is so extensive that they can afford to simply waste it away. When speaking of the effects of testosterone on a bird’s immune system, it was noted that it depresses the immune system, testosterone which is necessary to grow the tail-feathers by which females choose males. Thus, only the strongest male immune systems can abide higher testosterone levels and maintain good health. Pinker’s claim is that opulence makes the same statement to female women; it states that one’s abilities are so strong that one is, more or less, able to waste resources – longer tail feathers serve no practical purpose – and still be the strongest.¹³⁵

There are certainly no lack of status symbols in modern societies. Not surprisingly, both Pinker and Geary claim that the same fundamental principles that govern male-male competition in hunter/gatherer societies are likewise operative in modern industrial societies; it is simply the case that the venue of competition has changed. Geary well summarizes intra-group male-male competition in modern societies:

In relation to the pattern found in many preindustrial cultures, the level of male-on-male physical violence is low in industrial societies. When male-on-male aggression does escalate to homicide in industrial societies, the precipitating events are often centered on sexual jealousy or male status competition, as in the case in preindustrial cultures. Nonetheless, in industrial societies with socially imposed monogamy, male-male competition is most generally focused on the acquisition of social and material indicators of cultural success. Or stated otherwise, in modern society, middle- and upper-middle-class men typically compete to acquire those

¹³³ Geary, *Male, Female*, 141.

¹³⁴ Pinker, HMW, 495.

¹³⁵ Pinker, HMW, 500-501.

social and material resources (e.g. SES) that influence female choice of mating and marriage partners.¹³⁶

The essence of the competition is the same; the manner has changed.

Interestingly, before the effects of wide-scale birth control, the reproductive effects of male success in societal competition were remarkably similar. Just as in preindustrial cultures, modern men of high societal stature sired more children and had more surviving children. “Most important, across generations, non-elite men were four times more likely to experience an extinction of their lineage (i.e. reach a point at which there were no surviving direct decedents) than their elite cohorts.”¹³⁷

Contemporary Western societies present an interesting anomaly: With the wide-spread use of birth-control, SES is now negatively correlated with number of children sired. Studies have been done, however, to determine the likelihood of paternity, in the absence of birth control. Not surprisingly, men of higher SES reported a higher number of sexual partners and overall greater sexual activity. Researchers determined that SES accounted for 63% of individual difference that led to likelihood of paternity. Thus, Geary concludes: “As in other human societies and with most other primates, higher status men report more sexual partners and more overall sexual activity than their lower status peers.”¹³⁸

In both pre- and post-industrial cultures males must compete for status within their milieu. The results of this competition become a principle of sexual selection. Females or their families are more likely to choose higher-status males as mates leading to greater reproductive success for males who competed well. This in turn leads to the continuance of the genes that allowed them to compete well. In earlier cultures, status came with being a good warrior, hunter, technician, or leader able to wage war or peace depending on what best served the community. In modern cultures, men compete with education levels, bank accounts, and fame. Each culture has its signs of status – be it a feathered headdress or a BMW – that signal to all one’s status. But the ultimate cause for the continuance of such traits remains the same: more powerful men win more mating opportunities.

Inter-group conflict: Pinker quotes feminist Andrea Dworkin in marking the ways in which the male will gain access to female fertility:

A man wants what a woman has – sex. He can steal it (rape), persuade her to give it away (seduction), rent it (prostitution), lease it over the long term (marriage in the United States), or own it outright (marriage in most societies).¹³⁹

¹³⁶ Geary, *Male, Female*, 142-143.

¹³⁷ Geary, *Male, Female*, 143.

¹³⁸ Geary, *Male, Female*, 143.

¹³⁹ Quoted in Pinker, *HMW*, 474.

Throughout much of human history, the history of warfare has been the history of the first of these options: of stealing access to women's fertility. Men form coalitions to help establish their status within their own groups, but they also form coalitions to plunder other groups.

In many preindustrial societies and throughout human history, coalition-based aggression is often associated with personal gain, including more wives, larger territories, the acquisition of slaves, and, most important, higher reproductive success.¹⁴⁰

Pinker echoes and intensifies this thought:

In foraging societies, men go to war to get or keep women - not necessarily as a conscious goal of the warriors (though often it is exactly that), but as the ultimate payoff that allowed a willingness to fight to evolve. Access to women is the limiting factor on male's reproductive success. Having two wives can double a man's children, having three wives can triple it, and so on.¹⁴¹

Going to war against other men is indeed a risk. But, if a man could increase his reproductive success by two- or three-fold, then it may well be a risk worth taking. Those who were inclined to do so and succeeded in their endeavors found their war-like genes projected into the future.

Pinker dismisses the idea that warfare was undertaken primarily as a source of obtaining high-protein food noting that, in fact, the most war-like tribes are the best fed.¹⁴² War is always a risk; undertaking it when weakened by hunger increases this risk and thus lowers its possible reproductive efficacy. Instead, willingness to fight is tied to relative assurance of victory, risk proportionate to potential benefit, and uncertainty as to who will have to pay the inevitable cost of warfare. Each of these merits brief examination.

If a man knows for certain that death and destruction await him and his side in a war, then engaging in it makes no evolutionary sense. Clearly, some other, more viable option must be found. As for potential benefit, Pinker chronicles how violation of the women of the conquered is a nearly universal aspect of warfare, quoting even texts from Sacred Scripture where Moses instructs the Israelites to slay all but the nubile women; these, rather, were to be taken as wives.¹⁴³ Geary recounts the archeological examination of a village of native Americans destroyed by a

¹⁴⁰ Geary, *Male, Female*, 143.

¹⁴¹ Pinker, HMW, 510.

¹⁴² Pinker, HMW, 511, 515.

¹⁴³ Pinker, HMW, 511-512.

marauding tribe. The mass grave reveals that all classes of people were represented equally among the slain, with the exception of nubile women, who, evidently, were taken by the victors.¹⁴⁴

Though potential gain, in reproductive terms, is significant, a man must know that his risk will be proportionate to his potential gain, and that it will be shared equally by the members of his coalition. If a man knows that his companions will, to their own benefit, expose him to disproportionate danger, then it makes little sense for him to undertake the endeavor. Thus, group cohesion and reliance upon one's companions becomes paramount; if a man cannot depend upon the members of a coalition, then forming and acting in coalitions is more likely get him killed than serve his purposes. Thus, equal distribution of risk is essential to maintaining a coalition. The inability to manage these complexities of aggression-based coalitions leads to the unraveling of attempted coalitions in most animals.¹⁴⁵ The ability to form such coalitions and manage the complexities of distributed risk and gain probably explains the nature of male intra- and inter-group dynamics even today.

“War is, to put it mildly, a major selective pressure, and since it appears to have been a recurring even in our evolutionary history, it must have shaped parts of the human psyche.”¹⁴⁶ Geary observes that ambushes, battles, and raids were normal occurrences in the lives of 90% of hunter-gatherer cultures.¹⁴⁷ While clearly warfare was and is a reality that also profoundly affects women, as far as its execution goes, it has always been the realm of men.

Another implication is that females should never have an interest in starting a war (even if they had weapons or allies that made up for their smaller size). The reason that females never evolved an appetite to band together and raid neighboring villages for husbands is that a woman's reproductive success is rarely limited by the number of available males, so any risk to her life while pursuing additional mates is a sheer loss in expected fitness. (Foraging women do, however, encourage men to fight in defense of the group and to avenge slain family members.)¹⁴⁸

Thus, the fundamental principle of sexual selection reappears: women choose, men compete. In reproduction, women are the scarcer resource, men the more plentiful. Fighting to secure what is scarce might, if the risk is proportionate to the benefit, make sense. Risking one's life to obtain what one already has makes no sense at all. Thus, women do not engage in warfare.

¹⁴⁴ Geary, *Male, Female*, 141.

¹⁴⁵ Pinker, HMW, 516.

¹⁴⁶ Pinker, HMW, 510.

¹⁴⁷ Geary, *Male, Female*, 140.

¹⁴⁸ Pinker, HMW, 515.

Up to this point, war has been seen, more or less, as a selection pressure and calculation for the aggressor. However, if there are coalitions of men who undertake the risk of attacking other individuals or groups, there will also be, then, a selective pressure on the defenders, which, again favors the bigger, stronger, faster males. Thus, males will also be selected for their ability to defend their wives, children, family, and the political structures that preserve them. Failure to do so, obviously, is catastrophic in genetic terms, possibly meaning the end of one's direct genetic descendents. Even in texts of *Numbers* quoted by Pinker, the Israelites are instructed to slay everyone except women who have not yet known man. Thus a man could expect that his male children, parents, and all relatives except females of child-bearing age would be killed. Though, certainly neither would such an experience be pleasant for a young women, nevertheless, genetically, she maintains the ability to carry on her genes, whereas for the male defeat can mean absolute ruin. Thus, there is not the same genetic pressure on women as man. As such, there is intense selective pressure on men to defend their families from aggressors.

There is yet one other arena of male competition that must be mentioned. Earlier, the impact of female promiscuity among chimps on the size of the testicles of male chimps was discussed. The implication was that the testicles of chimps evolved to be relatively large due to the fact that their semen would have to compete with that of other male chimps within the genitalia of the female. The size of human male testicles is not as large as that of chimps, however, their relative size does indicate that human females were not always subject to the semen of just one man. Rather, the size of human male testicle indicates some history of competition that must have occurred inside the female. Thus, if a man forms a sexual alliance with a woman, he knows that he must be worried about whether or not some other man will nevertheless seek sexual access to the same woman. The reality of the male proclivity towards a variety of sexual partners in conjunction with a willingness on the part of females to, at times, accommodate this desire, sets the stage for the entrance of jealousy and habits in males to prevent other males from gaining sexual access especially to women in whose offspring he invests.¹⁴⁹

6. Female-female competition

Male jealousy and sperm competition reintroduces the topic of paternal investment - men become jealous ultimately because they do not want to waste their

¹⁴⁹ See Pinker, HMW, 468. Recall also from the discussion on female choice that females may choose a stable, reliable mate but then choose extra-pair mate for other reproductive motives. She will likely engage in these liaisons both near her ovulation and close to a time when she engaged in intercourse with her regular mate. Thus, human sperm must at time compete with those of other men.

resources on the offspring of other men. The significant level of paternal investment that some men provide to their offspring, however, also provides an evolutionary motive for female competition; as was seen in the discussion of paternal investment, securing a male who provides good paternal support has large positive consequences for offspring. This being the case, it is clearly in a female's best reproductive interest to secure a mate who will reliably provide such investment.

Female-female competition is, in fact, found throughout the primate world. Usually, however, such competition is not over quality mates but rather over quality food and other resources needed for the proper rearing of the young.

Given that men in many societies strive to restrict the access of women to those resources needed to raise their children successfully and that they more generally compete with one another for resource acquisition and control, men, in a sense, become the potential "resource objects" to women. In other words, women are expected to compete for access to resource-holding men, just as other female primates compete with one another for the resources needed to survive and to raise their offspring.¹⁵⁰

Given the evolution of paternal investment and sexually exclusive relationships, along with the cultural fact that men tend to control most resources, female competition generally consists in competition for a suitable spouse who will provide the resources necessary for the well being of her children. This constitutes another instance of sexual selection: females will be selected based upon their ability to compete with other females in finding a high quality mate; those who succeed in so doing, secure a mate whose investment in her offspring will increase her reproductive efficacy and augment her genetic legacy.

The nature of this competition is distinct, however from male-male competition. It has two primary components: building herself up regarding those attributes in virtue of which males choose stable mates, and knocking down her rivals regarding these same categories. Male choice will be discussed in more detail in the following section, but it is clear that one fixed principle of male choice is the physical attractiveness of a female. Thus, females compete to attract and retain a quality mate by maintaining their own attractiveness.

Aggression towards other females, as opposed to male-male aggression is likely to be indirect or relational, employing tactics such as gossip and social exclusion. Interestingly, though evident, for example, in sex-based differences in play, these behaviors peak in early and middle adolescence. This is the time of the advent of adult sexuality and, in traditional cultures, the time of initial mate

¹⁵⁰ Geary, *Male, Female*, 136.

selection, thus, presumably, traditionally the time of greatest female-female competition for a suitable spouse.¹⁵¹

Relational aggression can have a physical effect by inducing social stress in its target, which stress, in turn, can have negative reproductive consequences.¹⁵² However, it also frequently targets another important category of male choice in a spouse: sexual fidelity. As has been said many times by now, a great hurdle to paternal investment is the uncertainty of paternity and fear of raising another man's children. Thus, a woman's sexual fidelity is of great importance to a man if he is to invest in her offspring. It is perhaps unsurprising then that, in attempting to lower the value of rival, women would spread gossip relating to a rival's promiscuity.¹⁵³ Women who successfully moved themselves to the top of the selection queue and obtained high-quality mates were rewarded with more surviving and thriving children; thus these traits were sexually selected in females.

7. Male choice

In most species where males do not invest much in their offspring, the picture is simpler: dominant males vie for position, which, in turn, leads to mating opportunities. Females can refuse even a dominant male, but, the system generally works along these lines. With paternal investment, females must now vie for the attention of the highest quality males and males must choose wisely, at least regarding a female in whose offspring he plans to invest his resources. If a male invests next to nothing in reproduction, he is best served simply to mate with as many females as possible. With the expectation of investment, as the female must choose well, so must the male choose well.

While men do sometimes choose to invest in their offspring, it remains the case that males are more interested than females in casual sexual encounters.¹⁵⁴ And regarding casual sexual partners, males tend to be significantly less discriminating. Will the ability to engage in sexual activity and then simply walk away, that women would be more concerned about casual sex is not surprising.

Regarding selection of a spouse, males and females exhibit similar preferences, with both rating intelligence, kindness, and understanding as very important. As noted earlier, there are sex-based distinctions regarding the relative

¹⁵¹ Geary, *Male, Female*, 137.

¹⁵² Geary, *Male, Female*, 137.

¹⁵³ Geary, *Male, Female*, 136-139.

¹⁵⁴ Geary, *Male, Female*, 144-145. Women may, under certain ecological circumstances - when the support of one man is not enough to sustain her offspring - engage in more casual sexual relationships for the resources that such a relationship can bring. Her goal, however, is the resources. Men's goal is the sex itself.

importance placed upon sexual fidelity versus emotional fidelity; this is a function of the uncertainty of paternity for men and the awareness in women of need for paternal support for the benefit of her offspring. This difference leads to a unique brand of jealousy in each sex. Mate-guarding is a common practice of males, but not of females. It is more intensive when guarding young, attractive, fertile mates. Sexual infidelity is also the most common motive for dissolving a spousal bond.¹⁵⁵

Another area of difference regards the relative importance placed upon physical appearance: "Although both women and men prefer sexually attractive to unattractive partners, this preference is consistently found to be stronger in men than in women."¹⁵⁶ This difference is yet another example of sexual selection. For the woman, of paramount importance is that she not be left alone to raise her children. Good genes, of course, are important, but a man who can assist her when she and her children are most vulnerable is extremely important. The male's greatest concern will be the fidelity of his mate, and - not having to worry as much as women about being abandoned and left alone to care for his children- he can place more importance upon genetic fitness as expressed in physical beauty. It would be expected, then, according to evolutionary logic, that those aspects of a woman that men find attractive would have some bearing upon her genetic health and fertility.

Men tend to like younger women. This, however, depends upon the age of the male: A sixty year old male may prefer a woman 20 years younger, while a man in his twenties prefers a woman three to five years younger. A teenage male, however, prefers a woman five years older. Thus age preferences seem to center on a woman's most fertile years with men's preferred age for women clustering around the peak fertility age of 25 years.¹⁵⁷

Geary claims that men's preferred facial and body features in women are indicative of sexual maturity, emotional expressiveness, health, age, and fecundity. For example, men appear to universally prefer the female form when the ratio of a woman's waste to her hips is 0.7 to 1. It appears that this waste to hip ratio is correlated with both health and fecundity. "Women with ratios of greater than 0.85 are at risk for a number of physiological disorders and appear to have greater difficulty conceiving than women with lower ratios."¹⁵⁸ Similarly, it appears that breast asymmetry is negatively related to fecundity and found unattractive by men.¹⁵⁹ Generally, males place more emphasis upon physical appearance in selecting mates;

¹⁵⁵ Geary, *Male, Female*, 148.

¹⁵⁶ Geary, *Male, Female*, 149.

¹⁵⁷ Geary, *Male, Female*, 150. "For women, fecundity is relatively low in the teen years, peaks at about age 25, and then gradually declines to near zero by age 45...." p. 150.

¹⁵⁸ Geary, *Male, Female*, 150-151.

¹⁵⁹ Geary, *Male, Female*, 151.

at least some of the attributes found attractive by males are signs of woman's health, emotional expressiveness, and fertility; all of these aspects have reproductive consequences.

8. *Male problems and female problems*

In the evolutionists understanding, sex differences begin relatively small – an ovum versus a sperm cell. It is a series of ecologically driven adaptations that transform small initial differences into greater differences as species' complexity grows. Yet evolution takes equal stock in both sexes, valuing the genes of females as much as those of males. Pinker makes an interesting observation:

From a genes point of view, being in the body of a male and being in the body of a female are an equally good strategies, at least on average (circumstances can nudge the advantage somewhat in either direction). Natural selection thus tends towards equal investment in the two sexes: equal numbers, an equal complexity of bodies and brains, and equally effective designs for survival. Is it better to be the size of a male baboon and have six-inch canine teeth or to be the size of a female baboon and not have them? Merely to ask the question is to reveal its pointlessness. A biologist would say that it's better to have the male adaptations to deal with male problems and the female adaptations to deal with female problems.¹⁶⁰

Human males, both as heirs to their evolutionary predecessors and in their own right, have been selected to deal with male problems. Females have evolved to deal with female problems. The fundamental principles of sexual selection as manifest in the human species provide the bases for determining the nature of that which constitutes male and female problems.

The fundamental male problem regards obtaining mating opportunities with the best quality and highest number of females and placing his offspring in the best possible circumstances to ensure the survival and subsequent reproduction of these offspring. This, first of all, means competing with other males in various arenas – sometimes physically within his own group, or against men of another group. Almost always, a man will compete for status and dominance in his milieu. What constitutes that status changes from epoch to epoch and culture to culture, but status leads to access to females, so men will seek it. It is likely that women began placing significant value upon paternal investment; thus, men began providing it. This investment, however, was distinct from maternal investment. Traditionally, the single greatest contribution that a male could make was to provide high-quality food to his mate and children. Thus different skills led to reproductive success in males versus females.

¹⁶⁰ Pinker, TBS, 343.

With her greater investment in reproduction, women must be more selective about mating partners; for a bad choice can be catastrophic. Women must therefore think differently about casual sexual encounters. They must also seek ways to secure the best possible mating partner. Ideally, this is a man with good genes who is also able and willing to provide for children they produce together. Such men will be desirable to women; they must, therefore, adapt so as to be able to win such men. This mode of competition is distinct from male-male competition – for the woman does not seek all the same things in man that a man seeks in a woman. Hence a woman tries to make herself attractive to high-quality men while, perhaps, at the same time trying to make rivals not seem so attractive.

Paternal investment principally regards provision; in this way a man secures the well being of his children. As a consequence of the progression of sexual selection, for the vast majority of human history, the vast majority of intensive child care has fallen to women. Obviously, such care touches essentially upon the well-being of a woman's offspring, because providing proper care to a child can and does have direct impact upon the survival of that child. Thus selection pressures surrounding parental investment would be distinct for the male – who provides more distant investment – and the female, who provides immediate care. Women would, then, be selected for their ability to well perform such intensive care as providing was a female problem. Thus, those characteristics that more led to effective intensive care giving would have been selected in females, while those that led to better provision would have been selected in men.

In Chapter 1, Simon Baron-Cohen's categorizing of the male brain as systematizing and the female brain as empathizing was briefly discussed. He sees these distinctions in spontaneous male and female tendencies as outgrowths of the distinct evolutionary pressures outlined above. First, some reasons are offered why empathizing would be selected more prominently in females. Next, the same is done for systematizing in males.

Baron-Cohen lists a number of possible ways in which empathizing was likely adaptive for early human females; here, a few highlights are offered: Perhaps the most evident area of adaptive empathy lies in childcare. Successful mothering is manifestly linked to genetic success – children must not only be born, they must also survive and thrive. A large part of child care is awareness of what a child truly needs at any given time. Before a child has the ability to communicate verbally, the necessity of being able to discern the child's needs is clear. However, a caregiver needs not only the ability to discern what a child's needs might be – which perhaps could be done by some systematic analysis of probable problems that the child might

be having – but also the disposition to respond to those needs.¹⁶¹ If the mother is moved emotionally by a child's distress, she will also likely be moved physically to do something to abate that distress. Given that the female had primary care of the child, especially when the child was most vulnerable and least able to communicate its needs with the precision of the spoken word, it seems clear that the ability to discern the child's state and have an appropriate emotional response to the child would have lead to more successful child rearing and hence a larger place in the gene pool.

Baron-Cohen points out a corollary to the importance of the efficacy of maternal empathy in the importance of attachment. Good maternal empathizing would reasonably lead to what psychologists refer to as secure attachment with the mother. Secure attachment, in turn, brings with it a number of advantages that the child will enjoy throughout his or her life, such as ability to learn faster, greater facility at being accepted in one's peer group, greater popularity in one's peer group, and the ability to form more stable relationships throughout life. All of these abilities will positively influence this child's ability to successfully reproduce. As such, the empathy that, in part, promoted the secure attachment would be selected in a population. Once again, it is to the mother that sexual selection has given the task of primary care of the child, and so it is to her that the child will be more particularly attached. Hence, empathy in the female will pay greater dividends, and therefore be selected in females.

Baron-Cohen also hypothesizes that females would have had greater evolutionary pressure to be selected for empathy based on the role that friendship would have played in the life of a typical female. The hallmark of male-to-male relationships is competition: the foundation of the competition is the desire to have access to as many females as possible. This manifests itself either in direct conflict or, more adaptively, in establishing of hierarchical structures and competition for the means of supporting females. While, subsequent to the existence of male investment in childrearing, there is female competition for higher-quality males, the modality of this competition is distinct. Males resort to the fight-or-flight instinct, both options of which are relatively self-explanatory. Females, however, seem to employ a process in which they will attend to their offspring and themselves, seeking to protect themselves and their offspring in a defensive manner. Befriending is one means of developing a social defense. "Befriending extends the protective element to groups

¹⁶¹ Baron-Cohen gives a dramatic example of this by noting the importance of absence of empathy in some primates (monkeys, in particular): in monkeys, a mother crossing a river with an infant clinging to her stomach will not check to see if the infant's face is out of water, an obviously perilous situation for the infant, to which the mother is apparently oblivious. In the great apes, however, this never happens, a phenomenon which some scientists attribute to the emergence of primitive empathy in these species. See Baron-Cohen, ED, 128.

who provide mutual aid and who can step in when a woman becomes unable to care for herself and her children.”¹⁶² Given her naturally smaller stature, physical conflict becomes a less reliable tactic of self-defense. Social alliance and the strength of a group is more effective.¹⁶³ Empathy, however, fuels the understanding and communication that allows friendships to flourish. If, therefore, more intimate friendship was more adaptive for females, and empathy was an attribute that would facilitate that friendship, the female would then be selected for empathy more so than the male.

There are other aspects of the adaptability of empathy that apply to friendship and the community taken generally. Males will fight for females and for the means to acquire more females. Females do not have the same reproductive need to fight for males; and their physical stature contraindicates fighting. However, the fighting of males, especially within a community, generally would not profit females. Rather a stable, peaceful community would provide her with the best atmosphere in which to raise her children. Males have been selected more for aggression. It therefore falls more to the female to try to limit the conflict within a community, to play the role of peacemaker. In this role, empathy would serve her well for the ability to resolve conflict and maintain the stability of the community.¹⁶⁴

Strong empathy also gives the female a greater social intelligence, a greater ability to clue-in to what is happening in a given society. This brings with it several advantages: First, it will most frequently fall to the female to leave the house of her family and take-up with the family of her husband. This places her in the position of having to navigate the “politics” of a new family system. The male, having the genetic bond that will afford much more leniency towards boorishness, will not have as much pressure to develop empathy. The female, however, must learn how to fit in a new and intense social milieu. Learning to read the thoughts and feelings of others and how to respond properly would, no doubt, make her life much easier.

Finally, empathy is of great use to the female in the all-important task of choosing with whom to mate. Males are all-too-eager to impregnate her. Unfortunately, in order to gain sexual access to females, males will be willing to trick this access out of her by promising her commitment when they have no intention of following through. A female who is easily fooled by the false promises of men is likely to find herself fooled, pregnant, and alone. Discernment of a male’s honesty,

¹⁶² Rhoads, *Taking Sex Differences Seriously*, 140.

¹⁶³ Rhoads points out the interesting fact that in prisons male subcultures form around the principles of “hierarchies of power and coercion”. Females prisoners tend to structure relationships according to intense friendships and fictitious families. Rhoads, *Taking Sex Differences Seriously*, 140.

¹⁶⁴ See Baron-Cohen, ED, 126-127.

therefore, becomes very important. Empathy can be an effective tool in discerning male sincerity. If a female has a facility for judging the thoughts and feelings of others and for responding appropriately herself, she is better suited to ferret out those males whose intentions are less than honorable. Interestingly, these same skills would be very useful in the care of a child, who also might be inclined to feign various affective and physiological states in order to fool his or her mother.¹⁶⁵

Imagination could doubtless provide other ways in which strong empathizing skill would disproportionately aid females in their reproductive success and so provide more evolutionary pressure on the female to develop empathy. The question now, however, turns towards suggesting specific evolutionary pressures that would have led to the selection of systemizing in males. Baron-Cohen offers more than a few.

All sex-based differences follow from initial distinctions in the reproductive cells; initial differences in investment in reproduction led to a fundamental social structure in which males compete for females; as a result, males are larger and stronger than females. It is also a structure in which males hunt not only to provide food for themselves, but also for their families and as means to make alliances. Within, the social structure, power and position are paramount because these lead to greater access to females. What then of systemizing?

Baron-Cohen offers a number of speculations as to why natural selection would have fitted males with a greater systemizing ability than females.¹⁶⁶ To do this is to show how a trait will improve a male's chances at effectively reproducing while at the same time not necessarily improving a female's ability to effectively reproduce. Thus, one should look first to those areas where males and females have been found to differ. Males compete for females. Those who compete successfully, acquire more females and have more offspring. How could systemizing skills allow a man to compete more successfully for females?

Unlike elephant seals, competition between human males involves more than simply size and strength. Other abilities allow males to acquire resources and/or status in his community and, through these, to gain access to more females. For example, ability as a hunter helps a man to provide for himself and for a mate and child. Not all males, however, are equally proficient at hunting. Those who are more proficient have an advantage over those less proficient. An argument could certainly be made that systemizing skills are helpful in effective hunting. While speed, strength, and throwing accuracy are very important to the hunter, so are the systemizing skills that allow the hunter to assess the environmental variables and,

¹⁶⁵ See Baron-Cohen, 128-130.

¹⁶⁶ For Baron-Cohen's discussion of the adaptive nature of systemizing in males see pp 118-126.

from assessing these variables, judge where which prey is likely to be at which times. Systemizing his location would also allow him safely to return to his home after tracking an animal or seeking out places where he is likely to find prey. Systemizing the weather, as far as possible, also assists him in predicting the behavior of animals in response to weather and in not getting himself killed by exposure. Man's need to hunt and so to wander farther from his home would force him to learn the nature of natural systems, whether such a system be the winds and currents that push and pull and fishing boats, or the connections between the character of a hoof-print and the proximity and likely location of prey.

Systemizing would also prove very useful in developing tools for hunting. Developing a good tool is a matter of experimentation: finding which material works best for which function. Once the general system is developed, perfecting it is also a matter of systemizing: how does one determine which arrow will provide the greatest range and accuracy? The man who develops a means of systematically discovering which arrow flies truer will have a distinct advantage over the man without this knowledge; in fact, the latter man may find himself with the former's arrow stuck between his eyes.

This introduces the point that knowledge of natural systems and systemizing the making of tools is not only helpful in hunting or commerce; these skills would also be very useful in warfare. The evolutionary claim is that, at root, males fight with other males over females, and tribes fight with other tribes over females. Here again, the ability to systemize is evident - one is reminded here of the disciplined, systematized Roman Legions employing superior weaponry and martial technique to vanquish ferocious though less systematized enemies.

Being able to vanquish another tribe (and take their women) or defend your own community (and preserve your women) is crucial, but so too is achieving and maintaining status and power within your own community. Ability at any of the above mentioned skills will likely lead to status. However, it is very important for a male that he be able to learn how the social system works in his community: he must know what it is that will lead to elevated status and what will lead to diminished status. Understanding the system allows him to use the system to his advantage. The higher within the system he is able to move, the more access to females he will have. The man of brute strength can achieve a certain level success, but the man who, in addition to sufficient strength and courage, also brings to the table the ability to understand his social system and excel within it will find himself in the strongest position.

To these reflections, Baron-Cohen adds that many of the arenas in which systemizing skill disproportionately serve the male are also arenas in which empathy would be a liability. Hunting dangerous prey is not a place where concern about the feelings of your fellow hunters proves very useful. What is important is that one's

fellow hunter can do what is supposed to do. Similarly, in warfare, a soldier cannot be overly concerned about the feelings of the enemy he is killing; nor are the *feelings* of his comrades of paramount importance. Here again, what is important is that, each soldier perform his assigned task; for all the lives of a group of soldiers will likely depend upon each man doing his part. Further, if the general in the army is overly concerned about the suffering of the platoon who must stay and fight to the death so that the rest of his army can safely retreat, then his army will not be able safely to retreat. Shifting from the actual battlefield to the social battlefield, in the all-important quest for social dominance, the male cannot be overly concerned about the male against whom he is competing for social position. If he is too concerned about the feelings of his competitors, he likely will not compete well against them. In the cases mentioned, the male must learn to systemize the situation and then work within the system without excessive concern either for his own feelings or the feelings of others.¹⁶⁷

For the female there are different evolutionary pressures: her reproductive success would not have depended upon her ability to make better weaponry than females from other communities so that she would have access to more males with whom to mate. Baron-Cohen's general point is that while empathizing would have been an adaptive attribute for females and the problems that they faced, it would not have been as adaptive for males and the problems that they faced. He does not wish to imply that males are utterly bereft of empathy nor that females are incapable of systemizing. In fact, on the tests that he has devised to measure these abilities male and female distributions are overlapping: females on average show a stronger propensity towards spontaneous empathizing, but the distributions overlap, meaning that there are some females who exhibit lower empathizing than males. The case is similar with systemizing: while the average male score for systemizing ability is higher than the average female score, there are a certain number of females who score higher than males.¹⁶⁸ This should not be surprising, for none of the reasoning given implies that women would not have profited from the ability to systemize nor that males would have no use for empathy. Rather, the arguments refer to the relative balances of these attributes based upon particular evolutionary pressures; pressures which generally pushed males more towards systemizing abilities and females towards greater empathy.

¹⁶⁷ See Baron-Cohen, ED, 118-126.

¹⁶⁸ See Baron-Cohen, ED, 56-57 and 82-84.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

When speaking of the evolutionists, perhaps it is a bit of an imposition to speak in terms of definition. While words such as “species,” “conspecific,” etc., are ubiquitous, the idea of definition is not so common. One’s energy is seemingly better focused on querying them as to their account of the human male. It was noted before that to ask the evolutionists for their account is to ask for a story – a story with no teller, but a story nevertheless. To understand what the human male is now is to understand the developmental path that has led him to where he is today – this in both what Bjorklund and Pellegrini call the phylogenic and ontogenic senses of development.¹⁶⁹ Primarily, to understand the human male, one must track him back to his origin in evolutionary time, discerning the cues and pressures that, as it were, forced him to become that which he is today. The mode of force, the director of the movement and shaper of the plot are the mechanisms of evolutionary progression. First, there is natural selection; those are chosen who best survive in the environment in which they find themselves. For sexual beings, there is also sexual selection; those genes will claim ascendancy whose owners were the most successful at reproducing – at finding and securing the best mates, and having offspring that themselves go on to successfully reproduce. Having reproduced means that these individuals were successful, for males, at being selected by females, and, for females, at well selecting males. Natural selection and sexual selection, along with the more or less random contingencies of ecology and random mutation, have blindly chiseled the intricate form of the human male from the simpler stuff that preceded him. So must the path be followed to its beginning. In order to give an account of the human male, his evolutionary history must be selectively traced its origins so that his crucial morphological, psychological, and behavioral properties can be understood in terms of the forces that wrought them. This was the work of this chapter.

What is of interest here is sexual differentiation. Thus, while there are origins more remote – such as that of life itself – the proper starting point for this discussion is that place in evolutionary history where the forces of natural selection first produced male and female. It is speculated that the evolutionary pressures that produced sexual reproduction centered on a need for genetic variety that was not provided by asexual reproduction. Thus, in its own time, evolution produced a

¹⁶⁹ Bjorklund and Pellegrini, OHN, 11. “Phylogeny and ontogeny are both forms of development – changes in structure and function over time. *Phylogeny* refers to changes in a species (or of particular genetic line that might include a series of related species) over geological time. *Phylogeny* is used synonymously with *evolution* (of a species). *Ontogeny* refers to changes over the lifetime of an individual and is what most people mean most of the time when they use the term *development*.”

manner of reproduction in which genetic variation was produced by having offspring that were the genetic combination of two parents. It appears, however, that a problem existed with the bellicose genes of the mitochondria. This rendered it impossible for each parent to contribute an equal reproductive cell. So, sexual reproduction also necessitated sexual differentiation. One parent provides a cell stripped of all but the genetic contribution; the other provides a cell that contains the genetic coding, but also all of the cellular mechanisms required for the growth of the conceptus. This is the essential difference between male and female. Males provide the simple cell, females the complex cell. All differences between males and females follow from this initial difference.

This initial inequality elicits the introduction of economic terms in virtue of which to explain the varying development paths taken by males and females of various species. Inequality means that one sex will invest more in reproduction than the other. Given the more complicated nature of the ovum versus the spermatozoon, females, by definition, begin with more investment in reproduction. In the course usually taken by nature, this initial greater investment expands with the complexity of the species to a greater disparity between male and female investment, with females having greater and greater investment. (There do exist, however, species in which, overall, males invest more in reproduction than do females.) This introduces the next principle: the lesser-investing sex competes for access to the greater-investing sex, which, by the mere fact of their greater investment in reproduction, is the limiting factor, the scarcer resource in reproduction. Being the less available, more valuable asset, the greater investing sex generally limits by choosing mates. Thus, in almost all cases, males compete for access to females and females limit reproduction, in part, by selecting with whom they will reproduce.

With these principles in place, enough has been said to take a giant leap in time from the origins of sexual differentiation to male and female as they are found in the human species. Given the principles at work in determining the male and female human, the first question that must be asked regards levels of investment in reproduction among men and women. This in turn inevitably leads to morphological questions founded in humans' mammalian and primate past. The evolutionary path followed by the humans is one in which females developed internal reproductive organs versus external for males. This is likely due to the relative value of the ovum versus the sperm. The male developed an external organ that facilitates the generous dissemination of the more economic sperm. So, initial distinction in the germ cells leads to distinct organs to accommodate their most effective employment. Evidently, in the environments in which human ancestors found themselves, protecting the limited number of ova within the body of the female proved most adaptive for the female and so became ascendant in the gene pool. For males, the mass-produced sperm was evidently best produced and delivered

by external organs. Sexual and natural selection, however, chose even greater investment for the female, for they selected for her not only internal ovulation, but also internal fertilization and gestation. Thus to the greater investment which is the menstrual cycle are added the realities of pregnancy and child birth. To which then must also be added breast-feeding of offspring.

Selection of distinct morphologies led to greater and greater disparity in investment levels between males and females, such that, when the process reaches the human species, it is common for male primates closely related to humans to invest nothing more in reproduction than the act of copulation. In men and women, the disparity is not so stark, but, given the realities of internal gestation, child birth, and nursing alone the distinction remains great. This sex-based disparity, following from the initial distinction between ovum and sperm, creates distinct selective pressures on women and men regarding those things that lead to the most effective reproduction for each sex. These distinct selective pressures, in fact, select distinct traits in men and women resulting in the physiological, psychological, and behavioral differences that are witnessed in men and women. Males adapt to manage male problems. Females adapt to manage female problems.

The first of these adaptations has already been mentioned. Ova are a female problem; in the path taken that arrived at woman, adaptations were made that led to internal ovulation, fertilization, and gestation. In males, the problem of how best to disseminate the sperm led to the male external genitalia. This, however, is only the beginning. With such greater cost to her in reproduction, the woman must choose wisely with whom she mates. This regards both the genetic constitution of a mate, and also the potential help that a mate will offer her in the raising of children. Once pregnant, her reproductive capacity is fully engaged, at the very least until the birth of the child she is carrying. Thus, the woman is pushed more towards a "parenting strategy;" given that, once pregnant, her investment is at least nine months of pregnancy and child birth, investing in an existing child to ensure that it survives so as to itself reproduce becomes a reasonable strategy.

Males, by contrast, are likely to be driven more towards seeking other reproductive opportunities. As was noted, a male who within a short time has sexual encounters with 50 different women could have 50 children. A woman who does the same will have only one. And once pregnant, she is unable to reproduce again for *at least* nine months - adding the contraceptive effect of lactation, likely much more than nine months. Women with whom to reproduce are, therefore, a limited resource and one which any man who wants his genetic line to survive, will seek with great vigor. Therefore, males must compete with other males for access to females. Females must choose males and will look for those attributes in males which lead to the genetic health and thriving of her offspring. These criteria of female selection mean that a man must have resources. Such resources can usually be acquired by

achieving status and prestige in his society. That which leads to status will vary from culture to culture, but, whether it be the warrior with the most scalps, or the broker with the richest portfolio who holds the highest place, men will compete to be the man at the top. In hunter-gatherer societies, this almost always meant that a man had to know how to compete and fight physically. Whether it was to raid another tribe and take their women, or prevent another tribe from taking his, a man had to learn how to fight.

Unlike most other species, however, such competition is not exclusively one against one. Usually male-male conflict is collaborative, with groups of men – who have typically stayed close to their kin – fighting against other groups of men. Within groups, men must learn to form dominance hierarchies without actually causing serious harm to members of their own group; it is best that the leader of a group that must fight against another group *not* be determined by means of actual physical combat with members of his own group. This would potentially leave the group's two strongest members severely injured from having fought each other. Men, therefore, must learn to find their place in the hierarchy – preferably without killing each other. Thus, men are selected for their ability to compete with each other, sometimes physically but often by other means. This accounts for the male being 15% larger than females. The reality of women's alternative mating practices in which she might mate with several men within a short time span accounts for the relative size of men's testicles.

The question of female mating strategies reintroduces female choice. Frequently enough in humans, female choice is negated by kin who view their daughters as societal resources to be bartered, or by males who violently subjugate her, be it through rape or by treating women as prizes of war. Nevertheless, assuming that the female has some ability to choose with whom she will mate, natural and sexual selection favored those females who selected their mates not only by physical appearance – i.e., who chose men who seemed to be the best genetic specimens – but, even more, they favored those women who mated with men who were able and willing to invest more than the minimum in their joint offspring. Thus, evolutionary forces favored women limited sexual access to only those men who were willing to commit to helping raise children had together. Because paternal investment has significant positive effects on the survival rates of children, females were “rewarded” for selecting males based upon their likelihood to invest in children. Males were thereby selected according to willingness and ability to invest in offspring.

With his greater investment in reproduction, a specifically male problem now becomes the question of paternity. Given concealed fertilization, a man can never be sure that a child is his own. If all a male offers is the act of copulation, the question of paternity is not something that concerns him much. He simply sows his seed as far and wide as possible, seeking as many mating opportunities as possible,

and hoping for the best. If, however, he is to expend his resources on offspring – his time, money, and lost mating opportunities – he must be certain that the child he raises is his own. Therefore, in exchange for his promise of commitment, he needs a promise of sexual fidelity. The woman, however, at times might find it advantageous to mate outside of this alliance. Thus sexual jealousy develops in men. For women, sometimes for whom being the second or third wife of a powerful man is better than being the only wife a poor man, the question of maternity is never an issue; the child to whom she gives birth will always have the same genetic bond to her. Thus women tend to be more concerned with a man's emotional infidelity as it might lead to withdrawal of support for her offspring.

The list of differences between men and women can, perhaps, be seen as list of responses to distinct problems, to male problems and to female problems. This being the case, for each item mentioned in Chapter 1, some evolutionary rationale could be provided for its existence. Take the sense of sight, for instance. Males have eyes and brains more suited to the perception of motion. The female system of sight is more suited to the perception of color and texture. Due to intra-sex competition, men were selected for size, strength and speed. Females, however, following from the initial greater investment in the ovum, internal gestation, and then lactation by necessity became the primary care givers to children. They are thus bound to their children whose lives depend on the nourishment received from their bodies. Add to this their smaller size, and males become the natural hunters. With paternal investment, as well, hunting becomes a manner in which a male can provide much high-quality food in relatively short time. Hunting, however, generally requires targeting and tracking abilities. Thus, the male eye evolves to be better at these tasks, for as was noted above, being a good hunter has both direct and indirect effects upon the thriving of a man's children – direct because he catches more food, indirect because his status increases in his society. Women, being more spatially restricted, bound by their children, would do well to excel at gathering what resources can be gleaned near the village. So, her sight is more geared towards discernment and her fine motor skills more honed. From initial differences in the reproductive cell, one arrives at distinct visual and motor skills in men and women.

It would take far too much time and space to trace each observed difference in men and women back to differences in the sperm and the ovum. What is clear, however, is that, for the evolutionists, there are real differences between men and women that, in fact, begin with the differences in their reproductive cells. These initial differences create distinct levels of investment which, in turn, lead to distinct evolutionary pressures on men and women. Evolution invests equally in each sex, but it does invest in exactly the same way.

This being said, men and women are members of the same species, far more alike than different. Almost all differences noted by evolutionists are difference in

degree rather than kind. If it is more adaptive, typically, for men to systematize, it does not at all follow that women will not be selected for having some systemizing ability. Rather, as this ability was more correlated with reproductive success in males, it will have a certain prominence in males. This in no way implies absence of that ability in females. Further, such traits generally involve overlapping distributions. Thus, quite easily, a given female could have better systemizing abilities than a given male. The theory does not deny individual variance. Rather, it explains distinctions in distributions according to adaptive value vis-à-vis efficacy in reproduction. The essential difference begins with the initial inequality in reproduction and proceeds along a circuitous evolutionary path that ends with modern man and woman.

The path that leads to modern man – and baggage picked up along the way – is the same, regardless of whether or not contemporary humans want to embrace their evolutionary past or not, or whether or not they are aware of the forces at work upon them.

Modern humans still enter this world with a nervous system evolved over eons of time and possess psychological mechanisms that bias them toward certain behaviors and interpretations of their environment at different points in development. Whatever the effects of modern culture are on the human mind and behavior, they are substantial, and they are mediated through a brain evolved for life in very different times.¹⁷⁰

Culture certainly has its place and makes its demands. But it is received through a brain that is the result of eons of evolution. Thus, preconscious forces are at work in man that are vestiges of a prior time. Man has his proximate causes, the reasons he gives for why he does what he does. These, however, are only important insofar as they relate to the ultimate causes that drive nature and evolution. Will a certain genetic composition endure? At the end of day, at the end of the voyage, it is adaptability that has been steering the ship. Thus, the human brain can spin tales as to why it is doing what it is doing; it can say it is leaving the room “to get a coke.” In the end, this is only contingently important. What is ultimately important is what leads to survival of one’s own genes and those of one’s offspring. These are the undercurrents of the brain that spur action.

A central theme in evolutionary psychology is that the evolved cognitive mechanisms that so influence our behavior are generally beyond awareness. That is, most adaptive cognitive processes and “strategies” are unavailable to consciousness reflecting implicit, as opposed to explicit, cognition. We concur. This approach permits psychologists to explain the actions of humans in the same way that the

¹⁷⁰ Bjorklund and Pellegrini, OHN, 8.

actions of nonhuman animals are explained. No special pleading for the uniqueness of humans is required to explain their behavior.¹⁷¹

Thus, though more complicated, the human male can finally be explained just as the male gibbon or elephant seal can be explained. Man is one part of nature, subject to all the same forces of nature as is every other part. There is no claim to a privileged place and there is no need of an added mode of explanation. The explanation of the human male is exhausted in the recounting of the natural forces that wrought him.

¹⁷¹ Bjorklund, OHN, 6.

Chapter 3

Freud and Sexual Difference

INTRODUCTION

Certainly, any theory of sexual differentiation will be complex. Freud's is no exception. As this work does not concern solely Freud, there is need to set aside some of this complexity and, instead, present the heart of Freud's theory, hopefully losing nothing essential in the process of distillation.

Freud's position is replete with controversy, voicing theses that have proved offensive to many - especially women - and outlandish to others. For now, judgment is reserved on the veracity of his thought; the current project is rather to understand Freud's position on sexual differentiation. To do this, I attempt to follow the developmental path of a boy's acquisition of masculine identity as understood by Freud. Having done so, boys' development is contrasted with that of girls, noting where and when the paths coincide, diverge, and subsequently re-intersect.

This chapter begins, in Section I, with a brief treatment of some of the most fundamental concepts in Freudian thought, as well as Freud's thoughts on the theoretical consequences of the intersex disorders. Next, in Section II, the Oedipus complex is explored, first as it pertains to boys, then as it pertains to girls. Discussion of the resolution of the Oedipus complex leads, in Section III, to a general examination of the origins of the super-ego and, more precisely, to sexual differentiation in this process. Understanding of the formation and resolution of the Oedipus complex in conjunction with the formation of the super-ego allows for adequate characterization of man *qua* male in the thought of Freud.

I. GENERAL CONCEPTS

Like Pinker, Freud is an heir to Darwin. Therefore, the ultimate causes that drive man must be related to his survival and subsequent ability to reproduce. As a materialist and determinist, all will finally be reducible to such ultimate causes. In this context, Daniel Robinson well summarizes Freud's fundamental tenets:

Utterly consonant with Darwinism, Freudian theory rests on the notion of instinctual biological drives that impel the individual to act in such a way as to survive. The principle governing or defining all these drives is that of *pleasure*. The exercise of this principle is sexual gratification which, in its most advanced expression, involves heterosexual relations for the express purpose of procreation. However, the individual arrives at this level only after successfully passing through more primitive stages of gratification at any one of which the individual might be arrested by trauma. The stages are identified in terms of the particular source of pleasure: oral, anal, genital, and phallic. The sexual "energy" devoted to this endless search of pleasure is the "libido," which operates in the service of that most primitive survivalistic element of psychological beings, the "id." Since the instincts of the id are such as to lead to incestuous, murderous, and purely egoistic actions, no human society could survive its unrestrained expression. Every society must "socialize" its young: develop in them a conscience, or "superego," which will direct the individual not away from gratification but toward socially acceptable means of gratification. The compromise between the impulses of the id and the constraints of the super ego results in the self of whom we are aware, the "ego."¹

Ultimate causes lead to survival. Pleasure, however, provides the proximate causes. It is the quest for pleasure that serves both the prolongation of the species and constitutes the fundamental force driving the psyche. Expression of this force is constitutive of the id and leads to the formation of the other parts of the psyche - the super-ego and the ego. The sexually distinct expression of this force, as required by anatomical distinction, leads to consequent sexual differentiation of the psyche, and the shaping of the male and female psyche as consistent with their anatomy. This process will be seen in the formation and resolution of the Oedipus complex discussed in the following section.

In addition to being a follower of Darwin, Freud was a trained physician. As such, he was no doubt aware of the contemporary theories on the biological question of sexual differentiation. He was also aware of the existence of the intersex disorders mentioned in Chapter 1. He comments on such disorders:

¹ Robinson, *An Intellectual History of Psychology*, 317-318.

The importance of these abnormalities lies in the unexpected fact that they facilitate our understanding of normal development. For it appears that a certain degree of anatomical hermaphroditism occurs normally. In every normal male or female individual, traces are found of the apparatus of the opposite sex.... These long-familiar facts of anatomy lead us to suppose that an originally bisexual physical disposition has, in the course of evolution, become modified into a unisexual one, leaving behind only a few traces of the sex that has become atrophied.²

In the presence of anatomical traces of the opposite sex, Freud sees signs of an earlier bisexuality. This biological "fact" also manifests itself in the development of sexual identity. Thus, one can anticipate that, for Freud, the paths of masculine and feminine development will, in fact, have many points of coincidence and intersection.

II. THE OEDIPUS COMPLEX

To understand development is, in part, to understand the energy that spurs it on. For Freud, then, to understand development is to understand libido: the sexual energy that is the primary force moving the human machine. Libido focuses itself primarily in distinct regions of the body throughout a person's development. At the beginning of a child's development, libido is focused on the mouth (age birth to 1 year);³ this is the infant's primary source of pleasure as he receives his nourishment from his mother's breast. In the normal course of development, the oral phase gives way to a libidinal focus on the anus (ages 2 to 3 years).⁴ This is the time of toilet training where children learn that they can assert a significant amount of control over their parents simply by learning to control their bowels. Up to this point, the development of males and females appear to be essentially the same as the focal points of libidinal energy- the mouth and the anus - are equal for males and females.

The next stage of developmental marks a kind of beginning of "adult" sexuality, and the beginning of the divergence of male and female psycho-sexual identity. In this stage, the focus of libidinal energy moves from the anus to the phallus: the penis in the case of males, and the clitoris in the case of females (ages 3 to 5 years).⁵ It is here that the divergence of the male and female becomes evident; for the locus of pleasure is diverse. In fact, the having of a penis versus its lack

² Sigmund Freud, *Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality*, in *The Freud Reader*, ed. Peter Gay (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1989), 243-244. [Hereafter referred to as FR.]

³ Christopher F. Monte, *Behind the Mask: An Introduction to Theories of Personality*, Sixth Edition (New York: Harcourt Brace College Publishers, 1999), 91-93.

⁴ Monte, *Behind the Mask*. pp. 91-93.

⁵ Monte, *Behind the Mask*, pp. 92-93.

becomes the primary fuel of the engine of psychological development in males and females. This is due to the crucial role that the penis plays in the resolution of the primary developmental process of the phallic stage: the resolution of the Oedipus complex. And it is the formation and resolution of the Oedipus complex and its decisively distinct manifestation in males and females that will be the primary cause of divergence in the male and female psyche. First, a summary of the Oedipus complex as manifest in boys is given. This is then contrasted with its equivalent in girls.⁶

1. *The Oedipus Complex in boys*

As, in the course of the developmental process, the erogenous zone in the male moves from the anus to the penis, a boy's attachment to his mother begins to take on a sexual character – at least at the subconscious level. With the introduction of this mode of desire for the mother, the relationship with the father likewise takes a disturbing turn: what was likely to have been an affectionate relationship with the father, now takes on the character of rivalry for the common object of affection. With the arrival of phallus-centered pleasure, what were pleasant relationships with the mother and father turn, on the one hand, to phallic desire, and, on the other, to jealous hostility; a boy begins to desire the mother sexually and view the father as an obstacle to the fulfillment of this desire.

Into the mix is also added another element: the little boy discovers that he is able to self-manipulate this new erogenous zone. His wandering hands, however, are severely rebuked by his parents. According to Freud, these rebukes are generally accompanied by either expressed or implied threats of castration. So, with the arrival of the phallic stage also comes a fear of castration subsequent to threats made by parents, who severely censure the boy in order to prevent masturbation. Eventually, a boy will connect these threats of castration – and the intense fear they provoke – with his memory of female anatomy:

[W]hen a little boy first catches sight of a girl's genital region, he begins by showing irresolution and lack of interest... It is not until later, when some threat of castration has obtained a hold upon him, that the observation becomes important to him: if he then recollects or repeats it, it arouses a terrible storm of emotion in him and forces him to believe in the reality of the threat which he has hitherto laughed at.⁷

⁶ For summary of the stages of psycho-sexual development and the Oedipus complex see, Monte, *Behind the Mask*. pp. 86-95.

⁷ Freud, "Some Psychological Consequences of the Anatomical Distinction Between the Sexes," in FR, 673.

A young boy begins to take pleasure in his external genitalia; pleasure which, at times he provides himself. These acts bring the expressed or implied threats of castration. When he then recalls or sees anew the genital region of the female, he begins to think that such threats are not empty; rather, the female anatomy is proof to the young boy that there are creatures who have been found guilty of the crime of which he also stands accused, and upon whom the terrible sentence of castration has been carried out.

For the boy, there is an added element which increases his fear of castration, making the anxiety experienced at the sight or recollection of female genitalia all the more acute: the boy also fears that his own father will carry out the sentence of castration upon him as a response to the boy's erotic desire for his mother. Together, feared punishment for masturbation and paternal retaliation for the boy's secret desire to usurp his father as sexual possessor of his mother cause a powerful fear of castration. While these appear to be separate motivations, Freud indicates a connection between the two:

As can clearly be shown, he [the boy] stands in the Oedipus attitude towards his parents; his masturbation is only a genital discharge of the sexual excitation belonging to the complex, and throughout later years will owe its importance to that relationship.⁸

A boy fears castration as a punishment for masturbation, which is itself a result of the sexual energy produced by his Oedipal stance regarding his mother. Thus all fear of castration is finally reducible to the Oedipal dynamic. It is, then, understandable why Freud notes that even though the threat of castration is usually made by a female caregiver, a boy understands that the punishment will be carried out by either "the father or the doctor;"⁹ this completes the Oedipal dynamic by invoking the hostility of the father (or father-figure) towards the boy.

The arrival of the phallic stage plunges the young boy into a world of incestuous and violent conflict, which is crowned with the real threat of the loss of his most intense source of pleasure. This conflict-ridden situation must therefore be resolved. It will be seen that the fear of castration will play a leading role in such resolution - which role will also extend to the formation of ethics and religion.

Freud offers the following observation regarding possible resolution of the Oedipus complex - he also returns to the notion of inherent bisexuality:

⁸ Freud, "The Dissolution of the Oedipus Complex," in FR, 663.

⁹ Freud, "The Dissolution of the Oedipus Complex," in FR, 662.

The Oedipus complex offered the child two possibilities of satisfaction, an active and a passive one. He could put himself in his father's place in a masculine fashion and have intercourse with his mother as his father did, in which case he would soon have felt that latter as a hindrance; or he might want to take the place of his mother and be loved by his father, in which case his mother would become superfluous.¹⁰

Unfortunately for the boy, both of these options will result in the loss of his penis. In the case of taking the place of the mother, the deprivation of a penis is certain: the boy recognizes that the penalty of castration has been carried out upon women, so to identify with women is to accept the sentence of castration and resign himself to life without a penis. A boy's narcissistic love for his own sexual organ precludes this possibility. So, generally, identification with the mother will be avoided.

To put himself in the place of his father, however, has its own danger. This places him as the object of his father's wrath, who, clearly, will not take kindly to sharing his wife. Thus, once again, the boy would call down upon himself the sentence of castration. And so his narcissistic concern for his own penis also precludes this possibility. In order, therefore, to save his penis, he must, as it were, send it into hiding; he must try neither to replace his mother as the object of his father's sexual affection nor his father as the provider of that affection to his mother:

The whole process has on the one hand preserved the genital organ - has averted the danger of its loss - and, on the other, has paralyzed it - has removed its function. This process ushers in the latency period, which now interrupts the child's sexual development.¹¹

The boy has preserved the existence of his penis by refusing either role that would lead to the direct satisfaction of the Oedipus complex, but would also result in castration either as a precondition - in the case of taking the place of the mother - or as retaliation - in the case of taking the place of the father. Neither potential expression of his initial bisexuality - either taking the place of his father or his mother - is acceptable; he, therefore, effectively neutralizes it, sending it into the exile of the latency period, from where it will emerge at the final stage of psychosexual development: the genital stage.

The primary motivation for relinquishing Oedipal desires is fear of castration; it is this that prevents him from taking the place of either father or mother. The primary means of this resolution, however, remains to be seen. To understand this resolution, one must consider the concept not of taking the place of the mother or father, but rather of identifying with one or the other:

¹⁰ Freud, "The Dissolution of the Oedipus Complex," in FR, 663.

¹¹ Freud, "The Dissolution of the Oedipus Complex," in FR, 664.

The object-cathexes are given up and replaced by identifications. The authority of the father or the parents is introjected into the ego, and there it forms the nucleus of the super-ego, which takes over the severity of the father and perpetuates his prohibition against incest, and so secures the ego from the return of the libidinal object-cathexis.¹²

Libidinal desires directed at either parent are replaced by identification with one of the parents. In the male child, normal development leads the male child to identify with the father. This identification includes an internalization of the prohibitions set-out by the father, such as that against incest. Thus, the boy now has an internal principle preventing the return of sexual desire for his mother. The situation for Freud, however, is not always so clear:

Along with the demolition of the Oedipus complex, the boy's object-cathexis of his mother must be given up. Its place may be filled with one of two things: either an identification with his mother or an intensification of his identification with his father.¹³

Here is a return to Freud's curious notion of bisexuality: the boy has the potency either to identify with the father or the mother. He notes that the identification with the father is considered to be the normal outcome, as it permits an affectionate relationship with the mother and solidifies masculinity in the boy, but it is not the only possible outcome; he may also identify with the mother, "electing" to become the object of the father's desire. As such, the developmental path is sometimes lost.

However, even if the identification with father occurs, it is often not as simple as it may seem:

Closer study usually discloses the more complete Oedipus complex, which is twofold, positive and negative, and is due to the bisexuality originally present in children: that is to say a boy has not merely an ambivalent attitude towards his father and an affectionate object-choice towards his mother, but at the same time he also behaves like a girl and displays an affectionate feminine attitude to his father and a corresponding jealousy and hostility towards his mother.¹⁴

¹² Freud, "The Dissolution of the Oedipus Complex," in FR, 664. In this quotation, the "object-cathexes" mentioned refers to the "libidinal cathexis of his parental objects" (664) or, put otherwise, the desire either to have the mother as a sexual object or take her place as the object of the father.

¹³ Freud, *The Ego and the Id*, in FR, 640.

¹⁴ Freud, *The Ego and the Id*, in FR, 641.

Freud makes the point that simple resolution of Oedipus complex - for boys, identification with the father and object choice of the mother - is not the most common. There are rather the positive and negative resolutions. The positive is the primary and regards identification with the same-sex parent and object choice of the opposite-sex parent. Due to inherent bisexuality, however, there remains a residual of the opposite dynamic: identification with the opposite-sex parent and object choice of the same-sex parent. Thus, as there are anatomical residuals of the opposite sex, so there are psychic residuals.

Given this inherent ambiguity, the resolution of the Oedipus complex is critically important in the formation of masculine identity in a male child. Up until the time of the Oedipus complex, Freud describes of the mode of identification of male children with their fathers as warm and affectionate, and free from a sense of rivalry for a common object of libido.¹⁵ While he does refer to this rapport between father and son as identification, the above texts indicate that it is neither final nor decisive. It is the initiation of the phallic phase and the subsequent Oedipal stance of the boy that occasions a more complete identification. Speaking of the identification of the boy with his father subsequent to the Oedipal conflict, Freud writes: "In this way [by identifying with the father] the dissolution of the Oedipus complex would consolidate the masculinity in a boy's character."¹⁶ Up to this point, the possibility of the identification with either parent persisted as a result of the boy's inherent bisexuality. With the advent of Oedipus complex and its resolution, the boy will either deepen and consolidate his masculine identification or will primarily identify with the feminine. Thus, the Oedipus complex, in its normal development and resolution, serves to consolidate a boy's masculine identity by means of his identifying with his father, and taking the mother as an object of affection, instead of identifying with the mother and seeking to be the object of the father's sexual affection.

The boy enters the phallic stage with a loose identification with his father but also with an inherent bisexuality that leaves the potential for the boy either to complete his identification with his father or rather to identify with his mother. So what is it that will determine whether a boy identifies with his father or his mother? Freud says that it is the same determining factor for males and females:

¹⁵Freud, *Ego and Id*, in FR, 640. And "Some Psychological Consequences of the Anatomical Distinction Between the Sexes," in FR, 672.

¹⁶ Freud, *The Ego and the Id*, in FR. 640.

It would appear therefore that in both sexes the relative strength of the masculine and feminine sexual dispositions is what determines whether the outcome of the Oedipus situation shall be an identification with the father or the mother.¹⁷

While there is a capacity for both, there is within each child a disposition either towards masculine or feminine sexuality. It is this disposition towards either the masculine or feminine that determines the child's identification. For the male child, Freud appears to give a kind of primacy or point of reference to the father: the male child will either be disposed to identify with the father in assuming the mother as the object of libidinal cathexis, or he will choose to identify with the mother and be the object of the father's libido. Thus, the boy will either be like the father, or he will be the father's object. In both cases, the father is the point of reference. In the latter situation, there is for the boy an implied acceptance of the punishment of castration as a precondition for being the object of the father's sexual affection and identification with the feminine. This is a sentence that love for his penis will normally obviate. Hence, identification with the father, acceptance of the phallus, and assumption of the masculine sexual disposition is the usual outcome of the Oedipal crisis.

It is clear enough that, in this developmental process, the phallus plays a primary role. Regarding the sight or memory of female genitalia in connection with the male fear of castration Freud writes:

This combination of circumstances leads to two reactions, which may become fixed and will in that case, whether separately or together in conjunction with other factors, permanently determine the boy's relation to women: horror of the mutilated creature or triumphant contempt for her.¹⁸

The phallus reigns supreme in this developmental stage as it is the primary source of pleasure. At some level, therefore, the boy, upon seeing the girl, realizes how much more fortunate he is than she, having still in tact that which is the source of his pleasure. From this superior position, Freud says that a boy's reaction will either be horror or contempt for the girl. The possession of a penis, therefore, provides a privileged place for males; its absence, nevertheless, will likewise play a critical role in the development of the little girl. Attention is now turned to female development.

¹⁷ Freud, *The Ego and the Id*, in FR. 640-641.

¹⁸ Freud, "Some Psychological Consequences of the Anatomical Distinction Between the Sexes," in FR. 673-674.

2. Female Development

Freud indicates that, up to a certain point, the development of the girl and boy is the same; this is so even into the phallic stage; as a boy finds pleasure in his penis, so a girl will find pleasure in the clitoris. A point of divergence, however, arrives and, according to Freud, cannot be avoided:

The female sex too develops an Oedipus complex, a super-ego and a latency period. May we also attribute a phallic organization and castration complex to it? The answer is in the affirmative, but these things cannot be the same as they are in boys. Here the feminist demand for equal rights for the sexes does not take us far, for the morphological distinction is bound to find expression in differences of psychical development. "Anatomy is Destiny", to vary a saying of Napoleon's. The little girl's clitoris behaves just like a penis to begin with but, when she makes a comparison with a playfellow of the other sex, she perceives that she has "come off badly" and she feels this is a wrong done to her and as a ground for inferiority.¹⁹

It appears that the little girl is content until she sees the genital region of boys. At this point, it becomes clear to her that nature has not dealt equally with girls and boys, and that girls have gotten the worse part of the deal. Unlike boys, who fear their own castration at the sight of female genitalia, girls come to see themselves as already castrated: "The essential difference thus comes about that the girl accepts castration as an accomplished fact whereas the boys fear the possibility of its occurrence."²⁰

Confronted as she is with the superiority of the male penis, the girl develops envy for males. She sees herself as inferior and may refuse to accept this biological fact and behave as if she had a penis. Freud refers to this as a masculinity complex.²¹ Usually, she is forced to accept her lack of a penis and begins to seek the phallus in other ways. A greater tendency towards jealousy, however, will remain in females as a residual effect of their initial penis-envy.

As another sign of the primacy of the penis, Freud calls attention to the female attitude towards masturbation and its distinction from that of males. Freud's words are telling both as regards his understanding of the primacy of the phallus and the existence of a certain mode of bisexuality:

The reactions of human individuals of both sexes are of course made up of masculine and feminine traits. But it appeared to me nevertheless as though

¹⁹ Freud, "The Dissolution of the Oedipus Complex," in FR. 664-665.

²⁰ Freud, "The Dissolution of the Oedipus Complex," in FR. 664-665.

²¹ Freud, "Some Psychical Consequences of the Anatomical Distinction Between the Sexes," in FR. 674.

masturbation was further removed from the nature of women than of men, and... that masturbation, at all events of the clitoris, is a masculine activity and that the elimination of clitoridal sexuality is a necessary precondition for the development of femininity.²²

Freud wonders why it is that females are less likely to engage in genital self-stimulation. He reckons that this activity is, by its nature, more masculine and that therefore, at the time of the Oedipal conflict when the initial bisexuality is determined in one direction, this more masculine mode of behavior must be jettisoned by the female in order for the feminine role to be assumed. The masculine is identified with the phallus. To embrace the feminine, the girl must relinquish the clinging to the phallic, which masturbation represents.

The female desire for a penis, however, is not simply lost. According to Freud's notion of the conservation of psychic energy, it is rather transformed into another mode. "She gives up the wish for a penis and puts in place of it a wish for a child: and *with that purpose in view* she takes her father as a love-object. Her mother becomes the object of her jealousy. The girl has turned into a little woman."²³ The little girl now desires the penis from her father in the form of receiving from him a child.²⁴ Her desire for her father, therefore, is at root a sublimated desire for a penis; the source of its energy is a desire to have a penis. The desire for a penis is transformed into a desire for the father, to have him sexually, to have a child by him. As her desire for a penis cannot be realized, so too her desire for her father is unrealistic. Thus, her version of the Oedipus complex is in need of resolution. Unlike the Oedipus complex for boys, which is obliterated by the fear of castration, Freud states the, for girls, the libidinal cathexis for the father – which is really to possess a penis and a child – finally gives way to the frustration of not being realized in the person of the father. The desires however for a penis and a child remain in a more general way and prepare the young girl for feminine sexuality. Thus, later female sexual desire, both her sexual desire for men and her desire for children, find their initial energy impulse in the female desire for a penis.

III. OEDIPUS AND THE BIRTH OF ETHICS

²² Freud, "Some Psychological Consequences of the Anatomical Distinction Between the Sexes," in FR. 675.

²³ Freud, "Some Psychological Consequences of the Anatomical Distinction Between the Sexes," in FR. 676.

²⁴ See Freud, "Some Psychological Consequences of the Anatomical Distinction Between the Sexes," in FR. 676 and "The Dissolution of the Oedipus Complex," in FR, 665.

Before summarizing masculine and feminine sexuality, it will be useful to discuss distinctions in male and female ethical thinking. For Freud, this difference springs from the diverse manner in which the Oedipus complex is resolved in male and female children; distinct resolution of the Oedipus complex leads to distinct formation of the super-ego. That which precipitates the formation of this important psychic structure is, in Freud's rendering, significantly different in males and females.

*The broad general outcome of the sexual phase dominated by the Oedipus complex may, therefore, be taken to be the forming of a precipitate in the ego, consisting of these two identifications [identification with the father and identification with the mother] in some way united with each other. This modification of the ego retains its special position; it confronts the other contents of the ego as an ego ideal or super-ego.*²⁵

A result of the phallic stage of development is the formation of the ego ideal or super-ego. This "precipitate" is the result of identifications with both mother and father, but receives the greater part of its energy from the father:

The child's parents, and especially his father, were perceived as the obstacle to realization of his Oedipus wishes; so his infantile ego fortified itself for the carrying out of the repression by erecting this same obstacle within itself. It borrowed strength to do this, so to speak, from the father, and this loan was an extraordinarily momentous act.²⁶

The child must subdue his Oedipal wishes. So momentous is this necessity that the ego forms a separate structure to do this, which is the internalization of the prohibitions placed upon it, primarily by the father. Thus, it is the need to reign in the libidinal desires of the Oedipus complex that provide the opportunity for the formation of the ego ideal within the developing child. It is in confronting these desires that there exists a sharp distinction between the male and female.

To expound upon this, one must recall the distinct ways in which the Oedipus complex is resolved in males and females. For boys, Freud does not speak so much of the resolution of the Oedipus complex as of its obliteration. This is because, for boys, the repression of Oedipal desires is forced by a real and powerful fear, that of castration. As such, there is a poignant source of psychic energy to erect this new structure of the super-ego. It is a clear, decisive, and potent process fueled by an ominous source of energy.

²⁵ Freud, *The Ego and the Id*, in, FR, 641. Italics in original.

²⁶ Freud, *The Ego and the Id*, in, FR, 642.

This is in contrast to the situation with the female child. In her case, the sentence of castration has already been carried out, the punishment executed. As such, the same potent motivation to relinquish Oedipal desires simply does not exist. A girl's relinquishing of these desires appears to be due more to "upbringing and intimidation from outside which threatens her with a loss of love."²⁷ As noted earlier, the girl seems to pass through a series of frustrations: first of not having a penis, then of being able to have neither the father sexually nor a baby from the father. These are frustrations, however, which appear to have their effect more slowly as opposed to the more forceful and traumatic motivation which the male confronts. It is worth quoting Freud at length here to summarize the differences:

I cannot evade the notion (though I hesitate to give it expression) that for women the level of what is ethically normal is different from what it is for men. Their super-ego is never so inexorable, so impersonal, so independent of its emotional origins as we require it to be in men. Character-traits which critics of every epoch have brought up against women - that they show less sense of justice than men, that they are less ready to submit to the great exigencies of life, that they are more often influenced in their judgments by feelings of affection or hostility - all these would be amply accounted for by the modification in the formation of their super-ego.... We must not allow ourselves to be deflected from such conclusions by the denials of the feminist... but we shall, of course, willingly agree that the majority of men are also far behind the masculine ideal and that all human individuals, as a result of their bisexual disposition and of cross-inheritance, combine in themselves both masculine and feminine characteristics, so that pure masculinity and femininity remain theoretical constructions of uncertain content.²⁸

Freud's claim is clear; what he understands to be perennial attributes of female ethics - a lesser sense of justice, lesser willingness to accept life's demands, and greater subjection to emotion - can all be explained by a super-ego that is formed without the fear of castration.

In fact, at another point in his work, Freud appears to attribute the moral sense in women primarily to cross-inheritance. As a boy identifies with his father, so a girl identifies with her mother. However, in the formation of the super-ego, there will always be inheritance from each. Freud writes: "The male sex seems to have taken the lead in all these moral acquisitions; and they seem to have then been

²⁷ Freud, "The Dissolution of the Oedipus Complex," in FR. 665.

²⁸ Freud, "Some Psychological Consequences of the Anatomical Distinction Between the Sexes," in FR, 677.

transmitted to women by cross inheritance.”²⁹ Not only is the female moral sense weaker, but it appears to be derivative from the male moral sense.

It is worth pausing a moment here to look more closely at the formation of the super-ego as this process and its results stretch beyond its role in resolving the Oedipus situation in an individual and touch upon preserving the species as a whole.

We see, then, that the differentiation of the super-ego from the ego is not a matter of chance; it represents the most important characteristics of the development both of the individual and of the species, indeed, by giving permanent expression to the influence of the parents it perpetuates the existence of the factors to which it owes its origins.³⁰

The super-ego internalizes the prohibition of the parents – both mother and father, but especially the father.³¹ The internalizations of the norms to which the parents adhere will ensure that, in the absence of the actual influence of the parents that the child will imitate their actions. Thus, as Freud puts it, “it perpetuates the existence of the factors to which it owes its origins.” It is a victory, thereby, for the species which, in the future, after the latency period, will have new reproducing members. Hence, in a way, it is a move from pure concern for the individual to a more universal concern for the species; its formation perpetuates interiorly in the offspring those prohibitions that have led to the growth of the species.

Having explained a human’s turn from the purely selfish drives of the id, Freud claims to have explained what others refer to as man’s higher nature:

Here we have that higher nature, in this ego ideal or super-ego, the representation of our relation to our parents. When we were little children we knew these higher natures, we admired them and feared them; and later we took them into ourselves.³²

Man’s higher nature resides in the precipitate that is the residue of the Oedipus complex. Freud characterizes the nature of this residue as psychic as opposed to real. Once again, it is best to use Freud’s own words:

²⁹ Freud, *The Ego and the Id*, in FR. 643-644.

³⁰ Freud, “Some Psychological Consequences of the Anatomical Distinction Between the Sexes,” in FR, 677.

³¹ See Freud, “Some Psychological Consequences of the Anatomical Distinction Between the Sexes,” in FR, 677.

³² Freud, *The Ego and the Id*, in FR. 643.

The ego ideal is therefore the heir of the Oedipus complex, and thus it is also the expression of the most powerful impulses and most important libidinal vicissitudes of the id. By setting up this ego ideal, the ego has mastered the Oedipus complex and at the same time placed itself in subjection to the id. Whereas the ego is essentially the representative of the external world, of reality, the super-ego stands in contrast to it as the representative of the internal world, of the id. Conflicts between the ego and the ideal will... ultimately reflect the contrast between what is real and what is psychical, between the external and internal world.³³

Having, as it were, captured and redirected the libidinal desires constitutive of the id, the super-ego becomes part of the internal, psychic life of the individual, which, like other aspects of man's psyche must confront that which exists outside of itself, must confront reality. This is the function of the ego: to balance and stand between the demands of the internal and external worlds. In the Oedipus complex, the most important impulses of the id, as it were, come to foreground³⁴ and confront and are confronted by an individual's psyche and external reality. The result is that which is deemed highest in man, his ethical nature. Freud goes on to explain this nature as a "substitute for a longing for the father."³⁵ Those who reinforce the ego ideal, teachers et al., are continuing the role of the father. Thus the external world reinforces the internal world, but the substance of the structure is a psychical one; it is an internal reality. As such, the ego *ideal* is frequently at odds with the ego itself.

An earlier point can be reinforced regarding the distinct way in which the super-ego forms in males and females and, therefore, the distinct way in which they are likely to behave and think in the ethical realm: the male child forms the super-ego with the force of his fear of castration leading him to identify with his father. The ego ideal finds its source in the father and the fear of castration. Its function in both the male and the female child is to substitute for the longing for the father. In the male child this longing for the father appears to express itself as identification of the male child with the father. In the female child, the longing is ultimately to have a penis and so to have the penis-child from the father. In both the case of the male and female child, though it be in different way, the father is central.

³³ Freud, *The Ego and the Id*, in FR. 643.

³⁴ This is spoken metaphorically, for Oedipal desires will not come to the foreground of conscious thought as they are too troubling for the conscious mind. Therefore, they are quickly repressed.

³⁵ Freud, *The Ego and the Id*, in FR. 643. "It is easy to show that the ego ideal answers to everything that is expected of the higher nature of man. As a substitute for a longing for the father, it contains the germ from which all religions have evolved."

CONCLUSION

Like Pinker, Freud finds the source of man's most fundamental moving forces in evolution's determining mechanisms. Unlike Pinker, who relies more upon analysis of varying ecologies and adaptation within those ecologies, Freud begins with the idea that the forces that drive man are connected to his struggle for survival and reproduction, but then peers within man's psyche to discern the nature of these forces in the conscious and unconscious mind. As a result of this analysis, Freud claims to have discovered significant differences in the fundamental psychic structures of men and women. These differences center on possessing or lacking the phallus.

In her essay on sexual difference, Caroline Whitbeck classifies Freud among those who consider woman as a partial or imperfect version of a man.³⁶ (The other notable example of the "partial man" theory offered by Whitbeck is Aristotle.) Given the centrality of the phallus in Freud's account of sexual differentiation, Whitbeck's characterization is apt. It is clear that, for Freud, full possession of the phallus is sought by all humans, male and female alike. However, due to anatomical realities, men and women must seek it differently. Men, anatomically possessing a full phallus, may seek it directly. Females, having been castrated, are thus imperfect and must seek the phallus from men. Both boys and girls, though in different ways, seek the phallus from him who has it – the father. For the boy, this is a matter of identifying with the father. For the girl, desire for the phallus is at first a sexual desire for the father, and then a desire for a baby from the father; becoming the sexual object of the father entails a kind of identification with the mother. A summary of Freud on sexual differentiation can therefore be offered in terms of the centrality of the phallus and the centrality of the father as its primary possessor.

Supremacy of the phallus: If one thing is clear from a survey of Freud, it is that the phallus reigns supreme: in the phallic stage, pleasure is focused therein. It is this shift that begins adult sexuality and initiates the Oedipus complex. With the sight of the genitals of the opposite sex, boys realize that they are privileged, that they have been given a primary source of pleasure that females lack. As such, there is a fundamental reaction towards females as maimed, punished, and impoverished. The male's initial capacity regarding identification with *either* father or mother is generally resolved with the boy's realization that identification with the mother would result in the loss of his beloved penis. Therefore, fear of castration resolves any tendencies toward primary identification with the mother by a male child.

³⁶ Caroline Whitbeck, "Theories of Sex Difference," *The Philosophical Forum*, Vol. 5, Nos. 1-2 (Fall-Winter 1973-1974): 54, 68-75.

It is narcissistic concern for his own penis that causes the boy to relinquish libidinal cathexis for his own mother. The fear of castration also leads the boy to relinquish hostility towards his father as a sexual rival, subconsciously opting rather to form a kind of psychic alliance with him. He fundamentally establishes himself as one like his father, as one with a penis, who will stand in the same relation as does his father versus those like his mother, those who do not have a penis, and therefore must seek it from those who do. Therefore, subject to the destiny provided by his anatomy, a boy is ultimately able to establish himself as one who is able to provide the phallus. He is able to exit from the latency period and enter the genital stage in which he will stand like father.

A momentous part of the identification with the father during the phallic stage is the internalization of the prohibitions placed upon the boy's Oedipal urges by both parents, but primarily by the father. This formation of the super-ego or ego ideal is the foundation of religion, ethics, and the preservation of the species. In males, the formation of the ego ideal owes its strength and clarity to a boy's love for his own penis; it is the fear of castration that is able to redirect what Freud referred to as "the most powerful impulses and most important libidinal vicissitudes of the id." It thus causes a new psychic structure, the super-ego, to form with strength and clarity. For the internalization of the prohibitions that allow the boy to function peacefully with his father are assumed for the sake of preserving the phallus.

Female development also points to the supremacy of the phallus. Upon entering the phallic stage, little girls are content with their version of the phallus. It is when they realize that boys have a phallus that dwarfs theirs that the trouble begins. It is then that the female begins to envy the male and desires a penis for herself. She resents and blames her mother for having done this to her, for having deprived her of a penis. She then either develops a masculinity complex - whereby she refuses to accept the obvious fact that she does not have a penis - or she will slowly accept this fact and compensate for this lack by seeking to make-up for it in other ways. Thus the girl goes from seeking a penis to seeking what Freud calls the penis-baby, which she desires from the father. So, realizing that she cannot be like the father, having a full-sized phallus, she instead seeks to receive this phallus from him. As Freud says, her sexuality moves away from stimulation of her mini-phallus - which he deems masculine - to a fundamentally feminine sexuality in which she seeks the phallus from him who has it. This is a necessary acquiescence on the part of the female subsequent to biological reality. The primary referent again is the phallus: the masculine is he who has the phallus and he who will provide the phallus. The feminine, instead, is founded upon the lack of the phallus and therefore upon the fundamental stance of dependence regarding him who possesses it. Freud confirms the basic active/passive division of masculine and feminine, but where the root of this distinction is the having or lacking of the penis. Thus is

biology destiny. Formed by evolution, libido focuses on the phallus. The structures of the psyche then form to facilitate human reproduction. In that economy, there is one who has the phallus, and one who seeks it.

The centrality of the father: In many ways, the centrality of the father is a corollary of the supremacy of the phallus. While it is the little boy's love for his phallus - or the lack thereof, in the case of little girls - that fuels much of the Oedipal dynamic, the phallus of the father is likewise important. In the case of boys, they recognize that it is the father who has the privileges of the phallus; he is able to carry out the libidinal desire to sleep with the mother. It is the father who possesses the potent phallus, while the boy must send his own in to exile. The father is a kind of focal point: it is he who has what the little boy wants. It is he who prevents the little boy from getting what he wants and is the force behind the boy's calamitous fear of castration, which, in turn, gives birth to the ego ideal within the boy. And finally, it is with the father that the boy chooses to form an alliance, identifying with him rather than facing his wrath.

Also for the girl, though she will typically end up identifying with the mother, it is the father who plays the central role. When she realizes that she does not have the same privilege as do males, it is to the father whom she turns in order to make-up for this lack. Her identification with her mother is for the sake of being in the position to receive the penis-baby from the father. Her wish ultimately is to receive the phallus from the father. There appears to be no other reason to identify with the feminine beyond the fact that it is the best possible compensation that she can make for the cruel fact that the sentence of castration has already been carried out upon her. Thus, though distinct, the father plays a central role in the process of sexual differentiation; it is he who has what both boy and girl want.

"Anatomy is destiny." The male anatomy provides him with a privileged position. The female is generally forced to simply to accept her position of deprivation and assume an attitude of dependence to receive what she lacks from him who is in its possession. As such, for Freud masculinity is associated with having, activity, and power while the feminine is associated with a lack, jealousy, and a fundamentally passive attitude regarding those who have what they lack. To this must be added the distinction in formation and functioning of the ego ideal that Freud described. Males typically have a clearer, less fickle, and more stable ethical sense. And this is the part of the human being considered to be the highest part of human nature. So once again, the female finds herself wanting. Because the formation of the super-ego is not fueled by the forcefully motivating fear of castration, she is left with an undersized psychic foundation of ethics. "their super-ego is never so inexorable, so impersonal, so independent of its emotional origins as

we require it to be in men.”³⁷ Rather, women are subject to their emotions and to the ever-changing circumstances of individual situations and relationships rather than rising above such fickle considerations, as does the masculine. The following adjectives and descriptions are associated with feminine moral reasoning: “less sense of justice”, “less ready to submit to the exigencies of life”, “influenced in judgment by feelings of affection or hostility.” With the masculine are associated the following descriptions: “inexorable”, “impersonal”, “independent of emotional origins.” Clearly, the masculine is associated with hard reason that has the strength to stand even when emotion would push it the other way. It is independent and rational, impervious to the winds of passion and human respect that so often lead the female astray. The masculine exhibits a greater sense of justice and is more readily able to live up to life’s demands. This is the phallic stance.

The masculine is more firm, committed to justice and reason, less subject to emotion, more independent, and simply stronger than that which appears to be characterized primarily by privation. It is interesting, however, to ask the question what the relationship of masculinity is to being male. It is clear that simply being male does not lead directly to the possession of masculinity. Recall the words of Freud quoted earlier: “The majority of men are also far behind the masculine ideal.”³⁸ There are two factors that lead to inherent sexual ambiguity in all persons: bisexuality and “cross-inheritance.” The first is the desire both to take the place of the father and be the object of the father’s libido – i.e., the Oedipus complex and the inversion of the Oedipus complex. The second of these factors appears to refer to the inheritance that is the super-ego. While primarily from the father, the ego ideal is nevertheless still an inheritance from both parents. The super-ego is already a complex component of the psyche; it contains not only the positive imperative to be like the father, it also contains a negative imperative – prerogatives of the father which the child is not to imitate. This dual character is due to the fact that the primary task of ego ideal is the repression of Oedipal desire. As such the male child is to be like the father but not insofar as the father is able to possess the mother sexually. As regards this aspect of the father, the child will form reaction formation, an intense dislike of that which he previously desired.³⁹ To this complexity, however, must be added another: As was noted earlier, the super-ego consists of identifications both with the father and the mother. Both of these identifications are, “in some way”, united in the ego-ideal. Hence the child will presumably have

³⁷ Freud, “Some Psychological Consequences of the Anatomical Distinction Between the Sexes,” in FR. 677.

³⁸ Freud, “Some Psychological Consequences of the Anatomical Distinction Between the Sexes,” in FR. 677.

³⁹ See Freud, *The Ego and the Id*, in FR. 641-642.

something of the imperative to imitate the mother and avoid those things which are her prerogative. Thus, Freud says that either pure masculinity or pure femininity is not found in any human being.

In the end, characterizing the man *qua* male is at the same simple and complex. The male is defined by possession of the phallus. This leads to a position of privilege vis-à-vis women, who have lost privilege and seek to remedy their deprivation. Due to the force of fear of castration, male ego ideal forms in a way that is more decisive, strong, and inexorable. Male privilege is thus projected beyond anatomy to the structures of the psyche. The foundation, however, is anatomy. This same anatomy, however, can be the cause of confusion; and so the realization of the masculine in individual men becomes precarious. In each sex, there are anatomical remnants of the other and of their sexuality. The relative strength of such opposing sexualities leads to the primary sexual identification of a child. However, even in the normal course of development, there remains a certain level of identification with both the same-sex and opposite sex parent. Thus, in the sub-conscious of the boys lies both the remnants of the positive and the negative Oedipus complex. Though, typically, the resolution of the positive complex in which the boy identifies with the father is primary, there remain residuals of the negative complex in which the boy identifies with mother. Thus, perfect masculinity is never realized. Notwithstanding this ambiguity, it remains clear that the realm of the masculine, the realm of the phallic, is the realm of men.

Chapter 4

A Neo-Freudian Interpretation of Sexual Difference: The Death of the Body

INTRODUCTION

Freud sees masculinity as intimately bound with the biological facts of being male. Possession of a penis is the basis of a fundamental relational position as one who has versus one who lacks, one who is sufficient versus one who is deficient. The biological basis of this distinction leads to its relative inevitability. Anatomy is destiny. It also leads to a distinct moral sense, with males possessing a more dependable, objective sense of and adherence to the principles of justice. It is the “ego ideal” that constitutes the higher nature of man and facilitates the continuance of the species. This “moral” function of the super-ego is primary – though not perfect in males – and derivative in females, a product of the cross-inheritance of the negative Oedipus complex in which the female child identifies with the father. Though all males do not possess the masculine ideal as a matter of biological inheritance, such an ideal is, nevertheless, their prerogative; females can only possess, only participate in the masculine ideal derivatively.

Daniel Robinson notes that Freud was a product of what could be called the scientific psychology movement that wished to apply the methods and certitude found in the physical sciences to the human psyche.¹ Perhaps it was his attempt to adhere to the canons of positive science along with his unyielding materialism that

¹ Robinson, *An Intellectual History of Psychology*, 313-318. “Freud was the product of that marvelously contradictory climate of German thought in which science was defined in the positivistic, deterministic, and physicalistic language of Helmholtz, and in which philosophy was Hegelian.” p. 314.

led Freud to maintain a strict rapport between the anatomical and the psychological; the mind – conscious and subconscious – is necessarily bound to the matter in motion that produces it. Especially inescapable is the energy that fuels the organism, an energy which, according to its developmental progression, in the end is focused upon the phallus. However, the thinkers to whom focus is now shifted appear to break Freud's rapport between the realm of the body and the realm of consciousness. French psychoanalyst, Jacques Lacan, sees such primitive Freudian orthodoxy as a kind of metaphorical return to pre-Oedipal sexuality. In conjunction with deconstructionist thought, Lacan and his followers seek to free sexuality and the categories of masculine and feminine from the confines of anatomy. They thus offer a symbolic re-rendering of Freudian dynamics that jars Freudianism loose from anatomical determinism. In the process, however, the terms "masculine" and "feminine" are deconstructed to the point of losing all but the most tenuous connection to reality. It is because of the significance of the rupture between consciousness and corporality, and the prevalence of variations of their position that I now give considerable space to neo-Freudian thought. I give a sample of such thought by briefly examining the commentary of contemporary psychoanalyst Stephen Frosh upon the work of Jacques Lacan. I have chosen to treat Frosh's work because of the significance of the rending of body and soul that it demonstrates.

For current purposes, three aspects of Frosh's treatment of Freud and Lacan are examined here. First, in Section I, a brief summary is given of how masculinity and femininity are characterized in his interpretation of Freud. Next, in Section II, an argument is given for the extension of bisexuality beyond the resolution of the Oedipus complex. Finally, in Section III, a revised look at the primacy of the phallus and resolution of the Oedipus complex is provided in light of Lacan's linguistic re-rendering of these phenomena.

I. MASCULINE AND FEMININE

In understanding the Lacan/Frosh neo-Freudian rendering of the masculine and feminine, the most important point regards two oppositions and associations: the masculine is associated with the rational while the feminine with the non-rational. Secondly, the masculine finds affinity with the conscious mind while the feminine is associated with the subconscious mind. The rational is opposed to the non-rational, and the conscious to the subconscious. The masculine is then associated with the rational and conscious, while the feminine is associated with non-rational and subconscious. Freud seems clear regarding the rational/non-rational split:

But this turning from the mother to the father points in addition to a victory of intellectuality over sensuality – that is, an advance in civilization, since maternity is proved by the evidence of the senses while paternity is a hypothesis, based on an inference and premise. Taking sides in this way with a thought process in preference to a sense perception has proved a momentous step.²

While criticizing aspects of the text, Frosh extends the association of masculine with rational and feminine with non-rational by stating that the masculine is associated with the symbolic and feminine with the corporeal. While Freud seems to be making the opposition between the masculine and feminine clearly an opposition between possession and privation – the masculine state of “intellectuality” is an “advance in civilization” – Frosh softens this: the feminine is not the irrational in the sense of that which is lacking due reason, so much as it is that which is unknown, mysterious, and unwilling to yield easily to the rote or formulaic. In this aspect, the masculine is seen as stiff, stale, and lifeless while the feminine has an aspect of vivacious energy and excitement.³

This is a point that Frosh continually reinforces: the masculine is associated with power, privilege, control, mastery, and science – for instance, Freud’s desire to discover and master the working of the human unconscious is a masculine desire. At the same time, there is something rigoristic, sterile, and overly formal that also appears to be associated with the masculine. By contrast, the feminine is disruptive, unpredictable, unknown, subconscious, and, therefore, threatening to the masculine as it defies the order the masculine wishes to impose. The formal demands of logic and conscious movement of thought from premise to conclusion are the realm of the masculine while the mysterious and disruptive echoes in the mind emerging from the unconscious are the province of the feminine. While this characterization does not have the same force of negativity as does Freud’s regarding the female as a mutilated creature, lacking a proper phallus, it nevertheless defines the feminine negatively: the masculine regards conscious thought; the feminine unconscious thought. The masculine regards logical, rational thought; the feminine, non-logical, non-rational thought. The masculine, again, is the measure. The feminine is defined negatively in terms of the masculine.

Adding an aspect of the wonderful and exciting to the feminine also adds an aspect to the Oedipal conflict not so much discussed by Freud himself: the mother is the mysterious desired object, the possession of which is so forcefully sought and equally forcefully rebuffed. The masculine principle, present in the father, enters as a

² Sigmund Freud, *Moses and Monotheism*. In *The Origins of Religion* (Harmoundsworth: Penguin, 1985.) Quoted in Stephen Frosh, *Sexual Difference, Masculinity and Psychoanalysis* (London: Routledge, 1994), 72.

³ See Frosh, *Sexual Difference*, 24, 28-29.

principle that is external to the boy and imposes a static order that impedes a boy's exploration of this strange and wonderful land. This dynamic is played-out analogically in other parts of life. Frosh follows another Freudian commentator, Anzieu, in stating that Freud's project in psychoanalysis is the discovery of the unconscious, which ultimately represent "the desired body of the unpossessed mother."⁴ In this rendering, Freud is finally driven by a desire to possess the feminine; his entire project regards the plumbing and unearthing of the subconscious, which precisely is not the place of the rational, but rather is the locus of unsolicited desire and unrehearsed propositions.

In Freud's own life history, standing in the way of this achievement, according to Frosh, was Freud's father, who had informed his son that he would amount to nothing. Thus, the masculine principle entered to prohibit the young explorer from discovering the forbidden terrain. However, unlike Freud's Oedipus complex, which ends with identification with the father, this encounter ends with the defeat of the father: Freud overcomes the prohibition of the father and discovers the new body (of knowledge). Competition, then, is ultimately reducible to competition with the father who prevents his son from obtaining the desired body of the mother, the wonderful.⁵ In this rendering, the masculine tends to take on an oppressive, stifling character, while the feminine appears to represent a kind of Dionysian freedom.

II. THE EXTENSION OF BISEXUALITY

Frosh is clear that Freud's enunciated position states that inherent bisexuality lasts only up to the Oedipus complex. At that point, sexuality is resolved in one direction or another based on the stance the child takes vis-à-vis the father.

Freud writes that sexual difference is the final point beyond which analysis cannot go, the "bedrock", the place to which psychoanalysis returns and at which it discovers its therapeutic limit. Although he also discusses bisexuality of children and the way it is extended into adulthood, he places the Oedipus complex, with its inauguration of the chain of sexual difference, at the centre of the developmental spiral.... Its effect is to make the pre-Oedipal bisexuality of the child no longer

⁴ "Freud experiences the unconscious, whose corpus he has set out to establish, as the body of the crime from which he must exculpate himself, for it represents symbolically, and contains metonymically, the desired body of the unpossessed mother." Anzieu, quoted in Frosh, *Sexual Difference*, 50.

⁵ There appears to be at work an almost Sartrean understanding of fatherhood: the father is the oppressor, the prisoner, the imposer of shackles which the son must always strive to break.

attainable: it fixes the individual subject in a gendered position from which no escape is allowed.⁶

This quotation is clear in stating that the resolution of pre-Oedipal bisexuality forms a kind of psychic foundation upon which all other workings of the psyche are built. There is a fundamental identification either with the mother or the father. This bedrock determination is the cue for one or the other developmental processes. The absence of this clear determination is pathological and, according to Frosh, is seen by some to be one of the sources of hysteria.⁷

It is difficult not to see here a comparison with the biological processes we discussed in Chapter 1. The burgeoning psyche first experiences a period of indeterminacy and potency towards either polarity. It is not, however, an equal potency; biology will have clearly indicated one path versus another. Somewhat as did the Y-chromosome and then the testes (or the absence of each of these), so too will the initiation of the phallic stage and the presence of or absence of the phallus determine the developmental course to be taken by fixing the child's role in the Oedipal conflict. Also entering the equation is the polarity of the child's natural bisexuality. In other words, how strongly or weakly he naturally desires either to assume the same sexual object as the father, or to be the object of his sexual attention. The point, nevertheless, comes at which the child is to be determined in one way or another. Clearly, there is one way which is normal and consistent with the biological sex of the child. The other two possibilities would be pathological. Either the child who forms a primary identification with the opposite sex parent - ascendancy of the negative Oedipus complex - or the continuance of psychosexual indeterminacy, the physical correlate of which would be the intersex disorders discussed in Chapter 1.

Frosh's general point is that, at the point of the Oedipus complex, a psychic determination is made from which there is no return. A psychological foundation is set upon which all further development is built. All subsequent psychological conflict is seen from the perspective of either the masculine or feminine resolution of the Oedipus complex; that is the starting point. Frosh raises this point, however, to question it, and even to bring into question what Freud's own subconscious intentions were in his own writings regarding a mode of bisexuality that persists beyond the Oedipus complex.

For current purposes, a full reprisal of Frosh's argument would be excessive; therefore, I offer here only a brief summary of the primary points of the argument.

⁶ Frosh, *Sexual Difference*, 26.

⁷ "In Lacan's terms, denial of sexual difference involves denial of the Symbolic - "foreclosure" - and this is what produces psychosis." Frosh, *Sexual Difference*, 26.

One such point centers on a fragility and indeterminateness of the ego, which appears to depart from Freud's conception thereof. Frosh quotes Lacan:

The ego is the sum of the identifications of the subject, with all that implies as to its radical contingency. If you allow me to give an image of it, the ego is like the superimposition of various coats borrowed from what I will call the bric-a-brac of props department.⁸

The ego is a contingent sum of identifications loosely held together and changed like actors changing costumes in the theater backstage. The ego is thus unstable, which instability brings into question the fundamental identification that resolved the Oedipus complex and set the individual on his or her developmental path of gender. What is found instead is that the layer of the ego associated with a clear and fixed gender identity is a thin surface which forms a crust of consciousness, under which lies a fluid and fragmented self that cannot be so neatly defined as the ego would wish or perhaps fools itself into thinking it is. As such, masculinity and femininity are not firm identifications that form a kind of bedrock but rather veneers to be transcended.⁹

Frosh sees evidence for this in Freud's writings and in how his psychoanalytic method functions. Central to the explanation of the efficacy of Freudian analysis is the therapeutic reality of transference. The concept of transference hypothesizes that the patient will effectively transfer the emotional dynamics of critical relationships from their original objects (e.g. father or mother) onto the therapist. The therapist will therefore take the place of the original object. According to Freudian theory, this transference is real and the identification with the original object is likewise real. A male therapist, however, can take the place of either a male or female object. Implying that, on the level of his subconscious, he is able to identify with either the male or female. The same is true of a female therapist as regards a patient's transference of a paternal/masculine relationship. The implications of this are, once again, that the seemingly sturdy sex identity of an individual that appears from primary ego functioning is, in fact, a superficial reality that covers a vast unconscious, fluid sea that defies and disrupts such determination.

Next, in Freud's interpretation of one of his own dreams, Frosh finds ample evidence for feminine identifications in Freud himself. Once again, here is not the place to review the details of Frosh's argument but rather to summarize the general point. Frosh provides such a summary:

⁸ Quoted in Frosh, *Sexual Difference*, 59.

⁹ See Frosh, *Sexual Difference*, 62-65.

Freud looks around in his dreams and finds himself everywhere; as Lacan notes, this is one of the major discoveries of this text. Unexpected, though, for one who places sexual difference at “the bedrock” of analysis, the point beyond which analysis cannot go, he discovers himself in the woman as well as the man. Here he is, then, denying or transcending difference, fascinated by it (sexually curious), but also slipping in and out of subject positions, not allowing subject positions to get in the way. This is not simply a matter of being able to understand the other; it is a process of being, of taking on the sexual identity of the woman.¹⁰

Commenting primarily on Freud’s “Irma” dream, Frosh follows Lacan in noting that the preconscious and conscious levels of interpretation see Freud in a typical masculine posture: he is the examiner, the one who will master and dominate the situation. This superficial level of the ego, however, cannot stand. Freud must look into the other – in the Irma dream, he looks down Irma’s throat – and see his self dissolve. Lacan says: “He becomes something completely different, there’s no Freud any longer, there is no longer anyone who can say *I*.”¹¹ This regards Freud’s confrontation with his own unconscious, which is the feminine, the non-rational, which leads to a kind of death of self. “The dream thus demonstrates Freud’s art and some of the truth of his theory, but not through his mastery, rather through the activity of his unconscious.”¹²

With the ego thus dissolved, sexual identity becomes a much more tenuous thing: there is primary ego identification, but that is shown to be superficial and – if one is brave enough to confront one’s own unconscious – not nearly so fixed as it seemed. Frosh summarizes the point:

As the identifications which constitute the ego dissolve, the subject is left referring to something other than what it experiences itself to be, something that writes the formula for it. This something is not in itself gendered. It is too impersonal for that. Speaking for the subject, it muddles up “subject” positions, missing what is one with what is other, subject and object. This does not dispense with sexual difference, but it interrogates it impersonally, without formal allegiance. There is “masculine” and “feminine”, but the subject is other than these categories; inserted into them, for sure, but nevertheless outside what they have to say.¹³

The self, the subject, the *I* in some way participates in the reality of masculine or feminine but, finally, finds itself to transcend them. The airs of masculine mastery and dominance prove to be posturing of the unexamined ego.

¹⁰ Frosh, *Sexual Difference*, 55.

¹¹ Quoted in Frosh, *Sexual Difference*, 60.

¹² Frosh, *Sexual Difference*, 62.

¹³ Frosh, *Sexual Difference*, 63.

As such, one is left in considerable doubt as to what the affirmation “I am a man” might signify. If, notwithstanding some of the biological ambiguities mentioned in Chapter 1, this refers to a biological fact, such as “I have functioning male genitalia”, then perhaps controversy is avoided. If, however, the affirmation is to carry with it more than the simple anatomical affirmation, to include something such as “I have identified with my father as having the privileged place, as possessing what the female lacks and, therefore, take an active role regarding the female, seeking to master and explore her,” the case becomes less clear. It is here that the *I* as the subject of this predication has overstepped that which it can reliably affirm. For this *I*, beyond the Oedipus complex, still has the capacity to identify with female. If the subject can “inserted” into these categories, it can presumably then be extracted from a category and inserted into another.

In the end, for a neo-Freudian such as Frosh, even the concepts of masculine and feminine lose their capacity to maintain a fixed form; the categories themselves are deconstructed, rendering even more tenuous an individual’s ability to stably participate in one or the other (or both). Put otherwise, not only does the classification of an individual as masculine or feminine have less and less meaning, but so too do the *ideas* of masculine and feminine cease to have fixed meaning.

In the end... it becomes clear that psychoanalysis plays out both the central subjective significance of sexual division (that one experiences oneself as masculine and feminine in ways which are emotionally highly charged) and its untenability (that, because masculine and feminine are constructed categories, the never hold firm, but are always collapsing into one another).¹⁴

Psychoanalysis reveals a world which may seem solid on the surface (hence the “subjective significance”) but, in fact, is a fluid sea where reality is not what it seems: a world in which the male therapist must play and indeed be the part of the female, and where the analysand frequently finds him or herself shifting in sexual identification. It is a world in which the unconscious final takes the day and defies the simple classification to which the conscious mind clings.¹⁵ The self is finally a sexless entity which can be inserted severally into the mutually collapsing categories of masculine and feminine. One is left with a notion of masculine and feminine, and of human maleness and femaleness that, though not utterly bereft of meaning, nevertheless shifts, flows, and fractures to the point of having only temporary and subjective significance as a predication of an individual person.

¹⁴ Frosh, *Sexual Difference*, 65.

¹⁵ See Frosh’s summary: *Sexual Difference*, 65.

III. RE-RENDERING THE OEDIPUS COMPLEX: THE MEANING OF THE PHALLUS

In Freudian theory, the Oedipus complex is a momentous occurrence in the life of an individual. This is so for all of the reasons mentioned in the prior chapter. Crucial among these reasons are the formation of the super-ego and the establishment of an individual along the developmental path of either male or female. This is based, as was discussed, upon the having or lacking of the phallus. Also mentioned earlier was the curious notion that Lacan thought himself to be breaking psychoanalysis out of its own latency period. Typically, the latency period is a time of learning; according to Lacan, one thing gained by psychoanalysis during its latency period was a greater understanding of the importance of language. This passionless learning and growth could be employed to rediscover and recapitulate the meaning of the Oedipus complex in linguistic terms. To introduce this notion, Frosh quotes Lacan at length:

It is Freud's discovery that gives to the opposition of signifier to the signified the full weight which it should imply: namely, that the signifier has an active function in determining the effects in which the signifiable appears as submitting to its mark, becoming through that passion the signified....

This passion of the signifier then becomes a new dimension of the human condition, in that it is not only man who speaks, but in man and through man that it speaks, that his nature is woven by effects in which we can find the structure of language, whose material he becomes.¹⁶

There are three critical terms in this quotation: the signifier, the signified – both of which can be seen as straightforwardly translating to the Oedipal dynamic as referring to the male and female sexual roles – and a third, which is not so clear. The passion of the signified is clear: it suffers the change of being signified. But, what is to be said of the passion of the signifier, this passion in whose effects are woven man's nature and wherein lies the structure of language? Enter the third term: "In Lacan's thought, this is a process that refers to the Oedipus complex read as a formal structure of language. The apparently speaking subject is able to speak by being itself positioned in pre-existing linguistic order."¹⁷ The signifier is himself not wholly free but rather constrained, prohibited, as it were, in a linguistic context which limits the boundaries of his activity and so limits that passion which the signified is able to undergo. The third term, or the other, is that which stands over and above the signifier, constraining even his signification.

¹⁶ Quoted in Frosh, *Sexual Difference*, 69-70.

¹⁷ Frosh, *Sexual Difference*, 70.

This third term, this other, is difficult to define precisely. Frosh clearly identifies it as the metaphorical father in the Oedipal dynamic: it is the force coming in from without and limiting the desire of the neo-phallic youth, changing him and thus limiting the manner in which he would hope to act upon the female. Linguistically, he who would signify finds himself subject to a greater signifier, the metaphorical father, the possessor of the phallus, who marks the linguistic context in which all signification must occur. In a certain manner, this linguistic activity defines humanity. At the same time, such human nature is the object of linguistic activity and definition; it is language's material. Thus, the other effects a change also upon the signifier and so is associated with the father and the phallus.

In this context, the phallus re-enters the picture, not so much as a physical organ – though the organ retains a certain symbolic primacy; any other meaning of the phallus symbolizes the penis¹⁸ – but rather it is the privileged position of signifier: “The phallus is the privileged signifier of that mark where the share of the *logos* is wedded to the advent of desire.”¹⁹ A child in the Oedipus complex can have desire, but so can a beast. Meaning is added to desire by the introduction of something else, something higher. In Freud's terms, this is the analogue of the super-ego. The neo-phallic child who wants to be a signifier, must first submit to the father, identify with him, allow him to form the would-be signifier. Only after doing so can the son possess the phallus, the power to signify, to assign meaning, as does the father. Thus, put in Oedipal terms, the son must identify with the father, be changed by the father, if he is to escape castration and one day be like his father: to have and be able to use the phallus, to be able to signify the signifiable.²⁰

The situation, however, is not so clear; the other, the father, is, perhaps, not so neatly definable as it first seemed. There is a hint of this ambiguity even in classical Freudian theory: As was discussed earlier, the super-ego is a part of psychic or internal reality; it is finally part of the id, the unconscious part of man where the rules of logic and the dictates of reason tread with fear. In the analogy of the linguistic interpretation of the Oedipus complex, however, the super-ego is the passion of the signifier; it will later – after the latency period – be responsible for signifying the signifiable. But now it is learned that this other actually belongs to the unconscious, the unformed, the seething, and that which is generally associated with the feminine. How can the other, the “privileged signifier” be associated at the same

¹⁸ “[T]he phallus is not a fantasy, if what is understood by that is an imaginary effect. Nor is it as such an object... in so far as this term tends to accentuate the reality involved in a relationship. It is even less the organ, penis or clitoris, *which it symbolizes*.” Lacan. Quoted in Frosh, *Sexual Difference*, 74. Italics added.

¹⁹ Quoted in Frosh, *Sexual Difference*, 75.

²⁰ See Frosh, *Sexual Difference*, 70-76.

time with both the father/phallic, and the feminine/unconscious? If that which is the ultimate signifier, the ultimate masculine is, in the final analysis, subject to the unconscious – the wild feminine – then the masculine is finally resolvable into the feminine. Thus, human nature itself, which was woven in the passion of the signifier, takes on an aspect of absurdity and appears to be something of a joke in which the emperor (the phallus) has no clothes. In the end, what the other, the super-signifier, signifies is just the arbitrary seethings of the untamable unconscious. Phallic claims of mastering the unconscious are nothing more than idle boasts. And the masculine trait of mastery is, at root, hollow, stripped of its most fundamental meaning, as meaning itself is stripped of meaning, reduced as it is to subjection to the unconscious.

One is left, then, with a curious notion of the phallus: The lesser signifier, which is a symbol of the son, or perhaps more precisely, the burgeoning phallus of the son, is struck with that advent of desire to signify. This is a desire for mastery, control, and the subjection of the signified. The prototype appears to be a kind of desire for sexual mastery, possession of, and control over the mother in the Oedipal dynamic. It would appear that the young ego is like the young phallus, wanting to control and bring to subjection the external reality which it confronts. Into the picture, however, enters the greater phallus, the father, to whom the lesser must submit, lest he lose his own. This greater phallus establishes the context of signification, the rules and laws of meaning that at the same time raise the lesser phallus to the level of a possessor of meaning, a signifier – the higher nature of which Freud spoke – but at the same time drives his own phallus into latency as the prohibitions and significations of the father become part of his own psychic and unconscious world. This, however, is fundamentally the undoing of the phallus for, in the final analysis, all will be reducible to the non-rational energy of the unconscious. Mastery and control is the hallmark and desire of the masculine. In the end, however, it is the disruptiveness and non-rationality of the feminine that will have the final say as the phallus is exposed as an arbitrary thug, asserting intimidation-based control and dominance, but, in the end, itself a subject to powers beyond its control. Thus, masculine and feminine are finally illusions of intrapsychic dynamics the emptiness of which is exposed by the obscure process of psychoanalysis.

In this rendering, masculine and feminine do indeed have a meaning: the masculine as the signifier, subjector, and imposer of order and form, the conscious ego seeking control; the feminine as the signified seeking the phallus, but also as the disrupter and confounder, the unconscious, and inevitable foundation. While Freud may have seen male identification with the masculine as a matter of ordinary development due to his biologically privileged position – anatomy is destiny – Lacan and Frosh appear to see this identification as more tenuous than Freud thought; a

fact which Frosh claims can be seen even in Freud's own writings. Masculinity and being male are, therefore, not so closely linked. And the concept of masculinity itself turns out to be something of a fraud: to be masculine is, primarily, to possess the phallus; and to possess the phallus is to be the signifier. But, that in virtue of which the signifier is able to signify always renders him an object, as himself signified. And this power comes from the irrational unconscious, rendering the whole process absurd. Thus the meaning of masculine and feminine finally amounts to nothing.

Chapter 5

Sexual Difference in Jung

INTRODUCTION

It is natural for this discussion to proceed from Freud and some of his more contemporary followers to the enigmatic character of Carl Gustav Jung. Jung was a disciple and the chosen heir of Freud, until the intellectual son chose not to identify with the father, but rather to engage in an Oedipal struggle for mastery of the body of psychological knowledge. However, his historical position alone, of course, does not merit attention; it is rather what he brings to the discussion that is of interest here: though a bit peculiar at times, Jung's thought does offer something of a reprieve from the unrelenting reductionism of Freud and other of Jung's contemporaries and disciples. In the end, it is thus Jung's recovery of some notion of formal and final cause that will be of greatest interest.

The chapter begins, in Section I, with a discussion of Jung's foundational ideas – the collective unconscious and the archetypes. Without a working knowledge of these notions, Jung's theories are inscrutable. In Section II, I discuss the ideas and archetypes that are the elements of Jung's understanding masculine and feminine and the relationship between them. Finally, in Section III, I discuss the process the masculine development and its fruition in masculine identity.

I. FUNDAMENTAL IDEAS

Two related concepts make the foundation of Jung's thought on the nature of the human person and workings of the human psyche: the collective unconscious

and archetypes. Any understanding of Jung presupposes a working knowledge of these concepts; time and place must therefore be given to their elucidation.

1. *The Collective Unconscious*

As is evident from the name, difficulties are inevitable in trying to discern the nature of the collective unconscious; this because, by definition, the collective unconscious is unconscious. It is, therefore, something that, like God - a comparison that is not accidental - must be known through its effects. It is only through the effects of the collective unconscious that one may come to some knowledge of this mysterious realm.¹ However, before offering a justification of its existence, a brief description of this elusive reality is in order.

The collective unconscious is perhaps best described by contrasting it to the personal unconscious. Jung himself follows this approach:

A more or less superficial layer of the unconscious is undoubtedly personal. I call it the *personal unconscious*. But this personal unconscious rests upon a deeper layer, which does not derive from personal experience and is not a personal acquisition but is inborn. This deeper layer I call the *collective unconscious*. I have chosen the term "collective" because this part of the unconscious is not individual but universal; in contrast to the personal psyche it has contents and modes of behavior that are more or less the same everywhere and in all individuals. It is, in other words, identical in all men and thus constitutes a common psychic substrate of a suprapersonal nature which is present in every one of us.²

The personal unconscious is constituted of content that an individual has, in some way, experienced. These frequently are unsettling or unpleasant experiences, the negative character of which provokes the psyche into defending itself by removing any memory of such negative experience or access to this experience by the conscious mind. Thus, repression or denial of threatening or unpleasant experiences are among the most fundamental of the Freudian ego defense mechanisms. For example, an episode of severe abuse in the life of a child may be pushed from the conscious mind. Though unconscious, fears and desires associated with repressed content can remain and work their mischief in the personal unconscious of each

¹ As will be seen, it is difficult to avoid spatial metaphors when speaking of the collective unconscious.

² Carl G. Jung, "Archetypes of the Collective Unconscious," in *Collected Works* Volume 9, Part 1, trans. R.F.C Hull, ed. H Read, M. Fordham, G. Adler, and W. McGuire (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1959) 3. [This volume of the Jung's collected works is hereafter referred to as CW9i.] Please note that while the *Collective Works* also provides paragraph numbers, I have chosen in these notes provide page numbers.

individual. They are, however, subsequent to individual's experience, and, as such, are particular to that individual.

Jung's own clinical experience of the unconscious, however, finds this explanation of the unconscious as insufficient; within the unconscious of every individual, he posits that there is common content that transcends the actual, individual experience of each person.³ These contents are not the result of experience, but rather, like the Kantian categories of space and time, are *a priori* conditions for human, psychological experience. As it were, climbing an evolutionary existential ladder in which each prior rung provides a kind of foundation for the following step, the unconscious forms a base for conscious thought. The psychological foundation is given in terms of psychological categories – not unlike those of space and time – which underlie and color conscious human experience. The collective unconscious is a deeper “layer” of the unconscious, which does not follow from repression subsequent to individual experience but rather is shared by all humans as a prerequisite of that conscious experience. The collective unconscious is therefore at work in all human persons; all are subject to and reliant upon its content for their own conscious experience in a manner not unlike how all are reliant upon the categories of space and time for experience of the physical world.

2. Archetypes

Precise definition of the archetypes is something which has proved to be a difficult task for Jung's commentators because “his [Jung's] various writings on the subject are often vague, contradictory, and abstract to a degree that makes unequivocal interpretation impossible.”⁴ Once again, this should not be surprising, for the archetypes are parts of the collective unconscious and so can never be known directly. The contents of the personal unconscious are repressed or forgotten experiences that, either due to their disturbing character or from neglect, are no longer available to the conscious mind. By contrast, the contents of the collective

³ For an interesting example of contrast between a Freudian analysis in terms of repressed contents within the personal unconscious versus a Jungian analysis in terms of contents of the collective unconscious see: Carl G. Jung, “The Relations Between the Ego and the Unconscious,” in *Collected Works Volume 7*, trans. R.F.C Hull, ed. H Read, M. Fordham, and G. Adler. (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1953), 124-235. [This volume of the Jung's collected works is hereafter referred to as CW7.]

⁴ Monte, *Behind the Mask*, 426.

unconscious are not subsequent to experience. The contents are *a priori* forms; these “forms” are what Jung refers to as the archetypes.⁵

Jung himself provides some philosophical reflection on the nature of the archetypes;⁶ he invokes Plato’s notion of forms, which are in no way subject or subsequent to individual experience:

[F]or the past two hundred years we have been living in an age in which it has become unpopular or even unintelligible to suppose that ideas could be anything but *nomina*. Anyone who continues to think as Plato did must pay for his anachronism by seeing the “supracelestial”, i.e., metaphysical, essence of the Idea relegated to the unverifiable realm of faith and superstition, or charitably left to the poet. Once again, in the age-old controversy over universals, the nominalistic standpoint has triumphed over the realistic, and the Idea has evaporated into a mere *flatus vocis*.... Greek natural philosophy with its interest in matter, together with Aristotelian reasoning, has achieved a belated but overwhelming victory over Plato.⁷

Empiricism, according to Jung, in his time had won a decisive victory over any notion that there are or could be *a priori* ideas; thus, the conclusion is drawn that all universals are mere names.

While viewing it as the death-blow to any mode of ancient metaphysics, Jung finds that the seeds of Plato’s revenge were sown by the philosophy of Kant: “If it be true that there can be no metaphysics transcending human reason, it is no less true that there can be no empirical knowledge that is not already caught and limited by the *a priori* structure of cognition.”⁸ In the archetypes, Jung sees the return of a dominant, supraordinate form. Unlike the Kantian categories, the archetypes underlie and color human consciousness itself. Jung writes:

These aptitudes can be shown to be inherited instincts and preformed patterns, the latter being the *a priori* and formal conditions of apperception that are based on instinct. Their presence gives the world of the child and the dreamer its anthropomorphic stamp. They are archetypes, which direct all fantasy activity into its appointed paths and in this way produce, in the fantasy-images of children’s dreams... astonishing mythological parallels.... It is not, therefore, a question of inherited *ideas* but of inherited *possibilities* of ideas.⁹

⁵ See Jung, “Archetypes of the Collective Unconscious,” CW9i, 4. Jung, “The Concept of the Collective Unconscious,” CW9i, 42.

⁶ Jung, “The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious,” CW9i, 75-80.

⁷ Jung, “The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious,” CW9i, 76.

⁸ Jung, “The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious,” CW9i, 76.

⁹ Jung, “The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious,” CW9i, 66.

As the above quotation indicates, the archetypes are not definite ideas or propositions existing in the collective unconscious but are rather generic forms that underlie and dispose experience. Thus the archetypes are not definite but rather general possibilities that will be instantiated in various ways in different cultures and situations, maintaining, nevertheless, a sameness that allows them to be recognized as omnipresent throughout all of humanity: "The archetype is essentially an unconscious content that is altered by becoming conscious and by being perceived, and it takes its color from the individual consciousness in which it happens to appear."¹⁰ The archetype is itself unconscious; to attempt to make it conscious is to alter it. Therefore, it is altered as it makes its way from the darkness of the unconsciousness to finding a mode of expression in an individual.

One, perhaps, could find an analogy to Jung's position by considering the manner in which a substantial form is individuated by matter. Though the individual matter leads to certain accidental differences between members of the same species, the substantial form can nevertheless be discerned as the same in each member of the species. Similarly, Jung sees the collective unconscious as a kind of receptacle of forms or motifs of consciousness that are expressed somewhat differently by different individuals and by different cultures, but that can nevertheless be observed as formally the same in all cultures.

The distinct manifestations of an archetype, in a way, raise the question of how one comes to know the archetypes. Jung indicates that, for the majority of human history, the archetypes *as such*, were unknown; their effects, however, could be found in tribal lore, tradition, and esoteric teachings. Their influence was also manifest in myths and fairytales, as well as symbolically in various forms of art. It is worth quoting Jung at length on this point:

Primitive man is not much interested in objective explanation of the obvious, but he has an imperative need – or rather, his unconscious psyche has an irresistible urge – *to assimilate all outer sense experiences to inner, psychic events*. It is not enough for the primitive to see the sun rise and set; this external observation must represent the fate of a god or hero who, in the last analysis, *dwells nowhere except in the soul of man*. All the mythologized processes of nature, such as summer and winter, the phases of the moon, the rainy season, and so forth, are in no sense allegories of these objective occurrences; rather they are *symbolic expressions of the inner unconscious drama of the psyche* which becomes accessible to man's consciousness by way of projection – that is, mirrored in the events of nature. The projection is so fundamental that it

¹⁰ Jung, "Archetypes of the Collective Unconscious," CW9i, 5.

has taken several thousand years of civilization to detach it in some measure from its outer object.¹¹

When confronted with certain natural phenomenon – the recurrence of the sun’s appearance and disappearance, for instance – the human psyche is not content with simply accepting the obvious fact at face-value; rather the psyche takes the occasion to reveal something of itself by projecting some character of its own inner workings onto the phenomenon. Thus, the rising of the sun is not simply the rising of the sun; it is rather the activity of the sun-god. The relatively universal existence of some sort of sun-god in primitive cultures, however, does not tell us that there actually is a sun-god, existing outside of man, but rather that there is within the human soul some innate propensity to organize or formalize his experience in this manner. Thus, the sun-god reveals to us something of the structure of man’s unconscious that appears to be common to all humans. It would not be correct to say that such projections are simply the result of one man’s experience, a content of his personal unconscious. Rather, it is unconscious content that appears to have a collective effect; hence the positing of the collective unconscious, so named because it is much the same in all times and places. The contents of this collective unconscious are thus known through what they project onto the phenomenal world. These principles that organize experience, that project themselves onto experience, are the archetypes. Man’s myths and symbols, therefore, are effects of the “inner drama of the soul”, the characters of which drama are the archetypes, whose personalities are expressed and conflicts lived-out in what they symbolically project into the conscious thought of man.

Jung claims that for “several thousand years,” the fact of these projections went unknown. Thus mankind reified what in truth were the structures of his own unconscious mind. As such, the stuff of folk lore – gods, monsters, mermaids, and other strange entities – were thought to have an existence outside of man. Man himself did not realize that such beings were in fact the workings of deep part of his unconscious mind, held in common with all members of his species. The modern, rationalistic mind has attempted to dispel these fantasies with the power of technology and science. And so, the sun-god is put to rest as science sees no need for Apollo’s fiery chariot, and the siren’s song is silenced at the hands of Freud’s libidinal forces. For Jung, however, astronomy has no power to halt Apollo’s flight; for that movement always was a drama that essentially played-out within man. The sun-god was a kind of shadow, dancing on the wall the cave, only an image of the true form, or archetype. Removing the symbolic manifestation, which is the sun-god, will not do away with the sun-god’s source, the archetype, but rather lead to its

¹¹ Jung, “Archetypes of the Collective Unconscious,” CW9i, 6. Emphasis added.

appearance in another form, which form may, in fact, prove less adaptive than the former.

For a therapist, such as Jung, removal of symbolic manifestations of archetypes is only likely to increase his case-load; the attempt to crush the archetype without granting legitimacy to its existence and giving it its proper voice will only lead to that archetype, as it were, taking its revenge on those who would so disrespect it. And so the hyper-rationalist world of today will in fact fall prey to the mischief of the archetypes they claim to have destroyed. As will be seen when exploring the nature of that archetype that is most influential for our current discussion, the anima, the key to balance and fulfillment in life is humble recognition of the existence and power of the archetypes, while, at the same time, bringing their influence to consciousness, and thereby diminishing their ability to control one's life. Lacking this balance, the modern rationalist will find himself subject to the influence of that which he claims to have destroyed.

The formal and final causes of the archetypes might be summarized as follows: Archetypes are generic forms within the collective unconscious of man. They are forms which characterize human experience by placing their stamp upon that experience, by shaping that experience. By so doing the archetypes reveal to man something about himself; they reveal to him a deep part of his unconscious world that goes beyond any individual experience (beyond the personal unconscious) and rather speak of and reveal an unconscious element of himself that is common to all humans. As will be seen next, it is likely that the story being told by archetypes - that which they are revealing - is that of our evolutionary past, of evolved instinct and experience.

3. Instinct and Efficient Causality

The writings of Jung appear to link the formation (and function) of the archetypes with our evolutionary past, to a time in human existence when consciousness as known today either did not exist, or existed in an incipient state, which was much weaker and far less differentiated than the current mode of human consciousness:

Primitive man's perception of objects is conditioned only partly by the objective behavior of the things themselves, whereas a much greater part is often played by intrapsychic facts which are not related to the external objects except by way of projection. This is due to the simple fact that the primitive has not yet experienced that ascetic discipline of mind known to us as the critique of knowledge. To him the world is a more or less fluid phenomenon within the stream of his own fantasy,

where subject and objects are undifferentiated and in a state of mutual interpenetration.¹²

Burgeoning consciousness is much closer to the collective unconscious. This is a state in which the self as known today does not yet exist; internal and external experience are not clearly distinguished. In another place, Jung elaborates on the same theme:

There [in the collective unconscious] I am utterly one with the world, so much that I forget all too easily who I really am.... But the self is the world, if only consciousness could see it.... The unconscious no sooner touches us than we *are* it – we become unconscious of ourselves.... His [primitive man's] consciousness is still uncertain, wobbling on its feet. It is still childish, having just emerged from the primal waters. A wave of unconsciousness may easily roll over it, and then he forgets who he was and does things that are strange to him.¹³

Jung seems to believe that early human consciousness was much closer to an undifferentiated state of simply being, a state in which the sentient entity is simply another part of the grand mix of things that are. Primitive consciousness returns more easily to this state of unconsciousness, of undifferentiated amalgamation in the sea of being from which it emerged. This is the state of being object rather than subject, of being the object of many and other moving forces which push and roll over the relatively helpless consciousness like waters over a stick, pushed and turned in a turbulent river. “There [in the collective unconscious] I am object of every subject in complete reversal of my ordinary consciousness, where I am always the subject that has an object”¹⁴ says Jung. As such, the task of man has been the “consolidation of consciousness” as his burgeoning consciousness strives to hold back the waters of unconsciousness from which he came. The consciousness of man seeks control over these forces and has an innate and intense fear of returning to that mode of “nothingness” out of which he came. The archetypes, dwelling as they do in the collective unconscious, tell us something of that fearful past; a past to which man wants not to return.

It is worth noting that the unconscious of which Jung speaks is not simply the unconsciousness of a stone, or even a sentient animal, but rather that of a being that has exited the latter state and become self-conscious. Hence, the contents of the collective unconscious regard the rapport of a being that is now capable, so to speak,

¹² CW9i, 101. In another place he writes: “Man’s consciousness was then far simpler, and his possession of it absurdly small.” Jung, “Archetypes of the Collective Unconscious,” CW9i, 25.

¹³ Jung, “Archetypes of the Collective Unconscious,” CW9i, 22.

¹⁴ Jung, “Archetypes of the Collective Unconscious,” CW9i, 22.

of having a self. And, as such, the contents of the collective unconscious, the archetypes, are colored with the tones of both consciousness and unconsciousness. This, perhaps, will become clearer with some clarification regarding the relationship of the archetypes with instinct.

4. *Consciousness and Instinct*

In replying to those who in “medical psychology” would find the idea of archetypes and the collective unconscious to be mystical and unscientific, Jung asks them to consider their accepted thought on the existence and function of instincts: instincts are innate, *a priori*, dynamic forces that are shared by an entire species; as such they are collective or universal. He writes:

Moreover, the instincts are not vague and indefinite by nature, but are specifically formed motive forces which, long before there is any consciousness, and in spite of any degree of consciousness later on, pursue their inherent goals. Consequently, they form very close analogies to the archetypes, so close in fact, that there is good reason for supposing that the archetypes are the unconscious images of the instincts themselves, in other words, that they are *patterns of instinctual behavior*.¹⁵

Instincts are seen throughout the animal world. They continue to function even in those animals that have taken on a measure of conscious, self-determining thought; instincts pursue their goals “in spite of” that consciousness. These “hereditary factors of a dynamic or motivating character”¹⁶ are not chosen by the conscious mind but rather, in some sense, stand under that thought. It appears that Jung is offering the hypothesis that the archetypes are a kind of formal pattern that result when a universal instinct confronts a particular kind of consciousness – or perhaps it is better to say when that consciousness confronts its own instinct. Hence, they hearken back to a preconscious time but are nevertheless proper to human consciousness as a kind of rapport between an unconscious world and a mind that has escaped from that world, but remains in some ways subject to it. Put otherwise, they are of the unconscious, but precisely the unconscious of a conscious thing. Thus, when the *a priori* drive of instinct meets the kind of consciousness that seeks to avoid preconscious determination, there are the archetypes as vestiges of an old order from which the human being has not wholly escaped.

Archetypes, then, are unconscious images of man’s instincts, an representative of a desire that is no longer *simply* a blind compulsion; this does not

¹⁵ Jung, “The Concept of the Collective Unconscious,” CW9i, 43-44. (Emphasis in original.)

¹⁶ Jung, “The Concept of the Collective Unconscious,” CW9i, 43-44.

imply that they can be chosen, but rather that they have a rapport with the conscious mind. Neither is not to say that the origins of the archetypes are known. Jung writes:

But this “inside”, which modern rationalism is so eager to determine from “outside”, has an *a priori* structure of its own that antedates all conscious experience.¹⁷ It is quite impossible to conceive how “experience” in the widest sense, or, for that matter, anything psychic, could originate exclusively in the outside world. The psyche is part of the inmost mystery of life, and it has its own peculiar structure and form like every other organism. Whether this psychic structure and its elements, the archetypes, ever “originated” at all is a metaphysical question and therefore unanswerable. The structure is something given, the precondition that is found to be present in every case.¹⁸

Jung, therefore, sets aside the question of origin as indiscernible and chooses rather to concentrate on the structure of the organism¹⁹ of the psyche as it exists.

Of course, more could – and perhaps should – be said of the nature of the collective unconscious and the archetypes. The purpose here, however, is simply to understand these concepts well enough to understand how they apply to a Jungian account of masculine identity. The current treatment, therefore, will have to be sufficient to proceed on to Jung’s account of the male *qua* male.

II. NOTIONS OF SEXUAL DIFFERENTIATION

1. *The science of male and female*

No doubt, detailed research could reveal exactly what the scientists of Jung’s time thought regarding the biology of sexual differentiation. Study of Freud revealed that there was knowledge of the intersex disorders, which no doubt influenced thought on the biological relationship between the sexes. While a study of the

¹⁷ It is interesting to consider what Jung might mean when stating that the structure of the psyche antedates “all conscious experience” when considered in connection with the notion that the archetypes are somehow images of instincts. In the evolutionary theory to which Jung appears to hold, instincts are the products of the process of natural selection. Consciousness itself is somehow subsequent to the process of natural selection. An inherited instinct certainly predates an individual into whom it is born, but it is not clear that it is correct to say that it predates all experience as it is the result of the natural process of evolution.

¹⁸ Jung, “Psychological Aspects of the Mother Complex,” CW9i, 101.

¹⁹ It is interesting that Jung refers to the psyche as an organism rather than as an aspect of the organism that is the human being. Later there will be occasion to explore the nature of the relationship between body and soul, conscious being and non-conscious being. Conceiving of the psyche as in itself an organism is certainly of interest in this regard.

science of Jung's time would certainly be interesting, here it is pertinent only insofar as it affects his characterization of the male *qua* male. To that end, Jung makes the following statement:

Either sex is inhabited by the opposite sex up to a point, for, biologically speaking, it is simply the greater number of masculine genes that tips the scales in favor of masculinity. The smaller number of feminine genes seems to form a feminine character, which usually remains unconscious because of its subordinate position.²⁰

The biology to which Jung is referring is not exactly clear, but his general meaning is: an individual is male because he possesses a greater quantity of male genes; this numeric advantage "tips the scales in favor of masculinity" in him. At the same time, he nevertheless still possesses a significant number of female genes, leading Jung to make the curious statement that the male is "inhabited" by the female, up to a point - and the female is likewise inhabited by the male; there is, living within each man, a woman. This forms a kind of biological basis for the archetypes which are primary when considering Jung on sexual differentiation: the anima for men and, for women, the animus.

Before beginning a detailed discussion of the archetypes that factor most significantly in the question of sexual differentiation, it will be useful to take an inventory of that which Jung considered to constitute the masculine and feminine character.²¹ By way of introduction, these characteristics are, more or less, simply listed here; their reasonableness within the context of Jung's thought will be discussed subsequent to treating the archetypes.

2. *Masculine and feminine: Logos and eros*

At the beginning of an essay entitled "Woman in Europe," Jung asks himself a question: "Moreover, how is a man to write about woman, his exact opposite?"²² In this question, man and woman are posed as opposites. The theme of opposing dyads - and then their resolution - proves critical for understanding Jung's rendering of masculinity femininity. To understand masculinity and femininity is to understand a series of oppositions. These oppositions are related to each other; I will attempt to begin with the more central and then move towards more peripheral oppositions with a view to better understanding the foundations of masculinity and femininity.

²⁰ Jung, "Archetypes of the Collective Unconscious," CW9i, 27-28.

²¹ When reading Jung, I was left with the impression that certain traditional character traits that distinguish men and women were more assumed than argued to by Jung.

²² Jung, Carl Gustav, "Woman in Europe," in *Contributions to Analytical Psychology*, trans. H. G. and Cary F. Baynes (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul Limited, 1948), 164.

In some ways, the work of the rest of this chapter is to interpret the following words of Jung:

The discussion of the sexual problem is, of course, only the somewhat crude beginning of a far deeper questions, namely, that of the psychic or human relationship between the sexes. Before this latter question the sexual problem pales in significance, and with it we enter the real domain of woman. Her psychology is founded on the principle of *eros*, the great binder and deliverer; while age-old wisdom has ascribed *logos* to man as his ruling principle. In modern speech we could express the concept of *eros* as psychic relationship and that of *logos* as objective or factual interest.²³

The primary opposition in above text is that between *logos* and *eros*. Jung translates this “age-old” opposition into modern parlance as an opposition between the factual or objective and those things concerning the psychological as it pertains to human relationships. This “translation” provides an ample entry point for the many oppositions that can be summarized in interplay of *logos* and *eros*.

The realm of woman is the realm of relationship, the realm of love, which, for Jung, is a realm primarily of feeling, as opposed to the abstract, rational arena of man. “Masculinity means, to know one’s goal, and to do what is necessary to achieve it.”²⁴ The natural mode of the male is to think, to know his goal, and then to seek the means to achieve it. By contrast, Jung says:

It is the way of woman, as of nature, to make use of indirect ways without naming a goal. But the goal is inherent in her actions. Often she acts in purposeful way to invisible dissatisfactions, with moods, affects, opinions, and acts whose apparent senselessness, poisonousness, morbidity, or cold-blooded ruthlessness is infinitely uncomfortable to the erotically blind man.²⁵

Women act in purposeful ways, but often the purpose is beyond their conscious determination; they rather act from feeling.

The relationship of feeling to purpose is an instance of a general difference in how men and women relate. Jung writes: “The soul (anima, psyche) is of the feminine sex; since this concept, as concepts in general proceed from the mind of man.”²⁶ Conscious, determined thought – the world of concepts – is where man is at ease. He is uncomfortable with moods or affects; they confront him as wholly

²³ Jung, “Woman in Europe,” 176.

²⁴ Jung, “Woman in Europe,” 179-180.

²⁵ Jung, “Woman in Europe,” 187.

²⁶ Jung, “Woman in Europe,” 170.

other, as foreign. Moods and affects are thus experienced as other, and as such as feminine to the man; they proceed directly from the unconscious of man. Jung contrasts this experience to that of women: "for her [woman] moods and emotions do not come directly from the unconscious, but are peculiar to her feminine nature. They are therefore never naïve, but mixed with unacknowledged purpose."²⁷ For women, it is opinion that comes directly from the unconscious. That which is natural to man – rational opinion – in woman proceeds from her unconscious. That which is natural to woman – mood and emotion – proceeds from the unconscious of man.

According to Jung, women are more comfortable with the unconscious. As an extension of female sexuality, Jung refers to an "unconsciousness and indefiniteness" of woman that allows her to place herself "in the background as an independent willing and responsible ego, in order not to hinder the man, but rather to invite him to make real his aims with respect to herself... By maintaining a passive attitude with an invisible purpose in the background, she aids a man towards his realization, and in that way holds him."²⁸ The woman is content with indirect purpose that remains only in the background, unclear, and indefinite. She allows man to take the foreground in "independent willing" and in the social arena, where she is invisible. "For woman as woman is neither politically, nor economically, nor spiritually a visible factor of any importance."²⁹ This is at least the case regarding man's vision of woman in the external world. The world of the woman is the interior world.

Man is concerned with things, principles, and institutions. Woman is concerned with relationship.

For the most part he [man] contents himself with "logic" simply. Everything "psychical," "unconscious," etc., is antipathetic to him. It seems to him misty vague, and pathological. He wants the actual thing, the fact, not the feelings or fantasies that hover around it. To the woman it is often more important to know how a man feels about a thing than to understand the thing itself. All those things which are mere futilities and impedimenta to the man are important to her.³⁰

Similarly, Jung states that "It is a woman's outstanding characteristic that she can do everything for the love of a man. But those women who can achieve something important for the love a thing are most exceptional, because this does not really

²⁷ Jung, "Woman in Europe," 170.

²⁸ Jung, "Woman in Europe," 168.

²⁹ Jung, "Woman in Europe," 168.

³⁰ Jung, "Woman in Europe," 178.

agree with their nature. The love of a thing is a man's prerogative."³¹ Women tread facilely where men fear to go. It is the realm of psychological rather than the logical where woman feels at home. The psychological is a "middle kingdom" which Jung describes as being between the world of sense and affect and that of spirit. It is from this middle position that *eros* re-enters the scene.

Erotically blind man often finds himself in isolation. He mistakes sexuality for *eros* and seeks to possess women sexually. His tendency towards abstraction and idealizing also leave him alienated from himself and humanity in its fullness. Woman, playing the erotic, binding role, instinctively tends towards synthesizing what man sunders. While man tends to codify and institutionalize love, woman seeks love in the concrete, love that is beyond law – frequently, this is the purpose hidden in her feeling. It is through this love that man is able to find spirit or deeper meaning. Thus the final dyad that characterizes man and woman is that of spirit versus love.

The woman is increasingly aware that love alone can give her full stature, just as the man begins to discern that spirit alone can endow his life with its highest meaning.³²

Woman finds her fulfillment in love. Man finds his fulfillment in spirit.

As stated when introducing this section, the remainder of this chapter is, more or less, dedicated to explicating the differences little more than outlined here. What is clear is that Jung indeed saw a marked difference between the masculine and feminine, and likewise thought these characteristics to be bound to biological sex and the expression of genes that determine that sex. What remains to be seen is more precisely how the dynamics outlined above apply to individual men and women. Through this process, the meaning of masculine and feminine for Jung will become more apparent.

3. *The Anima*

i. *Character and origins:* When considering the genus of the anima, it should be of little surprise that it is difficult to discern its character: The anima is an archetype of the collective unconscious and therefore, by definition, inaccessible to the conscious mind. One knows the anima, therefore, through what she³³ projects into conscious life. Secondly, as an archetype, the anima is a general pattern that,

³¹ Jung, "Woman in Europe," 169.

³² Jung, "Woman in Europe," 185.

³³ I follow Jung's English translator's in using feminine pronouns instead of impersonal pronouns in reference to the anima.

while being an objective reality in the collective unconscious, has distinct manifestations in different cultures, individuals, and situations. She will, then, have multifarious projections throughout time and space. That being said, the underlying formality, nevertheless, remains more or less apparent, as it were, standing under all of the phenomena which will come to be seen as bearing the mark of her influence. The underlying sameness of her effects is a sign of her objective reality. Thus, the individual on whom she has her effects is an *object of her influence* rather than a subject conjuring her existence.

What, then, is the formal character of the anima? A few words on the origins of its discovery by Jung will be of help. Christopher Monte points out an episode in Jung's exploration of his own unconscious in which Jung found himself in conversation with a feminine personality seemingly residing within him:

I was greatly intrigued by the fact that a woman should interfere with me from within. My conclusion was that she must be the "soul", in the primitive sense, and I began to speculate on the reasons why the name "anima" was given to the soul. Later I came to see that this inner feminine figure plays a typical, or archetypal, role in the unconscious of a man, and I called her the "anima". The corresponding figure in the unconscious of woman I called the "animus."³⁴

Jung discovers within himself an independent personality, speaking to him with a woman's voice. He engages this voice in dialogue and debate and comes to choose for her the rich name of "anima." Jung comes to see this voice as the manifestation of some deep, *a priori*, pattern in the collective unconscious which is present in all men that warranted the name of "soul," the very life-giving principle of all that lives. "As the reader will have grasped, we are not concerned here with a philosophical, much less a religious, concept of the soul, but with a psychological recognition of the existence of a semiconscious complex, having partial autonomy of function."³⁵ For Jung, this does not mean that anima therefore has only a subjective existence; its existence in the collective unconscious is objective though related to man's psyche.

In his experience with the female personality within him, Jung saw an encounter with something perennial. This was the same reality that gave birth to ancient tales of mermaids, sirens, nixies, the succubus, and other feminine personages from ancient lore. In the psyches of later generations, the anima was expressed in the supposed existence and power of witches, or, religiously, in the icon of the queen of heaven, or the mother of God. Iconoclastic modern man has largely

³⁴ Carl G. Jung *Memoirs, Dreams, Reflections*, trans. Richard and Clara Winston, ed. Aniela Jaffe (New York: Pantheon, 1961), 186. Quoted in Monte, Christopher, *Behind the Mask*, 429.

³⁵ Jung, "The Relations Between the Ego and the Unconscious," in CW7, 190.

laid to waste the symbols that supported his ancestors, and so the anima lies even more hidden within him. What may have, in days gone by, been attributed to bewitchment, is now accounted for by appeal to personal psychology. For Jung, underlying all these phenomena is the same objective reality at work upon the souls of men: the anima.

Even if these powerful feminine images and symbols have persisted throughout human history, it remains to be seen why that which underlies these images is properly called anima. Jung clearly wishes to present a distilled vision of soul, freed from religious conceptions and elaborate philosophical systems. Instead, he offers a raw sense of soul as “the magic breath of life.”³⁶ Soul is the life force, “that which lives of itself and causes life.... With her cunning play of illusions the soul lures into life the inertness of matter that does not want to live.”³⁷ There is a sense of mischief in anima as characterized by Jung. It is an “elfin” force whose influence is unpredictable and somewhat magical, coming as it does from an unseen and seemingly undirected source.

The anima is not the soul in the dogmatic sense, not an *anima rationalis*, which is a philosophical conception, but a natural archetype that satisfactorily sums up all the statements of the unconscious, of the primitive mind, of the history of language and religion. It is a “factor” in the proper sense of the word. Man cannot make it; on the contrary, it is always the *a priori* element in his moods, reactions, impulses, and whatever else is spontaneous in psychic life. It is something that lives of itself, that makes us live; it is a life beyond consciousness that cannot be completely integrated with it, but from which, on the contrary, consciousness arises. For, in the last analysis, psychic life is for the greater part an unconscious life that surrounds consciousness on all sides....³⁸

Hence, the anima appears to be a foundational archetype: she underlies consciousness and, in some way, causes it to be. Anima makes man live, taking inert matter and giving it life. This is strong speech.

Perhaps, Jung is speaking in terms of a kind of formal causality; anima causes consciousness to be what is, to exist as it does, as any form causes a thing to exist as it does. So, anima underlies psychic life; “it is always the *a priori* element in moods, reactions, and impulses and whatever else is spontaneous in psychic life.” Somehow, soul is the first answer to man’s attempt to confront the unconscious, the unknown. Thus she is intertwined with religion and language, each which, in their own way, are intertwined with the rapport between the conscious and unconscious.

³⁶ Jung, “Archetypes of the Collective Unconscious,” in CW9i, 26.

³⁷ Jung, “Archetypes of the Collective Unconscious,” in CW9i, 26.

³⁸ Jung, “Archetypes of the Collective Unconscious,” in CW9i, 27.

In this sense, Jung is saying that anima is the most fundamental character of the male unconscious. She is the unconscious's first response to the conscious mind's queries, the most fundamental projection of the collective unconscious revealing the inner drama of the soul.

ii. *Anima as Feminine*: While having a sort of ascendancy regarding the unconscious psychic life of the male, Jung is quick to clarify that the anima does not account for all unconscious life.³⁹ Rather, she is associated with the first images to emerge from the sea which is the unconscious; a sea from which the human consciousness emerged and to which it must, in various senses, return throughout its life, if it is to truly understand itself. The anima appears to be the representative of this unconscious life. To the conscious mind, then, she is fundamentally other. And so, to the conscious mind of a male, she will be experienced as other, and, as other, as female. Jung, in fact, gives three reasons why the male will experience the anima as female.⁴⁰

The first reason Jung provides regards the influence and importance of women in men's lives. Frequently it is a woman who is the "inspiration" for a man. His encounter with the distinct psychology of women pushes and stretches his own psychology; his consciousness is permitted to see things that he otherwise would not have seen. Jung appeals to the fact that man experiences woman as fundamentally other; the otherness of the experience of woman renders appropriate the feminine character of the collective unconscious' primary representative to males. The woman is for man another mode of consciousness, a mode which for him was, before his experience of her, unconscious. The woman represents the other and the unconscious. Thus, the anima is feminine.

The second of Jung's reasons for femininity of the anima regards the physical and spiritual precedence of the feminine. His explanation of this point merits quotation and attempted interpretation:

As we know, there is no human experience, nor would experience be possible at all, without the intervention of a subjective aptitude. What is this subjective aptitude? Ultimately it consists in an innate psychic structure which allows man to have experience of this kind. *Thus the whole nature of man presupposes woman*, both physically and spiritually. His system is tuned in to the woman from the start, just as it is prepared for a quite definite world where there is water, light, air, salt, carbohydrates, etc. The form of the world into which he is born is already inborn in him as a virtual image. Likewise, parents, wife, children, birth, and death are inborn in him as virtual images, as psychic aptitudes.⁴¹

³⁹ Jung, "Archetypes of the Collective Unconscious," in CW9i, 27.

⁴⁰ See Jung, "The Relations between the Ego and the Unconscious," CW7, 188-190.

⁴¹ Jung, "The Relations between the Ego and the Unconscious," CW7, 190. Emphasis added.

In man's collective unconscious there are aptitudes, *a priori* images that, prodded by experience, shape that experience. These images precede man and, as it were, give birth to his experience as it is. It must be thus that Jung adds that "the whole nature of man presupposes woman, both spiritually and physically".

One wonders exactly what Jung intends by this statement, "the whole nature of man presupposes woman," both as regards its physical and spiritual aspects. As regards the physical, one interpretation is that he is referring to the primary and intimate connection that each individual human has with his mother simply in virtue of the nature of human motherhood. Excepting technological aberrations, none come into this world except through a mother, spending nine-months of intimate union with a mother. (It is interesting to ask if Jung had any knowledge of some of the biological facts discussed earlier in this work, namely, the manner in which the female morphology appears to be the "default" sex.)

Discerning what is meant in saying that man somehow spiritually presupposes woman is more difficult. It would appear that the most immediate interpretation would be to say that man has an inborn image of woman that presupposes his experience of woman and, as Jung himself says, attunes him to woman from the start. Thus, man's consciousness of woman is predisposed by the *a priori* image of woman that resides in the collective unconscious. But Jung also mentions pre-existing images of parents, children, and even carbohydrates. Certainly, the whole of nature does not presuppose the innate image of a carbohydrate. There must be, then, something that connect the image of woman with the image of soul; for as Jung claimed in a text quoted above (Subsection 3.i), it is the anima that "lives of itself and that makes us live." The foundational character of the image of woman is linked (if not the same) as the foundational character of the anima. This foundational character of image of woman leads to the third reason for the femininity of the anima: "An inherited collective image of woman exists in a man's unconscious, with the help of which he apprehends the nature of woman. This inherited image is the third important source of the femininity of the soul."⁴²

As Jung understood sexual differentiation, the relative number of male and female genes within an individual is the determining factor in differentiation. This established one sex as the dominant but leaves a significant number of genes of the other sex within the individual to assert an unconscious influence:

No man is so entirely masculine that he has nothing feminine within him. The fact is, rather, that very masculine men have – carefully guarded and hidden – a very soft emotional life, often incorrectly described as "feminine". A man counts it a virtue to

⁴² Jung, "The Relations between the Ego and the Unconscious," CW7, 190.

repress his feminine traits as much as possible, just as a woman, at least until recently, considered it unbecoming to be “mannish”. The repression of feminine traits and inclinations naturally causes these contrasexual demands to accumulate in unconscious. No less naturally, the imago of woman (the soul image) becomes a receptacle for these demands, which is why man, in his love-choice, is strongly tempted to win the woman who best corresponds to his own unconscious femininity – a woman, in short, who can unhesitatingly receive the projection of his soul.⁴³

“Either sex is inhabited by the opposite sex, up to a point...” Within every male there lives the female. This in-dweller seems to have a kind of autonomy. The male attempts to repress this feminine inhabitant and the non-male-typical “traits and inclination” produced thereby. There to receive the contrasexual material produced by the male’s unexpressed female genes is the collective image of woman.

Within parentheses, Jung makes a very interesting equivalence: the unconscious image of the woman is the natural receiver of man’s repressed feminine traits. He adds that this imago of woman is the same as the soul image. It would appear that the woman-image of which Jung here speaks is the same of which he spoke in the previous quotation – a collective image that the human male has received as a kind of patrimony from his early ancestors’ experience of women. Thus, there is an equivalence between the collective image of the soul and the collective image of woman.

Perhaps one source of resolving the apparent conflation that Jung makes between the image of woman and the image of soul is found by returning to the first reason for the femininity of the anima: the otherness of the woman for man, and the otherness of the unconscious for a conscious being. The following passage is telling:

Although it seems as if the whole of our unconscious psychic life could be ascribed to the anima, she is yet only one archetype among many. Therefore, she is not characteristic of the unconscious in its entirety. She is only one of its aspects. This is shown by the very fact of her femininity. What is not-I, not masculine, is most probably feminine, and because the not-I is felt as not belonging to me and therefore outside me, the anima-image is usually projected upon women.⁴⁴

The anima “is something that lives of itself, that makes us live; it is a life behind consciousness that cannot be completely integrated with it, but from which, on the contrary, consciousness arises.”⁴⁵ The anima, then, hearkens back to preconscious

⁴³ Jung, “The Relations between the Ego and the Unconscious,” CW7, 189.

⁴⁴ Jung, “Archetypes of the Collective Unconscious,” CW9i, 27.

⁴⁵ Jung, “Archetypes of the Collective Unconscious,” CW9i, 27.

life and, as such, represents the unconscious in a fundamental mode – though she does not exhaust its content. To the conscious mind she is thus experienced as fundamentally other than itself. Clearly, Jung implies that, for a male, his primary understanding of himself will be as male; for, when the male consciousness encounters the activity of the anima, – the basic, unconscious life forces within him, the image of the soul, the raw image of life – this otherness is naturally made to be feminine; for it is other than he is, and he is masculine. Hence, the anima is experienced as feminine. Among other things, she represents the suppressed feminine genes that were unable to find expression in the male person. Residing thus in collective unconscious, individual men project her onto individual women and onto symbols that play significant roles in their own individual lives and in the collective life of their societies. Thus, for males, the primary life force comes to take on a female personality; for those more adept at plumbing the unconscious, they might even be able to converse with her, as did Jung in the passage quoted above. All males, however, will be subject to her influence – all the more so for those who fail to become aware of her existence.

In summary, then, there is something to the sameness and the otherness of the woman for the man (and of the man for the woman) that is akin to the sameness and otherness of the collective unconscious that renders it appropriate that the soul – the first representative of the unconscious – should be feminine for a man. The otherness of the anima as unconscious renders it feminine for the man. Yet, at the same time, it is not so completely other that it cannot, in some way, be known. In this way, it is like the otherness of the woman to the male. The woman is other than him, yet a part of him at the same time. So the collective unconscious is other than him, yet underlying him as the aptitude that is necessary for him to have human experience. It is thus that this other, this unconscious, precedes the conscious.

As an afterthought, it is interesting to see how Jung relates the unconscious aspect of the soul with its perceived immortality. For Jung, the immortality of the soul – the fact that it exists “beyond the grave” – is the same as saying that it exists beyond consciousness. Hence, the soul – the invisible, immortal soul – exists in a realm beyond consciousness.⁴⁶ It is the realm of the gods where fate ultimately leads to heaven or hell. It is, at the same time, a kind of death, a return to a preconscious un-differentiation. Thus, Jung writes that soul plays her mischievous games both above and below human existence; fate holds either heaven or hell for her.⁴⁷ In the unconscious lie powers beyond those of mortal man, powers that can easily control man, but also, that can also lead him to salvation.

⁴⁶ Jung, “The Relations between the Ego and the Unconscious,” CW7, 191.

⁴⁷ Jung, “Archetypes of the Collective Unconscious,” CW9i, 26-27.

iii. *The anima as portal to meaning*: Being that which lives of itself, a kind of flame, there is something chaotic and powerful associated with the anima. It is not directed towards good or evil, but appears rather to exist both above and below these categories. Jung curiously writes:

She [anima] is the serpent in the paradise of the harmless man with good resolutions and still better intentions. She affords the most convincing reasons for not prying into the unconscious, an occupation that would break down our moral inhibitions and unleash forces that had better been left unconscious and undisturbed. As usual, there is something in what the anima says; for life in itself is not good only, it is also bad. Because the anima wants life, she wants both good and bad. These categories do not exist in the elfin realm. Bodily life as well as psychic life have the impudence to get along much better without conventional morality, and they often remain the healthier for it.⁴⁸

Anima is interested simply in life; she is not preoccupied with moralizing and impositions from the categories of good and evil. She can appear just as easily as angel or demon. Jung claims that she sees no opposition between aesthetics and ethics.⁴⁹ In her numinous realm, such categories have no place; therefore neither do such categories as praise and blame.

Her story, however, takes what may seem to be an unexpected turn: Although she may be the chaotic urge to life, something strangely meaningful clings to her, a secret knowledge or hidden wisdom, which contrasts most curiously with her irrational elfin nature.⁵⁰

The anima is not only the siren or the mermaid leading men to a watery death, she is also Sophia or the Queen of Heaven. For Jung this indicates that she has the potential, finally, to lead man to meaning and even a kind of salvation. Hence that famous closing words of *Faust* that we are saved through the eternal feminine.

The two images, siren and Sophia, are – or at least can be – related: for it is only when the siren leads man to a kind of death that he can reemerge with a new kind of wisdom. Jung speaks of being caught in an experience where reason, philosophy, and traditional teachings are of no assistance to the man being thus led by the siren. It is a kind of death, a kind of drowning in a whirlpool of forces that are beyond his control. This disequilibrium is the work of the anima as she initiates

⁴⁸ Jung, "Archetypes of the Collective Unconscious," CW9i, 28.

⁴⁹ He states that Christianity has placed a kind of opposition between the good and the beautiful, which the anima will not abide.

⁵⁰ Jung, "Archetypes of the Collective Unconscious," CW9i, 30.

a man into the world of the collective unconscious – a world beyond his power and personal experience, which, as such can be terrifying and disorienting. Such influence of the anima is characterized by:

an utter and unmistakable defeat crowned with the panic fear of demoralization. Only when all props and crutches are broken, and no cover from the rear offers even the slightest hope of security, does it become possible for us to experience an archetype that up till then had lain hidden behind the meaningful nonsense played out by the anima. This is the *archetype of meaning*, just as the anima is the *archetype of life*.⁵¹

The work of the anima is “meaningful nonsense”; she is folly and she is wisdom. And, according to Jung, for the anima, these things are the same.⁵² She, as fundamentally other for men, serves as a kind of portal into this other realm, which has always been outside man’s power and possession. In this capacity she, as it were, introduces man to other archetypes, as indicated in the text above, for instance, to the archetype of meaning.

4. *The Wise Man*

According to Jung, the anima and life itself, in of themselves, are meaningless: meaning is the result of interpretation. Interpretation results when a thinking thing confronts something it does not understand. Life and the anima admit of interpretation for the discerning mind; “for in all chaos there is a cosmos, in all disorder a secret order, in all caprice a fixed law, for everything that works is grounded on its opposite.”⁵³ From chaos, meaning can emerge; in fact, Jung seems to say that it is *only* from chaos that meaning can arise: it is only when an existing

⁵¹ Jung, “Archetypes of the Collective Unconscious,” CW9i, 32.

⁵² See Jung, “Archetypes of the Collective Unconscious,” CW9i, 31. This synthesizing of opposites is an instance of a general point that will reappear in the thought of Jung. Jung appears to believe that, somehow, in the collective unconscious, the distinction of opposites breaks down. Thus categories such as wisdom and folly, good and evil, lose their force and signification. It is unclear whether this is perhaps due to the fact that collective unconscious in some way hearkens back to preconscious times where there is no morality – as one would not attribute moral good or evil to the lion instinctively killing a gazelle – or if the collective unconscious somehow represents some higher form of consciousness, beyond the reach of our current consciousness. In this case, there is a godlike sense of being beyond good and evil. It is my judgment that Jung wishes to indicate both senses.

⁵³ Jung, “Archetypes of the Collective Unconscious,” CW9i, 32. Caroline Whitbeck writes: “In the Jungian scheme the feminine is conceived as one pole of a masculine-feminine polarity, in keeping with a rather Heraclitean view, that all psychic energy or libido is organized in polarities.” “Theories of Sex Difference,” 63.

symbolic order is laid to ruin that true meaning can break forth. The archetypes project images of themselves. These images form the foundation of our thinking. They images help to form a prevailing symbolic order, which, though it must perish, contains keys for revealing deeper meaning. The projected images of the archetypes seem to be something like the shadows dancing on the wall of Plato's cave. If one remains content simply with the shadows, they become deceivers. If however one takes them as images, they become occasions for deeper knowledge.

Jung offers the following dream to elucidate the point: An old king is about to die. For his burial, he chooses a tomb that is rumored to be the old sepulcher of a virgin. When it is opened for his burial and light enters the tomb, the bones of the virgin become a black horse which flees into the desert. A black magician, dressed in white, follows the horse into the desert and, having crossed the desert, finds the horse grazing in grasslands. In that verdant terrain, the black magician finds the keys to paradise, but does not know what to do with them; therefore, he seeks out the white magician. The dreamer finds himself with the white magician, who is dressed in black, when they are approached by the black magician, dressed in white, seeking knowledge of what to do with the keys.

Jung's interpretation goes as follows: The king/father represents the old symbolic order, which must die. This opens the tomb where the anima lies, as a sleeping beauty. The black steed, which she becomes, finds its meaning in Plato's *Phaedrus*,⁵⁴ as man's passions, which bring a certain amount of chaos into his life, but also serve to carry him on to a truer vision. Thus, she leads the way into a wilderness, a place of trial and desolation, on the other side of which, however, is the verdant garden or the heavenly city. It is however, the magician, the wise old man that follows on her heels, that emerges from where she once was. In the end, it is he, or better, the wise old man, in conjunction with the anima, that leads the dreamer, the individual, to the possibility of salvation, which Jung describes as individuation.

There is yet one thing remaining to surmise: what of the interplay of black and white? Why is it that there is a black magician dressed in white following a black steed finally in order to find the white magician dressed in black? The black steed and magician, in part, represent the "descent into darkness," the sense of meaninglessness and desperation that man experiences as he enters into the unfamiliar realm of the unconscious. The interplay, however, between black and white also represents the tendency of the unconscious to "relativize opposites."⁵⁵

It is also a paraphrase of the serpent of paradise who persuaded our first parents to sin, and who finally leads to redemption of mankind through the Son of God...

⁵⁴ Plato, *Phaedrus*, 245.c-254.e.

⁵⁵ Jung, "Archetypes of the Collective Unconscious," CW9i, 36.

The black horse and the black magician are half-evil elements whose relativity with respect to good is hinted in the exchange of garments.⁵⁶

This text reintroduces the relativization of opposites: it is not simply the good magician who leads to salvation: it is the good magician wearing black and the evil magician wearing white. It is from these two taken together that meaning arises from the anima-provoked desolation. Jung summarizes the dynamic:

The two magicians are indeed, two aspects of the *wise old man*, the superior master and teacher, the archetype of the spirit, who symbolizes the pre-existent meaning hidden in the chaos of life. He is the father of the soul, and yet the soul, in some miraculous manner, is also his virgin mother...⁵⁷

Meaning in some way, precedes life, is underlying life, is present as somehow guiding her apparently chaotic movement; meaning is the father of anima. In a realm however where one is freed from the opposition of opposites, at the same time as meaning is the father of the anima, meaning is born of the fertile though seemingly capricious soil of life; so anima is the virgin mother of meaning.

It appears that a kind of reciprocal meaning of gender itself can be garnered from this ostensibly paradoxical relationship: the masculine, the father, brings meaning to life, allows life to transcend its current state and move to a higher state of consciousness or signification. (In this sense it is reminiscent of the role played by the phallus in Lacan's neo-Freudian system.) There is a sense in which meaning was always present, guiding the anima, even in her mischief. At the same time, meaning does not emerge without the work of the anima. Hence, anima gives birth to meaning. Psyche, in a sense, precedes spirit, but it is spirit that guides her movement, and that, perhaps, is underlying the entire scheme.⁵⁸

In his essay on woman in Europe, Jung claims that the realm of the psyche is the realm of *eros*, the realm of relation. "But in contrast to objective understanding and agreement as to facts, human relationship leads into the psychic world, that middle kingdom which reaches from the world of sense and affect to that of the spirit."⁵⁹ It is psyche that bridges the gap between sepulcher and garden. As does woman, psyche functions according to the erotic principle, which is to bind and

⁵⁶ Jung, "Archetypes of the Collective Unconscious," CW9i, 35.

⁵⁷ Jung, "Archetypes of the Collective Unconscious," CW9i, 35.

⁵⁸ The apparent paradox of the precedence and posteriority of the anima vis-à-vis meaning (and vice versa) could likely be resolved by appeal to distinction in the order of generation and knowledge as opposed to the order of nature. See for instance: Thomas Aquinas, ST.I.77.4,6.

⁵⁹ Jung, "Woman in Europe," 178.

unify. She is guided by spirit, guided by meaning. This purpose, however is often hidden or unconscious and seemingly capricious. But soul leads to spirit. Love leads to meaning. Each needs the other for its fulfillment. "Fundamentally, therefore, both seek a psychic relation one to the other; because love needs the spirit and the spirit love, for their fulfillment."⁶⁰ Without spirit, psyche is blind, lacking even hidden purpose. Without psyche, meaning is sterile; it is the binding work of psyche, that unites man even to himself. As uniting man with himself, the feminine precedes a kind of spiritual rebirth of man. To understand this process more completely, however, requires greater knowledge of another archetype.

5. *The Persona*

The interaction of the anima and the wise old man is central to understanding masculine identity. However, before, attempting to summarize this identity, there are a few other inhabitants of the collective unconscious who play pivotal roles in the life of an individual man, intertwining as they do with the anima. As such, their acquaintance must be made. One such key interactor with the anima is the persona, whose relative dominance or weakness in large part determines the strength or weakness of the anima.

Invoking the etymology of the word, person, Jung describes the persona as a kind of mask; it is what is put forth to be seen by the outer world. It is the individual's face for the world. Jung writes:

The persona is a complicated system of relations between the individual consciousness and society, fittingly enough a kind of mask, designed on the one hand to make a definite impression upon others, and, on the other, to conceal the true nature of the individual.⁶¹

Like the theater mask, the persona both conveys a personality while, at the same time, hiding the actor behind the mask. Jung is forceful on the point that the actor must consciously recognize both of these functions lest he begin to believe that he is the mask he wears, in which case, he will serve the mask rather than the mask serving him.

The construction of an acceptable face for the world, according to Jung, implies significant "self-sacrifice." If the self is sacrificed to the point of the ego identifying with the persona, the result is a "soulless" person; the unconscious will not well tolerate this imbalance. As the man gives himself over to the external mask, internal forces arise within him with proportionate force.

⁶⁰ Jung, "Woman in Europe," 185.

⁶¹ Jung, "The Relations Between the Ego and the Unconscious," CW7, 192.

An opposite forces its way up from inside; it is exactly as though the unconscious suppressed the ego with the very same power which drew the ego into the persona. The absence of resistance outwardly against the lure of the persona means a similar weakness inwardly against the influence of the unconscious.⁶²

Having surrendered the inner world to the demands of the outer world (having sacrificed the self to the persona), the individual faces the rejoinder of the inner. It is the character of the revenge of the inner world that is of great interest here; for the first representative of the unconscious in men is the anima.

It appears that, for Jung, the more the persona of a man appears to be rigidly strong, so the more weakness will prevail in his private or personal life. This personal weakness, as a matter of contrast to the persona, is the hidden ascendancy of the anima:

The persona, the ideal picture of a man as he should be, is inwardly compensated by feminine weakness, and as the individual outwardly plays the strong man, so he becomes inwardly a woman, i.e., the anima, for it is the anima that reacts to the persona.⁶³

As the ego yields to the persona - to the demands of the external world - and believes itself to be what the persona represents, the anima, chief representative of the inner world, gains greater control. The public façade of great strength gives way in his private life to "effeminate weakness." The outwardly strong man falls under the sway of the anima and becomes a woman. With this in mind, Jung is clear that the individual male must consciously differentiate himself from both the persona and the anima lest he find himself in the service of both. With a working knowledge of the anima, the wise man, and the persona, the elements are in place to bring a picture of masculine development into focus.

III. MASCULINE DEVELOPMENT

1. *General progression*

That which is unconscious is projected. This is a fixed principle for Jung. For men, the anima, which Jung at one point refers to as "the archetype of the feminine,"⁶⁴ insofar as it can be known, takes on a female personality; as such, it is most easily and almost always projected onto women. Men's relationships with

⁶² Jung, "The Relations Between the Ego and the Unconscious," CW7, 194.

⁶³ Jung, "The Relations Between the Ego and the Unconscious," CW7, 194.

⁶⁴ Jung, "The Relations Between the Ego and the Unconscious," CW7, 192.

women, then, are frequently windows into the activity of the feminine archetype, of the anima, within him. The principal bearer of this image for a boy is his mother. It is this identification that is, in part, responsible for a mother's "domineering power" and for the depth of the attachment that the boy will feel for his mother.⁶⁵ As the boy grows, the anima image will be passed from the mother to other significant women in his life. These are the women who powerfully affect him; they are the women who, in one way or another, evoke and receive the projection of the anima. The departure point, however, is the projection upon the mother: "Because the mother is the first bearer of the soul-image, separation from her is a delicate and important matter of the greatest educational significance."⁶⁶ Effecting proper separation from the mother is more than just that; it is also a vehicle for proper differentiation from the anima herself. Thus, Jung says that this process of separation is of the greatest educational significance. If it is not properly achieved even the adult male will remain subject to the mother-image in the unconscious, which, in the final analysis is the anima.

According to Jung, the father protects a boy from the dangers of the external world. Once again, the masculine is concerned with the outer world. As such, the father is to provide for the boy a model persona, a model for how to relate to external world. It is the mother, however, who protects the boy from the dangers that lie within.⁶⁷ It is typically she who comforts the frightened child in the night, afraid of that which lurks in the darkness. For Jung, this darkness is finally the darkness of the unconscious. Confronting of the unconscious is a terrifying thing; it is a venture into a completely strange land. The anima is happy enough to leave this realm undiscovered, as its discovery can only serve to diminish her power. So, the boy must eventually let go of the hand of his mother, who would always defend him from this darkness, and, as it were, confront it and enter therein, so as to face its force, bring it to light, and harness its power. As the dream of the king's death revealed, such confrontation involves the death of the old symbolic order, a kind of death of the order of the father, and a transformation of the sleeping virgin into the black steed. This process involves a kind of harnessing of the power of the anima that is only done by entering the tomb; a tomb from which the mother will habitually want to protect the boy, just as she protected him from the terrors of the night. The terrors of the night, however, represent the terrors of the unconscious, which, ironically, as bearer of the anima image, the mother represents. Thus, in her protective capacity, the mother must also diminish, in a certain sense die, if the boy is to flourish.

⁶⁵ Jung, "Archetypes of the Collective Unconscious," CW9i, 29.

⁶⁶ Jung, "The Relations Between the Ego and the Unconscious," CW7, 197.

⁶⁷ Jung, "The Relations Between the Ego and the Unconscious," CW7, 197.

Jung claims that rituals of primitive cultures through which a young man is brought into adulthood will involve a symbolic separation from mother and confrontation of the “other side,” the terrors of the night, the darkness of the unconscious. If the boy is to become an adult, become a man, he must learn to confront on his own “darkness,” that from which his mother has hitherto defended him. Ironically, it is that which she, at the same time, represents as bearer of the soul-image; which image is the portal to the collective unconscious. Thus, if the male does not attempt to confront the unconscious but, instead, allows the bearer of the anima image (the significant female in a male’s life –first, mother, then wife) to so, she will protect the male from the terrors of the unconscious. This is done, however, so that he will always remain subject to it.

For Jung, modern man has stripped himself of many of the rituals and symbols that, in past ages, permitted him to confront the anima and achieve a proper balance between inner and outer. If the adolescent boy does not learn properly to confront the other, which is the unconscious and, by extension, the feminine, the anima will retain the power it had in the mother, which power will be passed to other significant females in a boy’s life and finally rest with his wife. His attitude towards his wife, however, will essentially be the same as that of the boy towards his mother – he will want her to protect him from the terrors of the night, running to her bed for comfort.

The consequence [of abandoning the primitive forms of educating young men] is that the anima, in the form of the mother-*imago*, is transferred to the wife; and the man, as soon as he marries, becomes childish, sentimental, dependent, and subservient, or else truculent, tyrannical, hypersensitive, always thinking about the prestige of his superior masculinity.⁶⁸

In short, the young man who has not properly confronted the anima residing in the mother image with either succumb to the anima by succumbing to “effeminate weakness” in his private life, or, for a while, he will manage to affect a compensatory, hyper-masculine persona in the vain attempt to best the anima in the person of his wife. In either case, it is the anima who, in fact, is in control of this man.

That the anima may seek to control the man does not mean that her function is wholly negative. If the anima is left to her own devices, un-noticed and unpropitiated within the unconscious, she will indeed lead the ship and its unwitting crew to certain destruction: man will either fall prey directly to the anima and become weak and effeminate, or he will give himself away to a persona, a caricature of masculinity under which façade lies submission to the dominant anima.

⁶⁸ Jung, “The Relations Between the Ego and the Unconscious,” CW7, 197.

There remains, however, what Jung calls “the union of opposites through the middle path.”⁶⁹ This is the path of differentiation from both the anima and the persona. In more primitive cultures, this path was an organic part of the rituals of the society: to become a man, the adolescent boy would symbolically confront the anima, the unknown, the other-world, the darkness, and leave his mother behind – she who had protected him from these terrors in the night. In a de-symbolized culture, the individual consciousness must do more on his own initiative actively to engage the anima. Such engagement is not a matter of control or domination – something which he can never achieve – but rather a middle way of entering into dialogue with her, and becoming aware of her activity. He must find her in the tomb of the dead king and bring light to that tomb so that she may lead him through the desert to Eden.

2. *The Animus*

Before returning to and concluding the discussion of masculine development by introducing the mana personality, it will be helpful to enrich the image of the anima by briefly marking its contrast and sameness with the archetype playing the same role in the female psyche: the animus. It must be noted at the outset, however, that understanding the animus is difficult. In transitioning from a discussion of the anima to a discussion of the animus, Jung writes: “If it was no easy task to describe what is meant by the anima, the difficulties become almost insuperable when we set out to describe the psychology of the animus.”⁷⁰

While differentiating the anima and animus, Jung makes important points about male and female psychology: To be unconscious is to be undifferentiated; it is the work of consciousness to differentiate, to define. Jung claims that the consciousness of women is not inferior to that of men, but is different. That which naturally enters the consciousness of man, that which he naturally differentiates, is distinct at least in some respects from the consciousness of women. And if the consciousness of men and women vary, so too does their unconscious differ. Jung provides the following observation:

The conscious attitude of woman is in general far more exclusively personal than that of man. Her world is made up of fathers and mothers, brothers and sisters, husbands and children. The rest of the world consists likewise of families, who nod to each other but are, in the main, interested essentially in themselves. The man's world is the nation, the state, business concerns, etc. His family is simply a means to an end, one of the foundations of the state, and his wife is not necessarily the woman for him (at any rate not as the woman means it when she says “my man”). The general means more to him than the personal; his world consists of a multitude

⁶⁹ Jung, “The Relations between the Ego and the Unconscious,” CW7, 205.

⁷⁰ Jung, “Anima and Animus,” CW7, 205.

of coordinated factors, whereas her world, outside her husband, terminates in a sort of cosmic mist.⁷¹

Male consciousness is concerned with the external: business matters and matters of politics. According to Jung, female consciousness is more concerned with interpersonal relationship. If male and female consciousness differ so, by necessity, the unconscious will likewise differ. A few points about the animus will elucidate this.

“The animus is the deposit, as it were, of all woman’s ancestral experiences of man....”⁷² This formulation is the same as that which associated the anima with a kind of amalgam of man’s primitive experience of woman. Jung offers two primary distinctions regarding how animus is experienced by women versus how the anima is experienced by men: First, while the anima’s activity is usually experienced as moods or affective responses in men, the hidden work of the animus is usually manifest in a woman’s strongly held opinions. These are opinions for which she likely has no extrinsic justification, but will nevertheless hold forcefully. So, as a man under the influence of the anima is subject to moods rendering him weak and effeminate, so the woman under the sway of the animus boorishly holds onto opinions that are usually foolish and not rationally substantiated.

The second distinction regards the animus’ mode of projection. That which is unconscious is projected. The anima is usually projected onto one female. Jung attributes this to the character of feminine consciousness, which is more intensely personal. The anima, therefore, attaches to one person with a “passionate exclusiveness.” By contrast, the animus is projected onto several persons. This diffuse projection follows the more disperse character of male consciousness. “Whereas the man has, floating before him, in clear outlines, the alluring form of a Circe or a Calypso, the animus is better expressed as a bevy of Flying Dutchmen or unknown wanderers from over the sea, never quite clearly grasped, protean, given to persistent and violent motion.”⁷³ As masculine consciousness is more personally dispersed, so will the projection of the unconscious masculine in women be more dispersed.

A final point regards the interaction of the anima and animus. Negatively, Jung writes that that the animus in women “plays up” the anima in men, evoking “venomous” reactions in men to women’s animus laden opinions. There is, however, a positive interaction in which the animus plays a role that Jung describes

⁷¹ Jung, “The Relations between the Ego and the Unconscious,” CW7, 209-210.

⁷² Jung, “The Relations between the Ego and the Unconscious,” CW7, 209.

⁷³ Jung, “The Relations between the Ego and the Unconscious,” CW7, 210.

as “creative and procreative”. It is this positive activity of the animus that is the source of a woman’s role as the inspirer of a man:

Just as a man brings forth his work as a complete creation out of his inner nature, so the inner masculine side of a woman brings forth creative seeds which have the power to fertilize the feminine side of the man. This would be the *femme inspiratrice* who, if falsely cultivated, can turn into the worst kind of dogmatist and high-handed pedagogue....⁷⁴

Jung speaks of the animus bringing forth the “spermatic word,” that which impregnates the anima within a man so as to give birth to inspired creativity. It is the masculine part of the woman at work on the feminine part of a man that is responsible for the woman’s inspiring role in a man’s life, just as it is man’s masculine consciousness that engages his own “inner nature,” the anima, to bring about his own creativity.

Jung again appears concerned with the resolution of opposites. The scene is reminiscent of the dream in which the good magician is dressed in black, while the evil magician is dressed in white. Each is within each. In the dream, wisdom is within folly and folly in wisdom. So the unconscious masculine within the conscious feminine interacts and potentially fructifies the unconscious feminine within the conscious masculine. The white wizard wears black, and the black wizard wears white, the inner being contrasted with the outer.

3. *The Mana and the Differentiation of the Individual*

The collective unconscious is at work in every member of the human race; there are no exceptions. Every human person is therefore, in some sense, subject to this realm that exists both above and below human consciousness. As long as an individual has not come to terms with the collective unconscious by making it conscious (in the mode that is possible) that individual remains, in a way, a part of the collective unconscious. He remains undifferentiated, not truly an individual. To be differentiated, to become an individual, to obtain an identity, one must first face and come to terms with the contents of the collective unconscious. These contents bind all members of the human race together in an undifferentiated mist: “If these contents remain unconscious, the individual is, in them, consciously commingled with other individuals – in other words, he is not differentiated, not individuated.”⁷⁵

Before the conscious mind is able to enter not only into his own personal unconscious, but also into those unconscious forms that affect his world, he remains

⁷⁴ Jung, “The Relations between the Ego and the Unconscious,” CW7, 209.

⁷⁵ Jung, “The Relations between the Ego and the Unconscious,” CW7, 225.

subject to the power of the archetypes and lost in an unconscious sea, filled with undifferentiated, *potential* individuals. His center of mass lies with his ego at the center of his conscious world, completely unaware of the fact that there is another world, massive and potent, exerting an unseen force on his unwitting universe. What is needed is a new center for the individual, one that places itself, as it were, on the threshold of each realm, finding a “middle way” between the conscious and unconscious, and so resolving these two opposites in a new found harmony. For the male, such resolution is a fruit of making peace with the anima.

The anima has a bewitching character – as does the animus in women – in that, to a greater or lesser extent, it can take control of the conscious mind, robbing it of its life and energy: “But when the unconscious contents... are not ‘realized,’ they give rise to a negative activity and personification, i.e., the autonomy of the animus and anima.”⁷⁶ The “realization” of the contents of the collective unconscious therefore becomes imperative. Such realization frequently happens through fantasy, fantasies which begin with images from the personal unconscious and then proceed to more universal images from the collective unconscious:

These fantasies are not so wild and unregulated as a naïve intelligence might think; they pursue definite, unconscious lines of direction which converge upon a definite goal. We could therefore most fittingly describe these later series of fantasies as processes of initiation, since these form the closest analogies.⁷⁷

The anima provides images to consciousness that afford the conscious mind the opportunity to make peace with her. As noted above, such a presentation of images to the individual male is similar to the process that, in primitive societies, was accomplished by initiation rituals, the rites of passage through which boys became men and girls became women. If the conscious mind attempts to assert absolute control over these images, the anima will withdraw from “dialogue” and simply become a destructive, autonomous force, exacting vengeance for the slight she has received.

A healthier, more adaptive course of action exists, however, in engaging the anima as she manifests herself. For men, this might mean, in some sense, discoursing with his moods (for women, she will engage her opinions, the product of the animus). Such discourse does not imply succumbing to his moods, but rather, first, giving them voice, hearing them out, and then taking an active role in their resolution. If the anima is thus propitiated, rather than being an independent, personified force *working upon the individual*, she will become instead a kind of bridge between the conscious and unconscious worlds; this happens only when “the

⁷⁶ Jung, “The Relations between the Ego and the Unconscious,” CW7, 224.

⁷⁷ Jung, “The Relations between the Ego and the Unconscious,” CW7, 230.

unconscious contents that are the efficient cause of the animus and anima phenomenon have become sufficiently assimilated to the conscious mind.”⁷⁸ The energy that fueled the archetype, in some way must be redirected from working upon the individual to working in his service. With such a redirection of the power that fuels it, it appears that that the anima loses what Jung calls its “mana,”⁷⁹ i.e. its power to enchant and subdue. It has gone from being a kind of mischievous force to being what Jung calls “the function of relationship between the conscious and unconscious.”⁸⁰ This rite of passage is achieved through the resolution of opposites – the resolution of the conscious and the unconscious. For the male, this is the resolution of the conscious masculine and the unconscious feminine, of that which he is and that which is other.

The anima’s loss of its *mana* marks a definite transition for the individual. For Jung, it raises the question of what becomes of what becomes of the mana. It may seem that this power from the unconscious would fall to the ego of the individual, who has seemingly mastered the anima. This conclusion, however, is based upon the illusory premise that it was the ego who mastered the anima. The situation, instead, is that the ego has come to terms with the anima; the conscious mind does not control the unconscious, but rather has gained some fluency in its language so as not to be completely fooled by it. Nevertheless, it is natural for the ego to think that it has achieved a kind of mastery and that it now possesses the yielded mana of the anima:

Thus the ego becomes a mana-personality. But the mana-personality is a dominant of the collective unconscious, the well-known archetype of the mighty man in the form of hero, chief, magician, medicine-man, saint, the ruler of men and spirits, the friend of God... Actually it is the figure of the magician, as I will call it for short, who attracts the mana to himself, i.e., the autonomous valency of the anima. Only insofar as I unconsciously identify with his figure can I imagine that I myself possess the anima’s mana. But I will infallibly do so under these circumstances.⁸¹

In fact, the mana has shifted from one archetype to another. In men, it has shifted from the feminine anima to a masculine hero figure, severally named by Jung: hero, saint, magician, etc. This archetype is derived from the father-imago as was the anima from the mother-imago, and, according to Jung, it possesses an even greater power.⁸² It assimilates the power of the anima and presumably adds it to its own,

⁷⁸ Jung, “The Relations between the Ego and the Unconscious,” CW7, 230.

⁷⁹ Mana can be defined as a pervasive magic or supernatural power.

⁸⁰ Jung, “The Relations between the Ego and the Unconscious,” CW7, 224.

⁸¹ Jung, “The Relations between the Ego and the Unconscious,” CW7, 228.

⁸² Jung, “The Relations between the Ego and the Unconscious,” CW7, 229.

rendering it a potent form in the collective unconscious. Having seemingly mastered the anima, the ego easily identifies with this same-sex archetype,⁸³ and claims the victory over the anima for himself. Such usurpation of the archetype's proper place by the ego will provoke a predictable reprisal; the individual will simply exchange a mistress for an even stronger master as he who was subject to the anima will now be subject to the magician.

Once again, all is not lost. For the ego need not succumb to identification with the mana-personality: "If the ego drops its claim to victory, possession by the magician ceases automatically."⁸⁴ The man reaches a point where he has indeed acquired a new kind of wisdom, a new kind of power that results from his successful resolution of the anima-complex. Such an achievement will result in praise and recognition given by others for his wisdom and mastery, and a certain amount of self-satisfaction. There is needed, however, what could easily be called an act of humility by the individual, lest he find himself in a kind of manic delusion: he must renounce the illusion that he, of his own strength, has mastered the anima and so now can claim her mana. If he does not claim victory as his own, he will find himself in a position from which salvation can emerge: the discovery of the self.

Once again, consideration of the dream of the two magicians, and the earlier discussion of the "middle way" is illustrative. In the dream, the first guide who emerges from the tomb is the anima in the figure of the black steed. The dreamer finds himself positioned with the white magician. Both magicians implicitly rely upon the power of the anima in crossing the desert and arriving in the garden wherein lies the possibility of salvation. The key to salvation is with the father, the white magician. Hence the individual must come to terms with both the anima and the magician in both aspects, white and black. The symbolic language requires yet more interpretation.

The anima, life, asserts herself in rites and rituals, or, in a mostly desymbolized society such as the modern West, in fantasies and images, in dreams, or in psychological symptoms. If this unconscious form underlying consciousness is recognized, understood, and interpreted, a bridge is built to another world surrounding the conscious world. With the help of the anima, the center of gravity of the ego is shifted from blithely sitting at the center of its conscious world to holding a much more precarious position somewhere in between the conscious and unconscious worlds. Arrival at this point, will, however, no doubt involve many

⁸³ At this point, Jung appears to diagnose Christ by referencing the following of His words: "The Father and I are one." Jung, "The Relations between the Ego and the Unconscious," CW7, 229.

⁸⁴ Jung, "The Relations between the Ego and the Unconscious," CW7, 230.

trials and a kind of death, a descent into the unconscious, in which realm he is as yet undifferentiated. The time in the desert is not pleasant.

The trials of the desert, however, bear the fruit of an initial understanding of the world of the unconscious, which can lead to the individual to thinking that he actually has control over the unconscious. At this point, a man identifies with the powerful hero, magician, or sage father. If, however, in an act of humility, the individual can admit that he is mostly powerless in the face of the unconscious, the unconscious will ease its power over the individual and a certain amount of that energy can fall to that mid point between the conscious and unconscious worlds. As such, the possibility for realization of the self emerges. This, for Jung, is salvation.

A few words, therefore, are necessary about that which for Jung is the elusive goal of life.

Thus the dissolution of the *mana*-personality through the conscious assimilation of its contents leads us, by a natural route, back to ourselves as an actual, living something, poised between two world-pictures and their darkly discerned potencies... I have called this centre the *self*. Intellectually the self is no more than a psychological concept, a construct that serves to express an unknowable essence which we cannot grasp as such, since by definition it transcends our powers of comprehension. It might equally be called "God within us."⁸⁵

The self comes within reach when meaning has been acquired, the wise man was allowed to share his secrets, thus establishing the conscious self, or the ego, in a place from which he can begin to see that which was both the beginning and the goal of his strivings: the self. The self is not the ego, which, according to Jung, orbits the self as the earth the sun. It is something greater in power than the individual; it is out of his control, a subject of which he is the object. Thus a new massive object enters the gravitational system to which the conscious self is subject: there is the outer world and the inner world, and, then, the self, which Jung says "could be characterized as a kind of compensation of the conflict between inside and outside."⁸⁶

Being, as it is, more powerful than the individual and causing, as it does, various movements within us, Jung claims that the self is rightly called divine – an appellation which, according to him, is neither a deification of man nor a dethronement of God, but rather a right naming of a psychological reality. Aspects of Jung's epistemology render his divination of the self unsurprising:

⁸⁵ Jung, "The Relations between the Ego and the Unconscious," CW7, 237-238.

⁸⁶ Jung, "The Relations between the Ego and the Unconscious," CW7, 239.

The two opposing world “realities,” the world of the conscious and the world of the unconscious, do not quarrel for supremacy, but each makes the other relative... [B]oth realities are psychic experience, psychic semblances painted on an inscrutably dark cloth black-cloth. To the critical intelligence, nothing is left of *absolute* reality. Of the essence of things, of absolute being, we know nothing.⁸⁷

One knows nothing even of one’s own absolute being. An individual can only orbit around it, catch glimpses of it and begin to know it from its effects within him. The effects of the self, at first, are most likely not recognized, not properly discerned or interpreted. It is the realization, interpretation and experience of the effects of the self as such that individuates, differentiates a man, gives him meaning, and is the goal of his life.

In this relation [between the ego and the self] nothing is knowable, because we can say nothing about the contents of the self. The ego is the only content of the self that we do know. The individuated ego senses itself as the object of an unknown and supraordinate subject. It seems to me that our psychological inquiry must come to a stop here, for the idea of a self is itself a transcendental postulate which, although justifiable psychologically, does not allow of scientific proof.⁸⁸

In coming to terms first with the mother-image and then with the father-image, the individual is situated in a middle way, a middle place between the inner outer worlds such that he can sense the work of God within him, of the self that has been the *telos* of his movement.

The journey ends here, arriving, as nearly as possible, at the self, the garden beyond the desert, the heavenly Jerusalem. The individual postulates the self from having experienced its effects and having a felt a need to be faithful to the self’s supraordinate reality. The path taken to this realization is not well traveled. “Many are called, few are chosen,” quotes Jung. For this new center of the individual is set on a razor’s edge, straddling two worlds, existing, as one can, in each. Thus, it is the rare person who can follow the way, enduring the pain of the journey, encountering the anima, crossing the desert, and finally finding a way to assimilate the mana personality, to achieve a truer vision and wisdom. Such is the work of the hero, the great man, the saint – and such men are few.

4. Masculine Identity

According to Jung, one’s sex is determined by the predominance of masculine or feminine genes. This dominance, however, is not absolute – the

⁸⁷ Jung, “The Relations between the Ego and the Unconscious,” CW7, 218.

⁸⁸ Jung, “The Relations between the Ego and the Unconscious,” CW7, 240.

subordinate sex remains in the unconscious as part of the whole person. In men these genes are expressed as the anima, in women, as the animus. Masculine and feminine have meaning that appears to be bound with the biological sex determined by the predominant genes. The genes determine the biological sex that in turn initiates distinct developmental paths based upon distinctions in masculine and feminine nature.

Female psychology is founded upon the principle of *eros* while the ruling principle of men is *logos*. Masculinity is concerned with concepts, institutions, and the working of the outer world. His realm is the political. "Masculinity means to know one's goal, and to do what is necessary to achieve it."⁸⁹ Conscious awareness and consideration of one's goal coupled with focused activity towards the realization of that goal is the hallmark of masculinity. Thinking, logical, outward-focused, decisive, and dedicated to institutional ideals are all characteristics of the masculine.

The feminine is a series of oppositions to the above characterizations of the masculine. While the realm of the masculine is the logical, the realm of the feminine is the psychological, the middle kingdom between sense and spirit, which is the realm of human relationship, and, in some ways, the realm of humanity itself, suspended as it is between sense and spirit, participating in each. Woman, by her nature, seeks to complete man, to make him whole. Purpose in her is generally indistinct and indirect, couched in her feelings though nevertheless part of her nature. According to the erotic principle, woman seeks to love and to heal. Man seeks to codify love. Women seek to love. This binding force of the psyche perplexes man who is erotically blind and cannot see the hidden purpose in her action.

The feminine is love and life. The masculine is spirit and meaning. Each without the other is fruitless. Each, in some way, precedes the other - psyche without meaning is lost, but, likewise, meaning without soul is dead. Thus, the masculine and feminine form a mutually dependent dynamic in which each relies upon the other for its existence. Meaning can only be found in and through love, but love is always guided by meaning.

It remains to be seen, however, exactly what the connection is between masculinity and the biological fact of being male and femininity and the fact of being female. Jung's own words are telling:

But, since the nature of the human being unites masculine and feminine elements, a man can live the feminine in himself, and a woman the masculine in herself. None the less in man the feminine is in the background, as is the masculine in woman. If one lives out the opposite sex in oneself, one is living one's own background, and that restricts too much *the essential individuality*. A man should live

⁸⁹ Jung, "Woman in Europe," 179-180.

as a man, and a woman as a woman. The part belonging to the opposite sex is always in the dangerous neighborhood of the unconscious.⁹⁰

Jung is clear and consistent that the masculine is the realm of men and the feminine the realm of women. To live one's background is to court pathology. Jung speaks of the cultural currents in Europe of his time in which women were more readily taking up social positions and attitudes typically held by men. His assessment of this phenomenon is mixed.

But no one can evade the fact, that in taking up a masculine calling, studying, and working in a man's way, woman is doing something not wholly in agreement with, if not directly injurious to, her feminine nature. She is doing what would be scarcely possible for a man to do, even were he a Chinaman.⁹¹

If a woman begins to live too much from her animus she disrupts the harmony of the self "smothering the charm and meaning of femininity, and driving it into the background. Such a development naturally ends in a deep psychological division, in short a neurosis."⁹² Such women find themselves isolated from their own nature. "The reason is that her animus (that is, her masculine rationalism, assuredly not true reasonableness!) has stopped up the entrance of her own feeling."⁹³ Feeling works with hidden purpose in the woman. Identification with the animus freezes the purposeful movement of nature and divides the woman from her self.

The situation is similar with the man who identifies with the anima. Such a man, under the sway of the anima, is "fickle, capricious, moody, uncontrolled and emotional, sometimes gifted with deemonic intuitions, ruthless, malicious, untruthful, bitchy, double-faced, and mystical."⁹⁴ In another place he states that "in the case of anima possession... the patient will want to change himself into a woman through self-castration, or he is afraid that something of the sort will be done to him by force."⁹⁵ The notion of division against the self is apparent. Just as the woman living from her animus is divided against herself, so is the man living from the anima. Hence Jung notes that "both figures [masculine and feminine] lose their charm and value"⁹⁶ when they are dominant in a member of the opposite sex.

⁹⁰ Jung, "Woman in Europe," 169-170. Emphasis added.

⁹¹ Jung, "Woman in Europe," 169.

⁹² Jung, "Woman in Europe," 171.

⁹³ Jung, "Woman in Europe," 171.

⁹⁴ Jung, "Concerning Rebirth," CW9i, 124.

⁹⁵ Jung, "Archetypes of the Collective Unconscious," CW9i, 39.

⁹⁶ Jung, "Concerning Rebirth," CW9i, 124.

The claim that a man should be predominantly feminine is not to say that man is to live some mode of pure masculinity – nor that women should be purely feminine. Much of this chapter has been dedicated to explaining the process of how the male comes to terms with and develops the feminine within himself lest it remain unconscious and thus unnoticed reap havoc in his life. As opposed to medieval simplicity and relative unconsciousness, Jung saw his epoch in Europe as a time and place of the greater ascendancy of characteristics the opposite sex in the individual.

Circumstances have forced her [woman] to master part of the masculinity, which alone could save her from remaining embedded in an antiquated, purely instinctive femininity, like a spiritual baby alien and forlorn in the world of men. Similarly, man will find himself forced to develop within himself some feminine characters, namely, to become observant both psychologically and erotically. It is a task he cannot avoid, unless he prefers to go trailing after woman, in a hopeless boyish fashion, always in danger of finding himself stowed away in her pocket.⁹⁷

Instinctively, men and women tend more towards *per se* masculinity and femininity respectively as typified in what Jung calls traditional, medieval marriage in which the outer world is wholly the realm of the man while the inner world is the woman's domain. The man's world is that of conscious determination while that of the woman's is indirect purpose and action. "He shall by they master" quotes Jung.⁹⁸

Circumstance and necessity, however, force men and women from living the *per se* masculine and feminine. In the time between the two great wars in Europe, Jung speaks of the dearth of marriageable men subsequent to the carnage of the First World War, which, coupled with the proliferation of contraception created new pressures on women *vis-à-vis* marriage. At the same time, the burgeoning field of psychology was pushing man into the shadowlands of the feminine within him. Though painful and bungling, this exploration of the psyche led to recognition and development of the feminine in man.⁹⁹

While it is not clear that Jung sees this development as purely good, it appears that he finds the hidden purpose of psyche behind the cultural movements outlined above.

The love of woman claims the whole man, not mere masculinity as such, but also just that in him which implies the negation of it. The love of woman is not

⁹⁷ Jung, "Woman in Europe," 178-179.

⁹⁸ Jung, "Woman in Europe," 179.

⁹⁹ For a discussion of the historical factors leading to the development of masculinity in women and femininity in men see Jung, "Woman in Europe," 172-178.

sentiment – that is only man’s way – but a life-will that at times is terrifyingly unsentimental, and can even force her to self-sacrifice. A man who is loved in this way cannot escape his inferior side, for he can only answer this reality with his own. And the reality of man is no fair semblance, but a true likeness of that eternal human nature which links together all humanity, an image of human life in its heights and depths which is common to us all.¹⁰⁰

The role of woman is the role of binding and healing, of creating or returning to wholeness. She is driven by the collective life-will to this end.¹⁰¹ Man, in his tendency towards rationalism tends to isolate himself with a false independence that is heedless of his own humanity. “In our strength we are independent and isolated, there we can forge our own fates; but in our weakness we are dependent and therefore bound....”¹⁰² “The incompleteness of humanity is always a dissonance in the harmony of our ideal.”¹⁰³ It is woman and the anima that take man from the harmony of the ideal, which is not real, into the reality of humanity in its weakness; for it is only from this point that the whole person, the self, can be discovered. This breaks man from his isolation by allowing him to experience his common humanity. It is only from this place that man can attain to spirit, to a true *logos* or meaning that has integrated *eros*.

The fulfillment of women is in love, while the fulfillment of man is in spirit. As I have already said, each, however, needs the other. “The indirect method of woman is dangerous; it can hopelessly compromise her aim. Therefore the modern woman longs for greater consciousness, for meaning, and the power of naming her goal in order to escape from the blind dynamism of nature.”¹⁰⁴ In Jung’s economy man and woman have a role which includes the presence masculinity and femininity in both man and woman. As will be seen in the following chapter, some of Jung’s contemporary disciples wish to remove, more or less completely, any relationship of ordering of these principles to the biological sex of the individual.¹⁰⁵ It is clear, however, that Jung believed the masculine principle applies principally to men and

¹⁰⁰ Jung, “Woman in Europe,” 181.

¹⁰¹ Jung, “Woman in Europe,” 181.

¹⁰² Jung, “Woman in Europe,” 181.

¹⁰³ Jung, “Woman in Europe,” 182.

¹⁰⁴ Jung, “Woman in Europe,” 187.

¹⁰⁵ Caroline Whitbeck writes: “In order to discuss the relation of women to the feminine or *eros* principle, we would need an initial distinction between what it held to be true of women and what is held to be true of the feminine, but this is what the Jungians do not supply.” “Theories of Sex Difference,” 63. She then proceeds to demonstrate this failure in Jung and some of his early disciples. pp. 64-68.

plays a secondary role in women, while the inverse is true in men. Thus, what can be said of masculinity should be able to be predicated of man.

Man is perfected in spirit. The spirit symbolizes meaning and is the father of the soul. The spirit directs and fructifies. Man cannot attain to spirit, however, without the feminine. Though the spirit is the father of the anima, she is his virgin mother; it is she who, in her way, gives birth to *logos*. Without the introduction of the feminine, attempts at meaning remain divorced from humanity; they are unincarnate. It is only through the feminine that *logos* can become incarnate, wed to humanity. Thus, it is only by means of interaction with and integration of the feminine that the masculine self, realized in spirit, can begin to take shape.

Masculine identity, then, begins with the biological predominance of male genes. This leads to the conscious expression of masculine traits. True masculine identity, however, includes the integrative, erotic work of the feminine within him, which permits man to enter into the depths of his humanity while at the same time reaching its heights, freeing him from his isolation and erotic blindness. "Thou canst be delivered from no sin thou hast not committed" quotes Jung. The erotically blind man cannot see his own weakness and therefore cannot be delivered from it. "For where is height without an equal depth, and can there be light that throws no shadow?" asks Jung.¹⁰⁶ The man who emerges from such a process of self-discovery is decidedly a masculine self. *Logos* remains his primary attribute. Such *logos* however that has descended into the depths of weakness so as not to produce false, isolated meaning. It is spirit made human by the binding power of *eros*. The path that leads to true masculine identity is indeed the road less traveled; it is the road of the hero and the saint, filled with dangers but that leads to wisdom. The road of woman is similar, but distinct. Hers is the path of *eros* that must find *logos*. For woman, love comes by nature. She must confront her unconscious in order to find meaning; for the fulfillment of love only comes if be born of the spirit, which is the meaning behind love. Thus masculine and feminine play perfective roles, each toward the other. For Jung, this likewise means that men and women play perfective roles each for the other. Man and woman do not have interchangeable roles in a blind drama for Jung. Instead, each has a complementary task that drives the plot forward towards greater perfection. Thus, form and teleology reenter the scene.

¹⁰⁶ Jung, "Woman in Europe," 186.

Chapter 6

Neo-Jungian Perspectives on Sexual Difference

INTRODUCTION

As with any significant thinker, commentators interpret Jung's work in many ways. Some have extended Jung's tendency to "psychologize" human phenomena beyond the boundaries established by Jung himself. Like many neo-Freudians, these disciples of Jung find themselves more allied with contemporary deconstructionist thought and distance themselves from any biologism or essentialism which, no doubt, are seen as remnants of Jung's own cultural milieu. This group of contemporary commentators inevitably seeks to rupture all but the most tenuous connections between biological sex and the meaning and instantiation of masculinity or femininity. I offer a brief summary of such an interpretation of Jung in Section I.

Other commentators claiming Jungian patrimony, rather than pushing Jung away from essentialism and the norms that can be associated with it, offer a picture of the masculine self that is more clearly defined in its form than the characterization of the self provided by Jung. In contrast to other commentators, this school of thought is also clear in indicating this masculine self as applying uniquely – if not exclusively – to men. Their ideas are popular in the modern "men's movement" and are utilized by some Catholic psychologists.¹ In Section II, therefore, I give a brief description of such thinkers.

¹ For instance, for a brief discussion of Phillip Mango's application of the archetypes of king, warrior, wise man and lover, see Liane Laurence, "The Making of Man," *Catholic Insight*, (February 2006), http://catholicinsight.com/online/social/article_646.shtml (Accessed June 19, 2008).

I. THE ANDROGYNOUS SELF

The true self is a difficult concept to comprehend in the work of Jung. He identifies it as a theoretical speculation psychologically justified but not scientifically provable. Any statements, therefore, regarding the predication of masculine or feminine regarding the true self are by necessity speculative. In the last chapter, evidence was set forth, however, that supported the thesis that Jung himself held the position that true self of man has a unique relationship to the masculine, as does the true self of the woman to the feminine. Some, however, argue that an overarching Jungian principle regarding the resolution of opposites – and therefore the resolution of the opposition of masculine and feminine – consequently places androgyny as a kind of ideal. Warren Steinberg writes: “Androgyny represents the ability to experience the attributes normally considered “masculine” or “feminine” without regard for the association to a sexual category.”² The same author acknowledges that males typically identify with the “instrumental/active dimension – rational, assertive, task-oriented behavior designed to achieve a goal in the outer world.” Females, on the other hand, “tend to identify with expressive/passive dimension – behavior oriented toward the expression of feeling and the management of the emotional life of the group.” He adds, however, that “there is no innate relationship between the genders and these two tendencies [i.e., the instrumental/active versus the expressive/passive.]”³

Appeal to the biological as a source of a kind of intrinsic foundation for masculine identity is seen as simplistic: “A few apparent biological or socialized sex differences have been generalized incorrectly to many unrelated skills, attitudes, and behaviors for males and females.”⁴ The tendency to overemphasize the distinction between male and female is not accidental. According to Steinberg, it follows from the basic split in the mind between conscious and unconscious. The psyche, rendering things in its own image, splits what it encounters into opposites. Thus, the masculine and feminine are more or less symbols of the conscious and unconscious. The drive to reify these differences in man and woman is due to the human tendency to concretize symbols, not to differences in the things themselves. Thus, as the unconscious must be made conscious, so must the distinction between the masculine and feminine be resolved. The self, then, becomes a sort of transbiological entity, containing both masculine and feminine. The distinctions between

² Warren Steinberg, *Masculinity: Identity, Conflict, and Transformation* (Boston: Shambhala, 1993), 10.

³ Steinberg, *Masculinity*, 2.

⁴ Steinberg, *Masculinity*, 9.

male and female pertain to the psyche and its projections and subsequent distinctions in socialization which, in turn, lead to distinct personas.

Jungian Gareth Hill makes the following observation regarding the relationship of masculine and feminine to male and female. Referring to the writings of Jung and one of Jung's earlier commentators, Hill writes:

“Masculine” and “feminine” are constantly used in two sense that become confused with one another: as inherent gender-linked traits and as nongender-linked archetypal principles and patterns. It is saddening that many Jungians still tend to perpetuate this confusion by speaking of the feminine as if it is the special province of women, or speaking of women's psychology as “feminine psychology” or men's psychology as “masculine psychology.”⁵

The point is clear enough: perhaps there is such a thing as men's psychology or women's psychology, but the former should not be equated masculine psychology nor the latter with feminine psychology.

He proceeds to outline the development of men and women in terms of reciprocal interactions between two bi-polar dynamics: Namely, first, the interaction of the static feminine and dynamic masculine, then, between the static masculine and dynamic feminine. He offers distinct developmental patterns for men and women. Finally, however, these distinctions appear to be more the work of social construction than the nature of things. The theory is interesting and thus merits a brief summary here. First, typical male development is summarized. This followed by a traditional pattern of female development, and then a more contemporary rendering of female development.

The baby boy begins within the static feminine: he is united with his mother, content in a kind of undifferentiated wholeness that characterized the static feminine. The dynamic masculine enters, however, to begin to provoke differentiation. The boy begins to explore, to move out into the world, to test his skills. The apex of this period is adolescence when the boy begins to forge his own identity and separate more definitively from his parents. This begins a period of what Hill calls “fiery initiations;” these are tests of the boy's abilities that lead to the formation of his identity. In these tests, the adolescent male is forced to confront limits – both his own and those imposed by the external world – facing such boundaries tethers an ego that may begin to think itself limitless. In the limits confronted in his fiery initiations, the burgeoning man confronts the static masculine, the structure in society; this is the structure in which he has to find his

⁵ Gareth S. Hill, , *Masculine and Feminine: The Natural Flow of Opposites in the Psyche* (Boston: Shambhala, 1992), 31.

place. He is likely to marry, establish a career, home, family and the various other cultural norms that indicate an adult life. At this point, the counter pole to the static masculine enters: the dynamic feminine. This is the time of the mid-life crisis; it is the confrontation with the anima mentioned in the previous chapter. At this point, a man may abandon certain aspects of the static masculine in his life (aspects of the old order), and begin a new period of exploration. In contrast to the exploration of the dynamic masculine, exploration prodded by the dynamic feminine tends to be inwardly directed. Confrontation with the dynamic feminine is characterized by what Hill calls watery initiations; it is entry to the exploration of the unconscious, and it will begin the process of individuation, at which point the self, which has been directing this movement, can begin to show itself. Among other things, the individual man can now relate to the feminine, independent of any particular woman. The result of the watery initiation is a return to the static feminine, a return to a new unity, a new oneness with the self and realization of the personality with new found wisdom and integration – the man has come to terms with the archetypes of life (the anima) and of meaning (the magician).

For women, Hill first offers a traditional picture of development, which he quickly refers to as anachronistic. It nevertheless merits a brief review: The little girl also begins in the static feminine. However, because she, being a potential bearer of children, is more naturally identified with the static feminine, she does not have as much impetus prodding her on to the dynamic masculine. Thus the dynamic masculine is lived in her through its projection, perhaps onto her father, or maybe even to a love of horses. These figures take on a magical or numinous character, from which she is saved by a masculine hero, her husband, in whom she finds the static and dynamic masculine, while he finds in her both the static and dynamic feminine. As her husband has to come to terms with anima, so she has to come to terms with animus which permits her, in some sense, to assimilate the dynamic masculine and leave the domestic world.⁶

For modern women, however, Hill notes that the developmental processes are much more similar in men and women: “Now, however, many young women... find the masculine in men less numinous and “other,” and are naturally inspired to fulfill themselves as young women in the world of masculine consciousness...”⁷ His general point is that both men and women must find the masculine and feminine in themselves; it is no less incumbent upon a man to find the feminine in himself than it is for a woman to do so:

⁶ For Hill's discussion of the male and female developmental processes, see *Masculine and Feminine*, pp. 23-35.

⁷ Hill, *Masculine and Feminine*, 33.

One of the most profound contributions of analytical psychology is the insight that both men and women have their roots in the feminine, that both must discover the masculine in their own way, and that both must come to an integration of the masculine and feminine, again each in his or her own way, in order to find full integration.⁸

Both men and women must integrate both masculine and feminine. But what does it mean to say that each, male and female, must do so in their own way?

While beginning with what seemed a quite strong androgynous line, biological considerations lead to certain qualifications of his position: "The physiological differences between men and women have endocrinological ramifications, the manifestations of which in the interface between body and psyche bear further discovery, research, and understanding."⁹ A few lines later he adds:

Certainly, however, at the most elemental, innate level no male can experience the static feminine to the depth and degree that is known by a pregnant female, and no female can experience so elementally a fulfillment of the phallic necessity as can a male.¹⁰

This, however, regards only the dynamic opposition between the static feminine and dynamic masculine. As regards whether either sex can lay greater claim to either the static masculine or the dynamic feminine, Hill claims there is no research to indicate that one or the other is more the province of either males or female.¹¹ His general point, therefore, remains that differences in male and female development and subsequent identity tend to be exaggerated vis-à-vis masculine and feminine as each, in fact, includes the other. Thus, while leaving room for the ramifications of biology, Hill clearly leans towards the androgynous self. The psyche itself is the primary font of knowledge. All knowledge is, in a way, knowledge of the psyche as all is known through its structures. Masculine and feminine are categories that are made by the psyche as signs of its fundamental constitution as conscious and unconscious. While female anatomy and its ability to sustain the very interior experiences of penetration and pregnancy do permit a certain unique experience of the feminine, and male possession of the phallus permits a unique experience of the analytic and incisive nature of the masculine, masculinity is not the exclusive province of the male nor

⁸ Hill, *Masculine and Feminine*, 33

⁹ Hill, *Masculine and Feminine*, 34.

¹⁰ Hill, *Masculine and Feminine*, 34.

¹¹ A case could certainly be made that Baron-Cohen's research finding that males tend to be more systematizing and females more empathizing argues that men do, in fact, have a greater affinity for the static masculine.

femininity that of females. Men and women must equally find and integrate masculine and feminine within themselves. Though perhaps dispositional, physical sex is incidental to masculinity or femininity.

II. THE MASCULINE SELF

1. King, Warrior, Magician, Lover

While embracing the fundamental tenants of feminism - most notably, equality of the dignity of man woman - there are disciples of Jung who favor the notion of a masculine self over the ideal of the androgynous self. Perhaps most notable among this school of thought is Robert Bly whose invocation of the fable of the hairy wild-man, Iron John,¹² has brought to the forefront the notion of masculine identity.

Following Bly, Robert Moore and Douglas Gillette have proposed that the masculine self can be defined in terms of four archetypes whose energies the individual man must assimilate according to his own circumstances. According to these authors, masculinity in its fullest expression contains the positive energies of the King, the Warrior, the Magician, and the Lover.¹³ They argue that mature masculinity lies at the point of a pyramid whose four sides are constituted by the four above archetypes. Most men, according to Moore and Gillette, remain in what they call "boy psychology," in which immature and generally self-centered archetypes hold sway. A boy must move from the selfish, self-aggrandizing archetypes of boyhood and adolescence into the mature archetypes of manhood.¹⁴ The negative characteristics - such as abusiveness, and the desire for control and domination - generally associated with patriarchy are actually the result of the extension of boy psychology into the chronological sphere of manhood.¹⁵ Thus the problems generally attributed to male dominated cultures are due to men's lack of development into true manhood rather than their failure to embrace androgyny.

The absence of progression from boy psychology to man psychology in the adult male leads to the prevalence of the shadows of each of the masculine archetypes. Each archetype has its positive expression, but also a bi-polar negative expression; for instance, the King's shadow may be expressed either as a tyrant, or an impotent weakling. If a man does not move beyond boy psychology, he will likely find himself subject to either (or both) aspect of the shadow.

¹² Robert Bly, *Iron John: a Book about Men* (Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley, 1990).

¹³ Moore, Robert and Douglas Gillette, *King, Warrior, Magician, Lover: Rediscovering the Archetypes of the Mature Masculine* (San Francisco: Harper, 1990).

¹⁴ See Moore and Gillette, *King, Warrior, Magician, Lover*, xvi-xvii, 16-19.

¹⁵ Moore and Gillette, *King, Warrior, Magician, Lover*, xvii.

Though the four archetypes do not all appear explicitly in Jung's writings, they are discovered and known as are all archetypes: by their projection. So, when one examines lore and art of most cultures, one finds that the characters of king, warrior, magician, and lover continually emerge as elements of the masculine self. Moore and Gillette claim that their recovery and proper development is key for realization of mature masculinity.

The central archetype of the masculine self is the King; it plays the central role in a male's development from boyhood to manhood and, in some ways, implies the other three masculine archetypes. The King encompasses but is not exhausted by the positive energies of the father. It has two primary characteristics: "two functions of King energy make this transition from Boy psychology to Man psychology possible. The first of these is ordering; the second is the providing of fertility and blessing."¹⁶ The King brings order to his realm. This includes aspects of the Warrior for this may mean defending his realms from enemies both within and outside his lands. It also implies the Magician's role, for he must have sufficient wisdom and technique to achieve harmony.

Next, the King is generative. He must have heirs. The King's children are a blessing to the realm. But, more than that, Moore and Gillette note how, in many cultures, the flourishing and fruitfulness of the land are tied to the flourishing and fruitfulness of the King. As is the King, so is the land. "The sacred king in ancient times became the primary expression for many peoples of the life-force, the libido, of the cosmos."¹⁷ The queen represents the land; and if the King flourishes and is vital, so will the queen be fruitful – the land too will flourish. In this way, the King implies the archetype of the Lover.

The generativity of the King extends beyond his own children and even beyond the fruitfulness of the land: for the King also extends blessing to individual members of his kingdom. Towards the young men of his kingdom, he is nurturing and psychologically generative. He does this by placing his trust in them, giving them responsibility, affirming them. Thus, the King extends his generativity throughout the souls of those in his kingdom, allowing them to flourish in the assurance of benevolence and wisdom.¹⁸

These aspects, claim Moore and Gillette, are contained in the archetype of the King that functions particularly in the collective unconscious of men. And the energy from this archetype, if properly accessed and utilized, can have a similar function in the psyches of individual men as the King is purported to have in ancient myths regarding his kingdom. Namely, it can bring order and harmony to

¹⁶ Moore and Gillette, *King, Warrior, Magician, Lover*, 52.

¹⁷ Moore and Gillette, *King, Warrior, Magician, Lover*, 58.

¹⁸ See Moore and Gillette, *King, Warrior, Magician, Lover*, 60-61.

the man, and bring about fruitfulness within him by blessing him. Speaking of the role this archetype in men's lives, they use superlative terms:

It stabilizes chaotic emotion and out-of-control behaviors. It gives stability and centeredness. It brings calm. And in its "fertilizing" and centeredness, it mediates vitality, life-force, and joy. It brings maintenance and balance. It defends our own sense of inner order, our own integrity of being and of purpose, our own central calmness about who we are, and our essential unassailability and certainty in our masculine identity.¹⁹

With these positive effects, gaining knowledge of how to access this most helpful inhabitant of the collective unconscious then becomes paramount.

Towards that end, their first council is not to identify with the archetype: just as any individual human king, is not the archetype of the King, so no individual man is the King archetype that lies within the collective unconscious. To identify with the King archetype is to become one pole of its shadow, to become the tyrant. However, not to recognize the King within us, to eschew him, is to become the other pole of the shadow: to become the weakling. Therefore, a man must neither think to possess or control the King, but neither must he flee from or deny the pertinence of the King's energy. Rather, he must make himself conscious of the King and assimilate his energy according to his own circumstances.

Interestingly, Moore and Gillette use the same metaphor for the relationship of the individual man to the King archetype as did Jung for the relationship of the conscious self or ego to the self: the individual man orbits the King archetype as a planet orbits the sun. If he tries to identify with the sun, he will be destroyed. However, if he does not acknowledge the sun, he will freeze to death. Thus, the King serves as a kind of goal of the masculine life, giving a more definite form to the character of the masculine self than did Jung.

The Warrior, the Magician, and the Lover can be seen as being unified in the King. While Moore and Gillette give each archetype a dedicated treatment, review of each separately is not necessary here, for the general point is clear: There exists in the collective unconscious four archetypes whose positive energies constitute the elements of masculine identity. These four elements are unified in the primary archetype of the King. To move from boyhood to manhood, the human male must come to conscious awareness of these structures of his unconscious mind and realize them within his own life in such a way that avoids the two-pronged shadow of the archetype, which can be roughly characterized as excess or deficiency regarding rapport with it. Excess consists in delusional identification with the

¹⁹ Moore and Gillette, *King, Warrior, Magician, Lover*, 62.

archetype. Deficiency regards fleeing from its positive energy and denial of its applicability in a given man's life. Though every man will not realize these archetypes in the same way, the true self of every man consists in a harmony of these elements.

2. *Ideas of the Archetypes*

This draws attention to the nature of these archetypes as described by Moore and Gillette. In a manner that departs from Jung, they appear to give the archetypes an aspect of an end or paradigm: while an individual man must not identify with one of these archetypes in the sense that he thinks himself to be the great King who underlies all kings who have come before or will come in the future, he nevertheless must find and realize the King within himself. He must, in his own way become the King, the Warrior, the Magician, and the Lover. For Jung, the archetypes are *a priori* categories of conscious, human experience. It is their existence that leads human beings to see a sun god where, in fact, there is only the only the rising and setting of the sun. They are not, however, ideals or paradigms which set before man goals that will constitute a perfected self.²⁰

This apparent shift in the notion of an archetype from an *a priori* category of psychological experience to paradigm has drawn some criticism. For instance, as part of a relatively scathing criticism of what he refers to as Jungian conservatism or the mythopoetic movement, David Tacey writes: "The primary, undifferentiated, 'ancestral' archetypes are to be resisted and even defeated - certainly not surrendered to in the manner advocated by popular Jungianism."²¹ Tacey places emphasis upon the fact that Jung makes clear that an individual must be attentive not to come under the influence of an archetype. In fact, this is quite the purpose in making the archetypes conscious: consciousness of an archetype is essential in avoiding being controlled by an archetype. To this Tacey adds that appeal to the mythic past is the work of a "cheap psychology" which, "caters to their regressive longing for an infantile and unconscious patriarchal paradise, replete with infantile idealizations of the father that any Freudian would immediately recognize."²² Thus, he sees the archetypal world as conceived by the likes of Bly and Moore and Gillette as a reactionary and regressive fantasy land that maintains and seeks to pacify unsettled men by feeding them "infantile" vestiges of a former and more comfortable patriarchy instead of waving the banner of revolution and forcing men to adapt to a new, post-patriarchal world. "Because of the illusory 'stability' and

²⁰ There is one notable exception to this: the self, to which Jung does give the aspect of being an end.

²¹ David J. Tacey, *Remaking Men: Jung, Spirituality, and Social Change* (New York: Routledge, 1997), 18.

²² Tacey, *Remaking Men*, 5.

purported 'timelessness' of the archetypes, Jung has proved attractive to the conservative opponents of change, and the revolutionary possibilities of Jungian theory have been denied."²³

Interestingly, some Catholic psychologists have found the masculine archetypes proposed by Moore and Gillette to have some validity. Paul Vitz notes that the theorizing of the King, the Warrior, the Magician, and the Lover, fit well with a servant-leader understanding of masculine identity. He, however, is quick to add the following criticism, which returns us to the question of the nature of the archetypes:

The problem with the Jungian understanding of male archetypes is that however much these theorists decry the serious, harmful distortions of these male archetypes, they offer no convincing method or model for avoiding the ways in men which have distorted these male tendencies to exploit or harm others - especially women.²⁴

The King is markedly distinct from either the tyrant or the weakling. And clearly, a man must avail himself of the positive energy of the King while avoiding and transcending the negative energies of the King's shadow. But what in Jungian psychology permits clear distinction of these various aspects? And how is it that one can arrive at a more or less fixed notion of the masculine self that is composed of the mature aspects of these archetypes and that reliably avoids the shadows? It seems that both Vitz's and Tacey's criticisms, while radically different, have a common element: The mythopoetic school seems to attribute a fixity to the archetypes that is difficult to achieve when building upon the foundation of Jungian psychology and epistemology.

The point here, however, is neither to defend nor refute any particular neo-Jungian school of thought, but rather to provide a brief sampling of contemporary developments in Jungian thought. No doubt, Moore and Gillette would offer some response to the arguments of Tacey and Vitz. Here, however is no the place for such an exchange.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Jungian commentators move Jung's either away from the idea that masculinity is tied to an individual's biological sex or they tend not only link masculinity with maleness, but also further define the elements of masculinity.

²³ Tacey, *Remaking Men*, 3.

²⁴ Paul Vitz, "Support from Psychology for the Fatherhood of God." *Homiletic and Pastoral Review*, (February, 1997): 10.

Those in the first camp can be described as advocates of the androgynous self. All individuals are finally amalgams of masculine and feminine principles. The human tendency to divide the species and rigorously identify with one or the other pole is due the psyche's projection of its own opposite-laden constitution as conscious and unconscious. As the unconscious is to be made conscious, so is the feminine to be realized in the masculine and vice versa. Where these commentators differ from Jung is in claiming that, in the end, the biological sex of an individual is more or less incidental and limited to the mostly illusory creations of cultural influences. Gender identity, in fact, is regressive in adults; it is something to be overcome in the realization of the resolution of what hitherto were thought to be opposites.

The second school of thought, what has been called the mythopoetic movement, takes Jung's idea of and methods for identifying archetypes and finds in ancient lore and recurring symbols evidence for four archetypes that constitute elements of man's identity. Some name these elements as the King, the Warrior, the Magician, and the Lover. Their claim is that a man can only find his self by realizing the positive energy of these archetypes. Thus, the nebulous and numinous true self indicated by Jung as the goal of human striving assumes greater definition than can be found in Jung.

Chapter 7

The Sociological Account: R. W. Connell and the Making of Masculinities

INTRODUCTION

No group of thinkers is uniform in its thought. Neither is the final group I consider in Part I, the sociologists, monolithic. It was, however, among the sociologists that I found the greatest uniformity in their antipathy towards any fixed notion of masculinity. Alasdair MacIntyre characterizes the Nietzschean criticism of 19th century rationalism's blindness:

Epistemologically what this lack of self-knowledge and the arguments which are assembled in its support sustain is a blindness to the multiplicity of perspectives from which the world can be viewed and the multiplicity of idioms by means of which it can be characterized, or rather, a blindness to the fact that there is a multiplicity of perspectives and idioms. To believe in such a world would be the illusion of supposing that "a world would still remain over after one subtracted the perspective!"¹

To enter the world of the post-modern sociologist is to enter a world of Heraclitian flux. It is to step into a land whose patriarchs sought to eschew the perceived blindness of those who came before them. Its terrain is inhabited and ruled by the descendants and heirs of Nietzsche, Sartre, and Foucault. In this realm, forms, in

¹ Alasdair MacIntyre, *Three Rival Versions of Moral Enquiry: Encyclopedia, Genealogy, and Tradition* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1990), 35-36.

and of themselves, cannot hold their shape. Only power and the will to power exist as abiding shapers of that which is.

To understand masculinity, then, is to understand the power that gives and maintains its shape. In the end, there are many such powers, many concurrent constitutive discourses that vie for ascendancy, and create and destroy a multiplicity of masculinities, often in conflict with each other and even within themselves. The goal of this chapter is to understand masculinity by understanding the forces that create and destroy it. The end result is that there is no object of study; nor is there the possibility of a fixed definition of that which makes a man to be a man. As regards an object of study, there is only flux.

This is not to say that masculinity does not exist as a social reality or category in virtue of which those possessing certain biological and/or racial, class, or ethnic requisites claim membership in a prevailing societal masculinity and thereby claim the right of power over those not so classified, namely, women, racial minorities, those of lesser social class, or the sexually diverse (*viz.*, homosexuals or transsexuals). Insofar as there is any consistent, coherent masculinity it is in virtue of the collective will to power of that group whose conception of masculinity includes the supposed "right" to profit primarily from those not within its demarcated boundaries. There is no "masculinity" as such; there is no real meaning of manhood. To the extent that it does exist as a temporary form, masculinity's hallmark is power and a desire to keep it. Stephen Whitehead summarizes this well enough; commenting on a supposed crisis in masculinity, he writes:

In fact, a crisis of masculinity (if there could be such a thing) that challenged dominant ways of being male, resulting in men ceasing to behave violently and abusively towards women, children, other men, animals, the earth itself, would be very welcome.²

To the extent that masculinity does exist, it is not a pretty thing.

In outlining and understanding the post-modern, sociological school of thought, I have chosen to follow primarily the work of R. W. Connell as presented in two books, *Masculinities*, and *The Men and the Boys*. It was my judgment that Connell provided the most complete account of the human male as male: his argumentation is the most transparent, thorough, and least polemical. He is also notable for the emphasis he places upon the human body, recognizing and attempting to correct what he diagnoses as difficulties with his intellectual predecessors and anticipating many typical objections to the sociological position. As such, he provided, in my estimation, the best case for his position.

² Stephen M. Whitehead, *Men and Masculinities* (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publisher, 2002), 4.

It is interesting to note that Connell also explicitly places his work within the ethical context of what he refers to as “social justice.”

Critical social science requires an ethical baseline empirically grounded in the situations under study. The baseline for the analysis in this book is social justice: the objective possibility of justice in gender relations, a possibility sometimes realized and sometimes not. To adopt such a baseline is not to propose an arbitrary value preference that is separate from the act of knowing. Rather, it is to acknowledge the inherently political character of our knowledge of masculinity.³

Because masculinities happen inevitably in the realm of the political, and, as will be seen, are necessarily relational, they enter the realm of social justice. As Whitehead claimed above, masculinities generally involve abusive power differentials, the knowledge of which evokes the ethical stance of social justice. Thus, such a stance is not arbitrary but rather evident subsequent to the knowledge of the powers that sustain and create masculinities.

I begin my treatment of Connell in Section I by briefly reviewing his assessment of other accounts of masculinity. What harvests have others fields produced regarding knowledge of man as such? In the end, do they establish a stable object of knowledge or, rather, reveal curiously fragmented shadows that change and bend according to the various light sources that produce them? According to Connell, one finds only shadows when exploring masculinities, not only for scientific accounts' lack substance, but also for their lack of light. Connell's summary of others' efforts to characterize masculinity is at times poignant and so merits some attention here. It also treats some of the theories already covered in previous chapters of this work and so is of further interest. As such, this chapter begins with a summary of Connell's assessment of positive science. Next, the contributions and limitations of psychology are explored. Finally, a critique is given of the efforts of earlier sociological accounts. Having understood the contributions and limitations of science, psychology, and earlier sociological accounts, the scene is set for the presentation of Connell's own account. In Section II, I discuss a critical aspect of Connell's account of masculinity - his understanding of the body. Next, in Section III, I summarize Connell's definition of masculinity, after first, however, reviewing what he considers earlier failed attempts at definition.

³ R. W. Connell, *Masculinities* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995), 44. Also, for a similar establishment of an ethical baseline, see Whitehead, *Men and Masculinities*, 8.

I. ACCOUNTS OF MASCULINITY

1. *The Science of Masculinity*

If there is a stable object of knowledge in the attempt to define masculinity, one would think that modern science, with its stated emphasis on certitude and objectivity would be the place to begin. In fact, this work began with recourse to such “facts.” According to Connell, however, such recourse is mistaken; for the only “facts” to be had are little worth having. The rest is ideology. He provides a number of reasons for why this is the case.

First, science itself is a masculinized endeavor; it is a set of practices that regard gender in a manner that is not neutral, but rather favors the male:

The guiding metaphors of scientific research, the impersonality of its discourse, the structures of power and communication in science, the reproduction of its internal culture, all stem from the position of dominant men in a gendered world. The dominance of science in discussions thus reflects the position of masculinity (or specific masculinities) in the social relations of gender.⁴

The very fact that those seeking approval of their positions can appeal so convincingly to the findings of “science” is itself a sign of the cultural dominance of a particular masculinity, which masculinity provides the criteria that, not surprisingly, then vindicates itself “objectively.” Thus, a masculinized science “proves” that there is such a thing as a true masculinity. This proof then justifies the maintenance of its disproportionate possession of all means of power. Believing this proof, however, is akin to believing proofs offered by Phillip Morris for why smoking is not harmful. Science is clearly the offspring of the prevailing masculinity and, as such, cannot be trusted as its vindicator.

Connell’s argument, while impugning the collective motivation of a certain class of people, or at least impugning the instrument of that group – namely, science as an instrument of the prevailing western masculinity – taints its findings, but does not necessarily dismiss them completely.⁵ In other words, if the nervous systems of females react consistently and measurably differently to stress than do those of males, regardless of the motivations of “science,” one would think that the physical

⁴ Connell, *Masculinities*, 6.

⁵ It is interesting that Connell speaks in terms of a hidden strategy: “Since religion’s capacity to justify gender ideology collapsed, biology has been called in to fill the gap. The need may be gauged from the enormous appetite of the conservative mass media for stories of scientific discoveries about supposed sex differences.” Connell, *Masculinities*, 46. Thus science is effectively part of an ideologically based plot.

fact remains and so, in spite of the ulterior motives of the institution that produces it, must still be addressed. Connell's response is to deny the findings:

The usual finding, on intellect, temperament and other personal traits, is that there are no measurable differences at all. Where differences appear, they are small compared to variation within either sex, and very small compared to differences in the social positioning of women and men. The natural-masculinity thesis requires strong biological determination of group differences in complex social behaviors (such as creating families and armies). There is no evidence at all of strong determination in this sense.⁶

According to Connell, there simply are no findings that justify that notion that there is a biologically based masculinity.

He adds that cross-cultural and historical evidence likewise contradict that notion that there is some natural masculine nature programmed into men's genes or hormonal systems. There are, for instance, cultures where there is no rape, where homosexual practice is ordinary, where mothers don't predominate in childcare, and where men are not aggressive. Thus, so-called scientific findings that indicate significant biological differences between men and women that might amount to what could be called a "masculine nature," insofar as they exist at all, are simply too small compared to the social forces which also determine the traits they claim to distinguish. Further, findings that could amount to a "nature" are contradicted by cross-cultural and historical studies. Thus he adds a quotation from Theodore Kemper: "When racist and sexist ideologies sanction certain hierarchical social arrangements on the basis of biology, the biology is usually false."⁷

Connell points out the work of David Gilmore who sought the broadest possible cross-cultural analysis of what constituted manhood so as to arrive at those characteristics which were universally present. Connell is unimpressed with the findings, which he summarizes roughly as follows: Manhood is an answer to the need for hard work: fighting wars and scaling heights. It also functions to prevent male children from psychological identification with the mother. "That a world-wide search of the ethnographic evidence should produce such stunning banality is cause for a certain wonder."⁸ Cross-cultural studies yield banal results.

⁶ Connell, *Masculinities*, 47.

⁷ Theodore D. Kemper, *Social Structures and Testosterone: Explorations of the Socio-bio-social Chain* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1990), 221. Quoted in Connell, *Masculinities*, 47-48.

⁸ Connell, *Masculinities*, 33. See also: David D. Gilmore, *Manhood in the Making: Cultural Concepts of Masculinity* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1990). It should also be noted that Gilmore himself does not appear to concur with Connell's assessment: "But most social

The evolutionists' argument that masculinity is somehow genetically inherited falls with dissolution of evidence of viable biological differences between men and women. What is more, gender practices happen precisely where biological determinism, of which evolutionary theories are representative, is transcended. Masculinities occur in a place that is beyond the reach of biological determinism.⁹

Perhaps appeals to what is universally-accepted, uncontroversial biology provide at least the beginning for a biologically based understanding of manhood. Connell rejects this as a science little worth having. "We could pursue a science of men, defining "masculinity" as the character of anyone who possessed a penis, Y chromosome and a certain supply of testosterone."¹⁰ The problem with this, he says, is that anything done by anyone possessing those characteristics would be a subject of the science. Thus, for instance, psychology's findings of femininity within men would be impossible; for anything a man does or has would be masculine. Thus he concludes that the "science" would be hopelessly vague. Further, it would be built upon a misunderstanding of the body, which will be discussed later.

In summary, the great hope of finding answers from positive science yields paltry results. More than contributing anything positive, positive science tends rather to work in the service of ideologues who use "scientific" findings to maintain their places of privilege in hierarchical structures. Whether or not many of the persons performing the research and reporting the results are women who claim to be feminist, is not important. In those cases, clearly these women have not seen that they have become parts of a hopelessly masculinized machine. What is clear is that those who have power will use science to keep it. Thus they tend to fit men and women into preformed categories, which ultimately can only be justified by a kind of biological essentialism;¹¹ an essentialism which finally favor the prevailing "essence," namely the masculine essence over the feminine essence.

2. *The Psychologists*

While certainly leaving room for attribution of error, many psychologists receive a relatively favorable reading by Connell. This, for two primary reasons: theorists such as Freud and Adler were pioneers and revolutionaries who opened many doors for the understanding of gender and masculinity; more doors, he will

scientists would agree that there do exist *striking* regularities in standard male and female roles across cultural boundaries regardless of other social arrangements." *Manhood in the Making*, 10. (Emphasis added.)

⁹ See Connell, *Masculinities*, 46, 71-72.

¹⁰ Connell, *Masculinities*, 43.

¹¹ See R. W. Connell, *The Men and the Boys* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000), 18.

note, than they were willing to enter themselves. Secondly, they provide useful insight into gender practices on the level of *individuals*. Having missed, for the most part, the greater social picture and the importance of the realms of culture, politics, and production, they nevertheless provide insight into the structure and fragility of masculinity on the level of the personality. Connell discusses some of the psychologists treated in chapters two through five of this work and adds commentaries on others not yet treated here. A brief summary is now offered of Connell's assessment of the psychologists' attempt to define masculinity.

Freud: To Freud, Connell attributes the first attempt to provide a scientific account of masculinity. It was Freud who disrupted the fixed understanding of masculinity and offered some insight into the complexities that underlie what is typically called masculinity. He shows that what hitherto had been thought to be a simple, natural process is actually complex and contradictory: "Freud understood that adult sexuality and gender were not fixed by nature but were constructed through a long and conflict-ridden process."¹² In fact, underlying masculinity (or femininity) is a foundational bi-sexuality and the inverted Oedipus complex. Connell's picture appears more Lacanian in that he sees the result of the process of resolving one's sexuality as fragile and unstable. Connell notes Freud's brilliance, in particular in the "Wolf Man" case where "layer after layer of emotion" and "the shifting relationships between them" are exposed by Freud's analysis. He thus concludes that: "No approach is adequate that has not absorbed this lesson about the tensions within masculine character and its vicissitudes through the course of a life."¹³ He adds: "The point most insistently made about masculinity was that it never existed in a pure state. Layers of emotion coexist and contradict each other. Each personality is a shade-filled, complex structure, not a transparent unit."¹⁴

Connell laments how later, less astute disciples of Freud tend to smooth-over the conflict and contradiction inherent in the establishment of masculinity, choosing rather to see the resolution of the oedipal conflict in terms of identification with the father, i.e., assumption of masculinity, as a normal, natural developmental process instead of the traumatic, precarious, unstable process that, according to Connell, it is.

Connell also praises Freud for planting the seed for a meaningful understanding of cultural patriarchy. Freud's theory on the formation of the super ego through internalization of prohibitions from the parents (primarily the father) provides a foundational concept for understanding patriarchy: "Here was a germ of a theory of the patriarchal organization of culture, transmitted between generations

¹² Connell, *Masculinities*, 9.

¹³ Connell, *Masculinities*, 10.

¹⁴ Connell, *Masculinities*, 10.

through the construction of masculinity. To develop this theory would be to tilt further towards social analysis than Freud and his orthodox followers were ever willing to do.”¹⁵

Freud, in his own way, began a deconstruction of the accepted masculinity of his day. He showed that it was not such a strong and “normal” development as was assumed. Freud, however, lacked sufficient awareness of the power and prevalence of social forces in the determination of personalities. Perhaps it was this ignorance that permitted him to maintain essentially sexist aspects of his theory, such as penis envy or the inferiority of a woman’s super ego. Freud himself was a product of the social forces of his time. His ignorance of their power blinded him to their workings in his own theory.¹⁶

Horney, Adler, and Reich: While Freud himself appears not to have recognized the social power of patriarchy and its effects upon his thought, some of his early disciples did recognize this error and sought to correct it. Connell proceeds to review three such theorists who, in his estimation, made significant adjustments and corrections to Freud’s thought.

Karen Horney re-centers the motive forces of the Oedipus complex by claiming that the primary fear that drives the complex is not fear of castration, but rather fear of the mother. It is fear of the mother that drives the boy from the mother to a narcissistic love of himself and concern for his genitals. Fear of women results in the construction of masculinity based upon the neurotic need to assert dominance over women as a reaction to this fundamental fear. Connell sees two points as a kind of apex of “the critique of masculinity in classical psychoanalysis.” These points are: “The extent to which adult masculinity is built on over-reactions to femininity, and the connection of the making of masculinity with the subordination of women.”¹⁷ Horney sees masculinity as resting upon the foundation of a neurotic fear of women and a compensatory need to dominate them.

Alfred Adler strikes a similar chord: Part of the fundamental split into masculine and feminine is the idea that one of these two is the weaker and, as such, is socially devalued. Femininity is forced into this position. Thus, to be weak is to be feminine. But, everyone, to a certain extent, is weak. Especially in men, fear and anxiety of this weakness (and fear of subsequent identification with the feminine/loss of masculinity that such weakness implies) lead to an exaggerated emphasis on the manly and masculine. “It means over-compensation in the direction

¹⁵ Connell, *Masculinities*, 10.

¹⁶ For further discussion and criticism of Freud from a feminist perspective see also Whitehead, *Men and Masculinities*, 23-26 and Whitbeck, “Theories of Sex Difference”, 68-75.

¹⁷ Connell, *Masculinities*, 11.

of aggression and restless striving for triumphs.”¹⁸ In light of this “masculine protest”, men are likely to become a menace to society in light of their “manly” overcompensation for their weakness. And so there is a necessary connection between masculinity, power, and public violence.

Where Horney and Adler exhibited a greater and necessary appreciation for feminism, Wilhelm Reich’s attempt to wed Freudian and Marxist theory “led to a brilliant analysis of ideology. This highlighted the ‘authoritarian family’ as the site where the reproduction of class society and patriarchy is accomplished.”¹⁹ According to Connell, Reich’s appreciation of how “larger structures of authority” are “condensed” in the family gave his thought a level of social sophistication that was wanting in the theorizing of both Freud and Jung. However, while Reich moved the discourse forward in identifying the “authoritarian family” as the agent of the continuation of patriarchy, he lacked the due appreciation of feminism possessed by Horney and Adler. “So,” according to Connell, “he did not treat masculinity itself as a problem.”²⁰ Horney and Adler are able to identify something central to the prevailing masculinity itself that is pathological, that seeks to dominate women and is otherwise aggressive. While Reich appears to have missed this essential problem with masculinity proper, he nevertheless succeeded in seeing the family as a mechanism for the perpetuation of patriarchy and so advanced the discussion on masculinity.

Jung: Regarding the thought of Jung, Chapters Four and Five of this work provide ample treatment, including some criticisms that are consistent with those leveled by Connell. The following well summarizes Connell’s position on Jung: “While Freud was struggling to overcome the masculine/feminine polarity, Jung not only settled for it, but presented the familiar opposition as rooted in timeless truths about the human psyche.”²¹ Jung, ensconcing his theory in “timeless truths,” renders it historically and socially illiterate. Connell adds: “Jung’s treatment of the masculine/feminine polarity as a universal structure of the psyche also leads to a quagmire. No historical change in their constitution is conceivable; all that can happen is a change in the balance between them.”²² Thus, instead of continuing of work Freud began in deconstructing the masculine, Jung plants them, according to Connell, in a quasi-Platonic, unchanging realm.

Summarizing the Psychologists: Obviously, much more could be said about what modern psychology has offered to the discussion of the nature of the human

¹⁸ Connell, *Masculinities*, 16.

¹⁹ Connell, *Masculinities*, 17

²⁰ Connell, *Masculinities*, 17.

²¹ Connell, *Masculinities*, 13.

²² Connell, *Masculinities*, 13.

male as male. This, of course, was the work of the previous four chapters. Three points, however, appear to be most salient in Connell's consideration:

First: Generally, what psychology has added positively to the discourse is the notion that masculinity is a fragile, precarious construction. This insight, according to Connell is a fundamental contribution of Freud – and one that is certainly augmented by Lacan. Thus, the notion of a solid, fixed, unchanging masculinity crumbles when pinned on its back for a while on Freud's couch. Rather, the picture that emerges of individual masculinities is one of shifting and contradictory notions, often held in place by neurotic fears and grasping attempts to maintain power and the illusion of strength.

The second point follows from the first: insofar as psychology gives insight into the formation and dissolution of individual masculinities within the individual personality, it is valuable in understanding masculinity *at that level*, namely, at the level of the individual personality. The level of the individual personality, however, as will be discussed shortly, is only one arena in which gender relations are played-out. As such, while psychology is helpful in the arena of the individual, it can be misleading in implying that it is defining "masculinity" when, in fact, psychology is only describing the dynamics of "masculinity" in the individual.

Psychology's limited range of competence, in turn, leads to the third point, which regards its major short-coming; it lacks an adequately sophisticated understanding of the workings and influence of social forces, not only in the formation of masculinities in individuals, but also in recognizing social institutions as bearers of masculinities – as realities to which the predication "masculinity" fundamentally applies. Thus, while a debt is certainly owed to thinkers such as Freud and Adler, their shortcomings cannot be overlooked.

3. Early Sociological Thought

Sex-Role Theory: Social processes form man; they make him who he is. Sex role theory holds that the meaning of the male as male is essentially a set of social expectations which are enacted typically by members of the biological sex who correspond to the role. "Masculinity and femininity are quite easily interpreted as internalized sex roles, the production of social learning or 'socialization.'"²³ In this understanding, masculinity or femininity is produced in terms of social expectations which are transmitted to a developing human being via various mechanisms of socialization such as one's family, schools, and the images provided by the media. The meaning of manhood, then, can change as the expectations provided by the mechanisms of socialization change. Manhood is a role given by society and played

²³ Connell, *Masculinities*, 22.

out by those to whom it is assigned. It is thus something of a social drama played upon the stage of the individual.

For Connell, there are positive aspects of this rendering: Roles are not fixed in nature or essences. As such, they can change as the social forces determining them change. The gravest errors of biologism and essentialism are thus avoided. Secondly, the conflict and complexity demanded by Freudian theory can be accommodated in terms of conflicting social pressures.²⁴ Masculinity within an individual could be a contradictory composite of opposing social determinants: perhaps one's family presents one role as the ideal while the media present another. The individual finds himself subject to social forces pulling him in opposite directions. This would account for the fragility and contradictory complexity of the Freudian ego.

There are, however, significantly negative characteristics of sex role theory. Connell notes that early sex role theorists assumed that sex roles were well defined; and the assumption of such roles was seen to benefit both individuals and society in general. Thus successful socialization in a clear masculine role served both the mental health of the individual and the overall stability of society. Conformity to social roles was, generally speaking, a good thing.

If a sex role was oppressive, it was so as an external influence asserting undue influence over an individual. As such, both men and women could equally be seen as victims of roles they had to play. A man could be equally oppressed by a social notion of masculinity as could a woman be oppressed by a social notion of femininity. There is no hierarchy of victimhood. The oppression of men and women stand on equal footing. Given the obvious advantages held by men in society, such an understanding can not be sufficient. There was thus among role theorists an imperfect commitment to feminism and an insufficient view of the connection between the subordination of women and oppression of other classes, particularly black and gay men. According to Connell, these deficiencies are not accidental:

For the logical presupposition of sex role analysis is that the two roles are reciprocal. Roles are defined by expectations and norms, sex roles by expectations attaching to biological status. There is nothing here that positively requires an analysis of power. On the contrary there is a basic tendency in sex role theory to understand men's and women's positions as complementary....²⁵

This quotation reveals the heart of the problem. Role theory drifts towards essentialism by ultimately seeing social roles as "attaching to biological status." This allows them to think of certain roles as complementary, which complementarity

²⁴ See Connell, *Masculinities*, 23.

²⁵ Connell, *Masculinities*, 25.

implies distinction, and which distinction, according to Connell, implies subordination. Thus the understanding of complementary roles precludes a power analysis and can seduce its adherents into acceptance of a hegemonic masculinity as a healthy social norm to which males must submit as enactors of their role and females must submit by way of playing the complementary role. Connell adds:

In sex role theory, action (the role enactment) is linked to a structure defined by biological difference, the dichotomy of male and female – not to a structure defined by social relations. This leads to categoricism, the reduction of gender to two homogenous categories, betrayed by the persistent blurring of sex differences with sex roles.²⁶

Categoricism creeps towards essentialism.

Thus, while role theory allows for the mutability of masculinity it nevertheless tends towards hegemony. Change of masculinities comes from the institutions of socialization. There is, however, no theoretical place for a disruptive dialectic within masculinity itself or, more broadly, within gender relations. This being so, related to its lack of intrinsic ordering towards power analysis, role theory is “fundamentally reactive.” “It does not generate a strategic politics of masculinity”²⁷ writes Connell. Role theory does not provide a place nor demand change from within gender relations but rather lends itself, even if not intentionally, towards those who would silence such disruptive voices.

4. Other Voices

Connell draws attention to others who have added their voices to the conversation. Here, I do little more than mention these positions and highlight what Connell appears to hold as their most salient points, noting how they were praised and how they were blamed.

Historians can show how social forces have manipulated the construction of masculinities for specific political ends. He recounts the story of the making and unmaking of masculinities in New Zealand at the end of the 19th century and into the beginning the 20th century. An overabundance of males due to colonial settlement led to an unruly subculture of womanless men. The colonial state attempted to produce a masculinity based upon agriculture and family life that would tame these males who were threatening the social order. Colonial wars in the early 20th century then demanded, however, a more violent masculinity. Thus, the passive agricultural life, which the state had promoted only a few years earlier, was

²⁶ Connell, *Masculinities*, 26.

²⁷ Connell, *Masculinities*, 27.

demonized and a more aggressive masculinity constructed through promotion of organized sport, specifically rugby. Connell writes: "The exemplary status of sport as a test of masculinity, which we now take for granted, is in no sense natural. It was produced historically, and in this case we can see it produced deliberately as a political strategy."²⁸ Thus history can show that production of masculinity is an historical matter that involves political interests and political struggle.

Margaret Meade is a name that often arises in discussions of gender. Connell praises her for "a powerful demonstration of cultural diversity of meanings for masculinity and femininity." She is in the next sentence, however, criticized for she "never quite overcame a conviction that a natural heterosexuality underpinned it all."²⁹ Praise is awarded for helping dispel the myth that masculinity and femininity are universal concepts. Blame is assigned for clinging to the notion that, somehow, underlying all cultural variants of what it means to be a man or a woman is a natural heterosexuality.

This shortcoming is highlighted by the fact that other anthropologists have found a tribe, the Sambia, where a homosexual practice is the normal rite of entry into manhood. A manhood which, it must be noted, is violent and aggressive. Thus, Connell refers to this ethnographic study as "scandalous" for those who cling to the status quo. For the very thing that is so often seen as the antithesis to manliness, homosexuality, is a rite of passage into a typically primitive version of masculinity: one that is violent and aggressive.³⁰ Thus, Meade must have been mistaken in her assumption.

Homosexual theory and feminist theory have further weakened notions of a universal, natural masculinity. Connell summarizes their findings in this way:

Gay theory and feminists theory share a perception of mainstream masculinity as being (in the advanced capitalist countries at least) fundamentally linked to power, organized for domination, and resistant to change because of power relations. In some formulations, masculinity is virtually equated with exercise of power in its most naked forms.³¹

In spite of the protestations of "anti-feminists" and "pop psychology", Connell holds the above insight to be of "fundamental importance."³² Among other things, it demonstrates how change in masculinities can come from within gender relations,

²⁸ Connell, *Masculinities*, 30.

²⁹ Connell, *Masculinities*, 31.

³⁰ See Connell, *Masculinities*, 32. It is worth noting that Connell appears to conflate a ritualized homosexual practice with homosexuality.

³¹ Connell, *Masculinities*, 42.

³² Connell, *Masculinities*, 42.

not simply from the mechanisms of socialization. Thus it adds an essential element that was missing from role theory.

From later sociological studies of *social construction* and *gender dynamics*, Connell draws an important conclusion: "Gender is not fixed in advance of social interaction, but is constructed in interaction."³³ One must consider the importance of social structures and economics, but also differences within masculinities. Thus "the relationships constructing masculinities are dialectical; they do not correspond to the one way causation of a socialization model."³⁴ Forces within a masculinity as well as other masculinities and other "places" within gender relations (femininity, for example) are all terms in the dialectic. So, he says: "We must also recognize the *relations* between the different kinds of masculinities: relations of alliance, dominance and subordination."³⁵ Masculinities are formed dialectically as a result of these varying forces; they cannot be seen as "fixed categories." In summary, curiously using the language of demonstration, Connell writes: "This theoretical work is still in progress. It has, nevertheless, convincingly shown that masculinity must be understood as an aspect of large-scale social structures and processes."³⁶

Finally proper credit must be given to the anti-essentialist work of *Jean-Paul Sartre* whose "existential psychoanalysis" can be seen to have liberated man from the determinations of nature and moves society to a place where it is able to study various "projects of masculinity."³⁷ Masculinities cannot be seen as givens but rather as projects, as the results of individual and/or corporate will and action. Further, *Michel Foucault* must also be given his due for his crucial work on the analysis of power and power knowledge. Understanding power is essential for understanding masculinity.³⁸

II. THE BODY

1. *The Cartesian split*

Before presenting Connell's definitions of masculinity, the human body remains as factor that must be explained. For Connell, errors and omissions in the proper understanding of the body are responsible for many of the errors found in attempts to define masculinity. He finds two principal errors regarding the body. Each error has attending metaphors that drive and give power to them. Both mis-

³³ Connell, *Masculinities*, 35.

³⁴ Connell, *Masculinities*, 37.

³⁵ Connell, *Masculinities*, 37.

³⁶ Connell, *Masculinities*, 39.

³⁷ See Connell, *Masculinities*, 18, 39.

³⁸ See Connell, *Masculinities*, 5, 49.

renderings of the body spring from a Cartesian understanding of the division of the human person into consciousness and the material body it inhabits. One error, according to Connell, takes the part of the body, the other takes the part of disembodied consciousness. As a corollary, a third error tries to resolve the first two by taking a little of each and combining the two positions.

Each of these errors is important: The first error, which places its emphasis on the body, has become the new source of contemporary ideologues' defense of the idea that there exists a "natural" or "deep" masculinity that plays an exigent and normative role in the lives of men. It is through strategic appeal to a mechanical notion of the body that essentialist ideologues ground their arguments. Those, however, who on the other extreme give no place to the body in their explanations, weaken otherwise useful theses by more or less forgetting and devaluing a significant part of the human being. Those in the third camp inadvertently find themselves sharing in the errors of one or the other of the first two. Each error, therefore, is important and merits attention.

The body: The first position looks to biology as the determinant of masculinity. Here the body is seen as a machine whose mechanical parts push and prevent the male in manners distinct from the female, thus rendering a biologically determined masculinity. Masculinity is an inescapable and biologically determined reality. Connell notes the metaphors used; there are biological "mechanism" that "hardwire" men to behave in such and such a way. Such "mechanisms" are the underlying assumptions of the positive scientists. The power of biological determinism, according to Connell, lies in the power of metaphor of machinery and mechanical determination. This metaphor of mechanical determination resonates and elicits belief. In it lies the power of the position that there exists a "deep masculine" lurking in genes, synapses, and hormones, determining and defining an objective meaning of manhood.

Consciousness: Perhaps it is the excesses of this position that lead to the second, which centers on the "consciousness" side of the Cartesian split. In this rendering, the body is more or less the arena in which social forces make symbolic determinations:

Rather than social arrangements being the effects of the body-machine, the body is a field on which social determination runs riot. This approach too has its leading metaphors, which tend to be metaphors of art rather than engineering: the body is a canvas to be painted, a surface to be imprinted, a landscape to be marked out.³⁹

³⁹ Connell, *Masculinities*, p. 50.

Here, the body is primarily passive matter formed by prevailing social discourses, which often seek to determine it for the benefit of a dominant group or institution. Once again, Foucault's notion of "power-knowledge" is invoked as bodies must submit to varying notions of what it means to be attractive or manly. Corporations, for their own profit, seek to control this symbolic discourse. New technologies, such as various plastic surgeries, can further submit the body to a prevailing symbolic order. Thus, in this case, instead of being the determinant of nature or meaning, the body is the unwitting receiver of such determinations.

Problems, however, also arise here: "This approach also - though it has been wonderfully productive - runs into difficulties. With so much emphasis on the signifier, the signified tends to vanish. The problem is particularly striking for that unavoidably bodily activity, sex."⁴⁰ As all of the symbolic, formative power is placed outside the body, while the many and varied dialecticians argue in the other room about its significance, the body itself begins to disappear and be forgotten; it ceases to have *any* reality in itself. Thus, specifically bodily activities - most notably for Connell, sex - lose a sense of substantiality. He quotes Carole Vance:

To the extent that social construction theory grants that sexual acts, identities and even desires are mediated by cultural and historical factors, the object of study - sexuality - becomes evanescent and threatens to disappear.⁴¹

As a mere stage for the social drama, the body is forgotten and, in a sense, trampled under the feet of the real enactors of the story. This however is not an acceptable account: "The surface on which cultural meanings are inscribed is not featureless, and it does not stay still."⁴² Instead, the importance of the body must, somehow, be asserted: "Bodies in their own right do matter. They age, get sick, enjoy, engender, give birth. There is an irreducible bodily dimension in experience and practice; the sweat cannot be excluded."⁴³ The body and its experiences and limitations are integral to human practice. They cannot be wholly subsumed in abstract, symbolic processes where they passively play the role of the signified in a social dialectic.

⁴⁰ Connell, *Masculinities*, 50-51.

⁴¹ Carole S. Vance, "Social Construction Theory: Problems in the History of Sexuality," in *Homosexuality, Which Homosexuality?* ed, Denis Altman et al. (Amsterdam and London: Uitgeverij An Dekker/Schorer & GMP, Amsterdam and London, 1989), 21. Quoted in Connell, *Masculinities*, 51.

⁴² Connell, *Masculinities*, 51.

⁴³ Connell, *Masculinities*, 51.

2. *Attempted resolution*

The reasonable solution, then, would seem to be to take some of each proposition: The semiotic approach gives a powerful rendering of the impact of social institutions and power structures. The mechanical position, however, gives some shape and substance to the body. Why not recognize that there is some of each of these explanations in the final understanding of masculinity? Connell quotes Alice Rossi, whom he refers to as a “feminist pioneer” in sociology, as offering such a compromise:

Gender differentiation is not simply a function of socialization, capitalist production, or patriarchy. It is grounded in a sex dimorphism that serves the fundamental purpose of reproducing the species.⁴⁴

Determining social forces are recognized: socialization, capitalism, and patriarchy are all seen as shaping gender differentiation. However, that is not the full picture: she “grounds” gender differentiation in sex dimorphism that has the biological function of maintaining the species. It would seem that an acceptable compromise has been reached: A certain primacy appears to be given to cultural/symbolic forces; in the above text, they are treated as given and clear. However, the body also receives a nod that saves it from disappearing amidst the clamor of the social discourse: sexual differences in the body are also “given” in that they serve the biological “purpose” of reproduction. Thus recognition is afforded to members of both camps, presumably utilizing what is valid in each. It can further be added that the feminist credentials of someone like Rossi are unassailable. One is not likely, then, to suspect this position as being yet another strategic ploy of sexist ideologues wishing to maintain their positions of power.

Connell, however, is not satisfied with this resolution. His initial rejoinder to Rossi is insightful in its logical consistency: He comments: “Masculinity, it would follow, is the social elaboration of the biological function of fatherhood.”⁴⁵ The inevitability of this conclusion is a sign of the insufficiency of the compromise that produced it. In spite of the best intentions of authors such as Rossi to maintain factors such as patriarchy and capitalism as the prime movers of masculinity, too much ground is inadvertently ceded to biology; the fixity of its position versus the transient nature of cultural signifiers inevitably gives primacy to the biological and thus leads towards creeping essentialism. Connell poignantly writes:

⁴⁴Alice S. Rossi, “Gender and Parenthood,” in *Gender and the Life Course*, ed. Alice S. Rossi, (New York: Aldine, 1985), 161. Quoted in Connell, *Masculinities*, 51.

⁴⁵ Connell, *Masculinities*, 52. Clearly, I will return to this quotation when discussing fatherhood in particular.

If biological determinism is wrong, and social determinism is wrong, then it is unlikely that a combination of the two will be right.... Biology is always seen as more real, the more basic of the pair; even the sociologist Rossi speaks of the social processes being “grounded” in sex dimorphism, the reproductive purpose being “fundamental”.⁴⁶

If one tries simply to combine biological determinism with the determinants of the social discourse, the biological ends up taking precedence; the biological assumes the metaphorical position of the “ground” or the “foundation”, which, even if it is simply what is walked upon, is still holding everything else up.

There is also an implicit confusion of the orders of operation of these two determining influences: by combining the two, one assumes that they each partially contribute in making the same thing, that their causalities are having effects in the same arena. Biology builds the foundation and social processes “elaborate” upon it. This, however, limits far too much the efficacy of social process: In addition to elaborating upon biological difference (the examples that Connell gives of this are “the padded bra”, “the penis-sheath”, and “the cod piece”) they are capable of much more. “Social process may also distort, contradict, complicate, deny, minimize or modify bodily difference.... Social process has recast our very perception of sexed bodies....”⁴⁷ The number of genders, for instance, that social process can indicate can range from one to “a whole spectrum of fragments, variations and trajectories.”⁴⁸ Thus, a compromise which gives a foundational place to biology is contradicted by the efficacy of social process, which processes appear to function at a level of causality that clearly is able to transcend that provided by the body.

One is left, then, with something of a conundrum: biological determinism places too much determinative power on the part of the body, reducing social process to biologically determined consequences of hard-wired mechanisms. Semiotic renderings, however, reduce the body to passive, ethereal insignificance. Attempts at wedding the two result in an illegitimate offspring that inevitably favors the biological. How, then, can the body be saved from insignificance without perpetrating some mode of essentialism?

3. *The agency of the body: resolving the split*

Not surprisingly, Connell’s understanding of the body is constructed precisely to avoid and resolve the difficulties found with the three attempts outlined above. Clearly, Connell generally prefers the semiotic account; avoiding essentialism

⁴⁶ Connell, *Masculinities*, 52.

⁴⁷ Connell, *Masculinities*, 52.

⁴⁸ Connell, *Masculinities*, 52.

is essential. However, the body must not be lost as the merely passive canvas on which social process paints. In the multifarious dialectic that produces “realities” such as masculinity, the body must also be given a voice, must be an *active* participant in the dialogue. This does not and cannot mean that the body and its biology provide a foundation or a normative base from which all discourse begins; it has a voice, but that voice is not the voice of God. It is one voice among others that actively asserts themselves in the determining of masculinities. The body, then, yields completely neither to biological determinism nor to social determinism. Rather, the body asserts itself within social processes. It does this primarily in two ways: First, as limiting and resisting symbolic definition; secondly as actively asserting itself propositionally, i.e., as not simply resisting or limiting definition, but also proposing definition. A more detailed look at the body’s assertiveness is in order, beginning with the body’s recalcitrance.

In defining masculinity, Connell describes the body as inescapable. This is in no small part due to the inevitable fact that the body somehow enters in to whatever definition of masculinity is offered. Thus part of the definition of a masculinity may include a certain physical prowess, be it athletic or sexual – to be a man, may mean, in part, to have a certain physical toughness or ability. The body is therefore drawn in to the practices that constitute “manhood.” But, the body does not simply assume a social paradigm as the sculptor’s block of marble permits as much musculature as the artist’s skill can produce. Bodies talk back; they get sick or injured, crack, strain, and break under the stress of trying to achieve what it means to be masculine. Thus, there are the numerous stories of professional athletes – who, in many ways, are seen as the paradigms of masculinity – breaking their bodies and proceeding maimed into middle age. So, a prevailing picture of what it means to be masculine can be given by various social structures, but the body will have its say:

The body, I would conclude, is inescapable in the construction of masculinity; but what is inescapable is not fixed. The bodily process, entering the social process, becomes part of history (both personal and collective) and a possible object of politics. Yet this does not return us to the idea of bodies as landscapes. They have various form of recalcitrance to social symbolism and control....⁴⁹

The body is not simply the play-thing of “social symbolism and control.”

This recalcitrance does not endow the body with a kind fixity; while the body asserts itself, refusing to yield completely to social control, it nevertheless remains a “possible object of politics.” Together with social processes, bodily processes become part of history. Bodies are not wholly defined by history, but

⁴⁹ Connell, *Masculinities*, p. 56.

neither do they have a definition that transcends history. Thus, men's bodies are both diverse and changing and, at times, resistant to change. This dynamic is better understood by looking to the body's other mode of asserting itself: active proposition.

Connell makes explicit his knowledge of the importance and influence of the Cartesian split both as regards the biological and sociological determinists. Regarding the latter, he writes: "Theories of discourse have not overcome the split: they have made bodies the objects of symbolic practice but not participants."⁵⁰ Connell's first step is to elevate the body above the status of mere object by demonstrating that the body can resist this symbolic practice and thus is not a mere object. This step is necessary, but not sufficient:

To break out of this universe [created by Descartes] it is not enough to assert the significance of bodily difference, important as this has been in recent feminist theory. We need to assert the activity, literally the *agency*, of bodies in social processes. The crisis stories [of bodies failing and resisting change]... showed the rebellion of bodies against certain kinds of pressure. This is a kind of effectiveness, but not full-blown agency. I want to argue for a stronger position, where bodies are seen as sharing in social agency, in generating and shaping the course of social conduct.⁵¹

Clearly, it is not enough that the body simply resist change. Sometimes the body also proposes change, is the agent in shaping social practice. Both resisting and proposing movement, the body is both object and agent of change, a participant in a mutually definitional dialectic.

Connell's chosen example is illustrative: He recounts an anecdote from American sports figure, Don Meredith. Meredith tells of how, amidst sexual experimentation with a female partner, a particular bodily excitation that he receives through her agency leads him to think that he might actually enjoy sexual activity with a male partner. Up to that point, he had rejected any and all homosexual advances. However, in the social context of a sexual relationship with a woman, his body, through its excitation, actively proposes a new social practice: sexual activity with a male partner. Thus, the body may not only be resistant to the demands of social practice, it may actively propose social practice. Connell summarizes the body's role as follows:

With bodies both objects and agents of practice, and the practice itself forming the structures within which bodies are appropriated and defined, we face a pattern

⁵⁰ Connell, *Masculinities*, 60.

⁵¹ Connell, *Masculinities*, 60.

beyond for the formulae of current social theory. This pattern might be termed body-reflexive practice.⁵²

The complexity and reciprocity of Connell's position is evident: bodies are both objects of practice and agents of practice, which practices, however, form the structures in which those bodies function and are defined. They are thus part of the changing flow of history, defined, in part, by variable cultural and historical structures. Thus, body lacks the fixity which biologists wish to give it. The structures, however, which "appropriate and define" body are themselves, in part, defined by the body. Thus body is not the shapeless canvas indicated by semiotics.

Understanding what Connell intends by "practice" helps to further understand his position. Practice forms the structures in which bodies are appropriated and defined. A few pages later, he adds these characterizations of practice:

Practice makes a world. In acting, we convert initial situations into new situations. Practice constitutes and reconstitutes structures. Human practice is, in the evocative if awkward term of the Czech philosopher, Karel Kosik, onto-formative. It makes the reality we live in.⁵³

In body-reflexive practice, bodies are both made by social reality and, at the same time, make that reality. Thus, the Cartesian division of body and the consciousness is resolved in the reciprocal relationship of body-reflexive practice. With this understanding of the body, a definition of masculinity and the practices that constitute it is now possible.

III. DEFINING MASCULINITIES

1. Failed Attempts

Before offering his definition of masculinity, Connell reviews why he believes that earlier attempts at such definition have failed. Briefly summarizing this review is helpful in understanding what he believes constitutes a valid definition.

Regarding the *essentialist*, Connell finds the primary weakness in the arbitrary nature of their definitions: there is nothing that obliges one to accept those characteristics claimed as constituting the essence of masculinity over and above competing accounts. A sign of this is the fact that essentialists tend not to agree upon what the essence of masculinity is; each rather offers his own version, claiming to have captured true masculinity.

⁵² Connell, *Masculinities*, 61.

⁵³ Connell, *Masculinities*, p. 65.

Regarding the *positivists*, he echoes points discussed earlier, but adds new insights and criticisms as well: First, he reiterates that science's neutrality is feigned. This seeming neutrality actually rests on assumptions about gender that favor the masculine. These assumptions, perhaps in a manner not realized even by the scientists themselves, guide them in determining what is significant or not when drawing up lists of differences between males and females. Further, they assume accurate knowledge of the categories "man" and "woman" so as to determine scientifically what it is that men do versus what women do. Such categorizing, however, assumes the categories they are trying to prove.⁵⁴ "Positivist procedure thus rests on the very typifications that are supposedly under investigation in gender research."⁵⁵ Positivists sneak their conclusions into the shaping of the question thus shaping the question so as to make the conclusion inevitable. For Connell, the discerning eye sees this circularity. And, finally, insofar as their supposed categories are valid, they misrender the predication "masculinity" as that which men empirically do. As such they make unintelligible other typical predications, such as referring to women as masculine or men as feminine. This indicates a fundamental misunderstanding of the terms masculine and feminine, tying them essentially to "what men do" or "what women do." While ways of speaking of how men and women relate to each other are needed, one cannot reduce masculinity to "maleness." A concept is needed to name patterns of gender practice, not just groups of people.⁵⁶ Rather, Connell offers: "The terms 'masculine' and 'feminine' point beyond categorical sex difference to the ways men differ among themselves, and women differ among themselves, in matters of gender."⁵⁷

Connell next criticizes what he calls the *normative* definition. This category appears to be linked to essentialist renderings and attempts to define masculinity by positing what a man ought to be. The normative definition also applies to role theory in that masculinity can be seen as the normative role that a man is expected to fulfill, thus *theoretically* freeing the norm from the bonds of essentialism. Connell indicates two principal difficulties with attempts to define masculinity in terms of normative criteria. First, most men do not meet the standards proposed by normative definitions. Connell ironically asks: "what is normative about a norm that hardly anybody meets?"⁵⁸ Secondly, normative definitions devalue and in some cases negate personal identity, which may, in fact, go contrary to the proposed norm. Thus it proceeds according to the false assumption that "role and identity correspond",

⁵⁴ The problem of the *Meno* returns yet again!

⁵⁵ Connell, *Masculinities*, p. 69.

⁵⁶ See, Connell, *The Men and the Boys*, 17.

⁵⁷ Connell, *Masculinities*, 69.

⁵⁸ Connell, *Masculinities*, 70.

implying that each individual man, regardless of his individual personality must fulfill the normative role. This, according to Connell, explains role theory's drift towards essentialism.⁵⁹

Connell gives greatest deference to the *semiotic* approach and a definition such as that offered by Lacan, in which masculinity signifies possession of the phallus; which, in turn means having the place of signifier in a discourse. Femininity is defined in terms of lacking the phallus, lacking the position of signifier. While Connell praises such a definition for avoiding the shortcoming of the preceding groups, he, nevertheless, in addition to the problems noted with the understanding of body, finds their understanding of discourse too limited; they fail to provide ways of speaking of "gendered places in production and consumption, places in institutions and natural environments, places in social and military struggles."⁶⁰ In spite of this shortcoming, they do provide the essential notion of symbols, signifiers, and those signified that can and must be applied to a general understanding of masculinity. Thus, Connell clearly recognizes himself as much in their debt.

2. Masculinity and Masculinities

After Connell lays all of the groundwork reviewed above, he offers his definition of masculinity. As this definition is complex, it is first quoted in its entirety. Next, each elements of the definition is explained in turn. This necessarily leads to a discussion of gender and an analysis of the definition of gender.

Connell defines masculinity as follows:

Rather than attempting to define masculinity as an object (a natural character type, a behavioral average, a norm), we need to focus on the processes and relationships through which men and women conduct gendered lives. "Masculinity", to the extent the term can be briefly defined at all, is simultaneously a place in gender relations, the practices through which men and women engage that place in gender, and the effects of these practices in bodily experience, personality and culture.⁶¹

Though certain aspects of this definition should be clear, part by part analysis will be helpful.

"A *place in gender relations...*" Sensitive as he clearly is to the use of metaphor, it is interesting that Connell chooses to begin his definition with a geographical metaphor: Masculinity is a "place." He, however, combines two of Aristotle's categories; for, it is a place in a relation. Masculinity is characterized as a term within a relation or multiple relations, where that term is indicated as a place. So,

⁵⁹ Connell, *Masculinities*, 70.

⁶⁰ Connell, *Masculinities*, 71.

⁶¹ Connell, *Masculinities*, 71.

masculinity is considered as a correlate in a relation, which correlate is best expressed with the metaphor of place.⁶²

Connell writes: “Masculinity and femininity are inherently relational concepts which have meaning in relation to each other, as a social demarcation and a cultural opposition.”⁶³ Masculinity, again to invoke a spatial metaphor, is a *social demarcation*. It is a place marked off within the realm of social relations – and, more specifically, gender relations. It adamantly is not a biological demarcation, though it does have reference to male and female bodies.⁶⁴ It is known only as a demarcated place in cultural opposition to femininity. He adds: “This holds regardless of the changing content of the demarcation in different societies and periods of history.”⁶⁵ Here, Connell marks a trans-temporal and trans-cultural truth about masculinity: Exactly what the demarcation of a particular masculinity is will change, but it will always and only have meaning in relation; specifically, it will have meaning as a configuration of practices within gender relations in “cultural opposition” to femininity. This being the case, to understand masculinity, an understanding of gender relations is needed; for it is, in fact, gender relations that form a coherent object of knowledge; masculinity, in the end, is a shifting place within these relations.

Connell offers the following definition of gender:

Gender is a way in which social practice is ordered. In gender processes, the everyday conduct of life is organized in relation to a reproductive arena, defined by the bodily structures and processes of human reproduction. This arena includes sexual arousal and intercourse, childbirth and infant care, bodily sex difference and similarity.⁶⁶

Gender is a specific structuring of social practices that applies when those practices regard the reproductive arena. Social practices, according to Connell, are generated as groups confront historical situations.⁶⁷ However, as corporate human practices, they are onto-formative – they serve, in part, to make the world we live in. The constellations of practices that constitute gender are body-reflexive practices in that they regard the reproductive arena, which is “defined by the bodily structures and

⁶² Place answers the question: “where are you?”. Which answer frequently has either a political or social significance: we say: “I am at home.” Or “I am in Rome.” The one indicating a place in a social network, the other a political reality.

⁶³ Connell, *Masculinities*, 44.

⁶⁴ Connell, *The Men and the Boys*, 29.

⁶⁵ Connell, *Masculinities*, 44.

⁶⁶ Connell, *Masculinities*, 71.

⁶⁷ Connell, *The Men and the Boys*, 28.

processes of human reproduction.” Gender structures social practice with reference to reproduction, a reference which is inescapably bodily. “Gender is a social practice that constantly refers to bodies and what bodies do; it is not a social practice reduced to the body.”⁶⁸

Reference to the body versus reduction to the body is a crucial distinction to which Connell returns again and again; that gender practices are ordered *in reference to bodies* does not imply that they can be reduced to bodies. Rather the reference to male and female bodies is an instance of body-reflexive practice where the body, regarding that which touches upon reproduction, is both the object and agent of practice. Body in its reproductive capacity indicates the arena of the discourse; it does not determine it:

Gender exists precisely to the extent that biology does not determine social practice. It marks one of those points of transition where historical process supersedes biological evolution as the form of change. Gender is a scandal, an outrage, from the point of view of essentialism.⁶⁹

Gender is an ordering of social practice that is determined neither by essences, biology, nor evolutionary forces. As an element and ordering of human practice, it not only inherits a world, it transforms and remakes the world.

Neither does the relation of gender to the realm of reproduction imply preference towards procreative gender relations. While the arena of discourse is demarcated by reference to reproduction and male and female bodies, no primacy of the male-female reproductive relationship follows from this reference. Connell well illustrates this point:

Biological reproduction does not cause or even provide a template for gender as practice. For instance, lesbian and gay sexualities are gendered practices as much as heterosexuality is – they are sexualities organized with reference to female and male bodies respectively as partners.⁷⁰

Clearly, for Connell, a male to male or female to female sexual relationship equally regards the reproductive arena as orderings of social practice. He thus corrects Rossi's error of giving a foundational place to the biological process of reproduction. Reproduction and its implicit reference to bodies as male and female simply demarcate a realm in which practices are ordered. Those relationships, however,

⁶⁸ Connell, *The Men and the Boys*, 27.

⁶⁹ Connell, *Masculinities*, 71-72.

⁷⁰ Connell, *The Men and the Boys*, 27

which lead to reproduction can claim no primacy, except, perhaps, as marking a kind of social geographical boundary or reference point.

Gender, while it is a structuring of social practice, also has structures which are internal to it and that characterize relations based upon gender. Connell offers a three-fold structure of gender; it functions according to relations of power, production, and cathexis.⁷¹ Regarding power, gender relations generally involve the subordination of women and dominance by men. Regarding production, gender is the base of a division of labor in which – at least in capitalist countries – one term of the relation, namely men, reap the greater benefit of the division. “A capitalist economy working through a gender division of labour is, necessarily, a gendered accumulation process.”⁷² This system is ordered towards concentrating the acquisition and accumulation of wealth within one place in gender relations. As regards cathexis, Freud’s term for the focusing of emotional energy or desire, gender is clearly ordered according to desires of one group within gender relations for other groups. While, typically, this is desire of men for women and women for men, it need not be so, nor should one think of such typical object-selection as in any way normative. These three structures order practice within gender relations. Gender itself is an ordering of practice according to either power, production, or cathexis. Within this ordering, masculinity is demarcated as a place. In this context, place must refer to a kind of configuration of practice which, because it happens within gender, regards the reproductive realm. Connell writes:

Practice that relates to this structure [gender], generated as people and groups grapple with their historical situations, does not consist of isolated acts. Actions are configured in larger units, and when we speak of masculinity or femininity we are naming configurations of gender practice.⁷³

Body-reflexive practice as it relates to reproduction takes on certain configurations; masculinity or femininity are such configurations of gender practice.

Connell cautions his readers not to give too much fixity to masculinity because he applies the word “configuration” to it. He invokes a phrase of Sartre, “unification of means in action,” to correct the tendency to give too much fixity to masculinity. Masculinity is as masculinity does. It is a temporal process which is always changing the point from which it began. He says that masculinity and femininity are “processes of configuring practice through time, which transform

⁷¹ See Connell, *Masculinities*, 73-74. And, Connell, *The Men and the Boys*, 24. These three structures can be seen as hallmarks of the principal progenitors of this theory. Power: Nietzsche/Sartre/Foucault. Production: Marx. Cathexis: Freud.

⁷² Connell, *Masculinities*, 73.

⁷³ Connell, *Masculinities*, 72.

their starting points in gender structures.”⁷⁴ Thus, while there always have been gender relations, the demarcations of masculinity and femininity within these relations are constantly changing. This change occurs according to the structures of gender noted above; thus gender relations will constantly change according to relations of power, production, and cathexis. The relative power of demarcated groups will change. The relative roles in production and accumulation will change. The practices through which sexual desire is shaped and expressed will change.

It is thus that Connell says that masculinity is the *practices* through which both men and women engage a demarcated place in gender. Masculinity is a place, but that place consists in a configuration of practices. However, not simply the practices, but also the effects of those practices, which effects are onto-formative; they are the actions which form the means of that action. Thus masculinity is a process continually remaking itself.

Connell is adamant not give too much fixity to the “place” in gender relations that is masculinity; one must ask, though, is masculinity given it too *little* form? There appears to be a curious flaw in the definition of masculinity as offered by Connell in *Masculinities*; one that he avoids in other works. For it appears that his definition does not, in fact define masculinity: how does stating that masculinity is a place in gender relations and the practices through which *men and women* engage that place distinguish masculinity from other places in gender relations, such as femininity? Would not femininity answer equally well to the definition offered by Connell? It is certainly curious that Connell does not give a specific difference in his definition. He indicates elsewhere, however that masculinity is indeed somehow tied to men: He says: ““Masculinity” does not exist except in contrast to “femininity”. A culture which does not treat women and men as bearers of polarized character types, at least in principle, does not have a concept of masculinity in the sense of modern European/ American culture.”⁷⁵ Thus the implication is that the definition of masculinity requires some reference to being male. (In fact, even Lacan’s definition includes a reference to the phallus.)

In other works, Connell explicitly makes this connection. For instance, in *The Men and the Boys*, he invokes the idea of reference; masculinity is a configuration of practices that refers to a male body, but is not determined by the body.⁷⁶ Thus, similar to the manner in which gender is defined *in reference to* reproduction but not determined by it, it appears the masculinity can be defined in reference to the male body while not being determined by it. In another place, Connell refers to masculinity as “the configurations of practice associated with the social position of

⁷⁴ Connell, *Masculinities*, 72.

⁷⁵ Connell, *Masculinities*, 68.

⁷⁶ Connell, *The Men and the Boys*, 29.

men....”⁷⁷ Thus, the place that a masculinity demarcates in gender relations has reference to men – and therefore the male body – but is not determined thereby.

While this is similar to Lacan’s reference to the phallus in defining masculinity – where the term has a clear reference to a bodily reality but no direct signification – it is likewise distinct. Connell avoids reducing the body to the merely symbolic in virtue of the reality given to the body in the limiting and proposing of practice. Men – and their bodies – in a way indicate the reference that will merit the predication “masculinity,” but this does not mean that only men can receive the predication. There are, in fact, different levels where the predication masculinity can apply.

3. Cross-sectional Configurations

Masculinities do not occur only at the level of the individual; other entities can receive this predication. At the level of the individual, a configuration of practice is what can be called personality; it is, for instance, where psychologists find themselves most comfortable. At this level, an individual (man or woman), may possess one or more masculinities, which at times, as Freud showed, can be at conflict with each other. The fracturing of masculinities can occur internally, but can also be due to external pressure. This pressure can come from another gendered cross-section of the social world, that of culture. At the level of culture there is also an ordering of practice regarding the reproductive realm. Symbols are established that signify what a man should or should not be. Cultures frequently have contradictory symbols that individuals must struggle to accommodate, in addition to struggling with their internal desires; one’s place in gender becomes all the more fragile. And yet there is still another layer; to the individual and cultural must be added, argues Connell, the institutional – the state, the workplace, the school. For institutions also order practice according to the reproductive realm. So, he argues the state itself is masculine because, among other things, “there is a gender configuring of recruitment and promotion, a gender configuring of the internal division of labour....”⁷⁸ which, in the case of the state, favors men.

The predication “masculine” appears to be univocal in all instances; just as an individual has a place in gender based upon a configuration of practices, so, for example, does the state configure its practices vis-à-vis the reproductive realm. As

⁷⁷ R. W. Connell, “Growing up masculine: rethinking the significance of adolescence in the making of masculinities,” *Irish Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 14(2) (2005): 13. See also: R. W. Connell, “The Big Picture: Masculinities in Recent World History,” *Theory and Society*, Vol. 22, No. 5. (Oct., 1993): 601. Here Connell refers to Masculinity as “men’s places and practices in gender relations.”

⁷⁸ Connell, *Masculinities*, 73.

such the state rightly receive the predication "masculine." These configurations of practice need not be the same; and one has no greater claim to the term "masculinity" than does the other. Thus, biology is given no pride of place. Connell writes: "The gender structuring of practice need have nothing biologically to do with reproduction. The link with the reproductive arena is social."⁷⁹ This is because masculinity is a relational term, defined by a configuration or project of practices that regard gender according to the structures of gender, power, production, and cathexis. Thus all masculinities are subject to and positioned within other gendered structures which may have a rival version, a rival configuration, and a distinct historical trajectory regarding masculinity. "Accordingly" Connell says "masculinity, like femininity, is always liable to internal contradiction and historical disruption."⁸⁰

4. Dominant Masculinities

Because there is no one, true masculinity, it does not follow that there cannot be a dominant or hegemonic masculinity in a given social setting. And this is, in fact, what exists in the modern West. "Hegemonic masculinity can be defined as the configuration of gender practice which embodies the currently accepted answer to the problem of the legitimacy of patriarchy, which guarantees (or is taken to guarantee) the dominant position of men and the subordination of women."⁸¹ A dominant masculinity can paint itself as the true masculinity and preserve itself by its relative control of all levels of discourse: individual, cultural, and institutional. This endeavor to maintain dominance is not limited only to dominating women, but also extends to other groups holding other places in gender relations, notably, homosexuals, and even will extend to domination of other classes and races.⁸² The interest that the dominant masculinity has in maintaining the prevailing gender order can appear to give that masculinity a sense of fixity that mimics what might be called a nature. The persistence of a dominant masculinity is, however, "the persistence of power and wealth and active defense of privilege."⁸³ Thus, the fixity of a hegemonic masculinity comes from its interest in maintaining its power and privilege. It is in fact precisely defined in terms of maintaining patriarchy; it is thus conservative by nature.

The dynamic of dominance is quite independent of what particular adherents to the hegemonic masculinity may think about gender equity:

⁷⁹ Connell, *Masculinities*, 73.

⁸⁰ Connell, *Masculinities*, 73. Also see Connell, *The Men and the Boys*, 28.

⁸¹ Connell, *Masculinities*, 77.

⁸² See Connell, *Masculinities*, 75, 78.

⁸³ Connell, *The Men and the Boys*, 14.

A gender order where men dominate women cannot avoid constituting men as an interest group concerned with defense, and women as an interest group concerned with change. This is a structural fact, independent of whether men as individuals love or hate women, or believe in equality or abjection, and independent of whether women are currently pursuing change.⁸⁴

Where there is a power differential, there are competing interests. If there is, therefore, any inequality it is a “structural fact” that these unequal groups must then be cast as competing interests. “For men and women, the world formed by body-reflexive practices of gender is a domain of politics – the struggle of interests in a context of inequality. Gender politics is an embodied-social politics.”⁸⁵

5. Summarizing the Definition

Connell has done an admirable job summarizing what others have said about masculinity, noting what he sees as strengths and criticizing what he sees as errors. Presumably, his definition utilizes the strengths of others while avoiding their weaknesses. He in fact reviews the strengths and weaknesses of others’ attempts at defining masculinity.

The positivists: This unfortunate group proceeds from within a gendered institution and thus has an interest in maintaining the status quo. As such, it magnifies its findings, which only have meaning if one accepts hegemonic masculinity and exaggerates the importance of so-called biological differences in comparison to distinctions in social position. Connell, obviously, both avoids and exposes these errors, recognizing the motivations of science and the relative impotence of their explanations. Further, he provides a rendering of masculinity that avoids both biological determinism and allows for application of the term to more than simply the human male. Positive science can only offer generalities about what men tend to do – generalities which tend to be contradicted by cultural and historical examples. Insofar as they succeed at all, they cannot account for how the predication of masculinity applies, for instance, to tribes or to women. Connell’s definition, by contrast, allows masculinity to be predicated *univocally* of these different social entities.

The psychologists, at their best, provided insight into the fragility of masculinity, the intricacies of its formation at the personal level, and some hints towards the importance of sociological forces. In the end, however, for the most part, they missed the importance of social structures and fell prey to their focus on the individual psyche. Connell, however, has accommodated the notion of the

⁸⁴ Connell, *Masculinities*, 82.

⁸⁵ Connell, *Masculinities*, 66.

fragility of masculinity, but has added to it entire levels of social intricacy which further explain its formation, internal and external conflicts, and possible deconstruction.

Connell exposes the creeping essentialism of early *role-theorists* and their tendency to offer a normative masculinity as the healthy goal of a male individual. He replaces such a normative definition with a more flexible one that is able to explain the role of a dominant masculinity; however, rather than offering such a role as a healthy resolution of gender identity, Connell describes it as an hegemonic, oppressive configuration of practice which clearly falls short of social justice.

And even the errors of *semiotic* deconstructionists, with their tendency to reduce the body to a mere place in a symbolic discourse, are corrected by Connell's notion of body-reflexive practice.

Connell offers a picture of an ever-shifting masculinity. Its reality exists within the realm of gender relations where it is at once a place, practices, and the effects of those practices; it can be attributed to men, women, cultures, or institutions. As a place in gender relations, masculinity regards reproduction and the bodies that facilitate that reproduction. Specifically it has reference to the social position, practices, and bodies of men. Its relational position is always marked in opposition to femininity. The place and configuration of practices that constitute a specific masculinity, however, are always changing and can be legion even within one individual entity. These various configurations are often contradictory and can be challenged either from within or without. Sometimes, it is the body itself that challenges a masculinity, as in the case of Don Meredith whose body caused him to relinquish the idea that masculinity and homosexuality are incompatible. There tends to be in societies, however, a prevailing, hegemonic masculinity. This configuration of practices is defined by its commitment to maintain patriarchy and gives masculinity the appearance of fixity. This semblance of permanence, however, is not due to an intrinsic validity but rather to unequal places held within the structures of gender relations, most notably, unequal places in relations of power and production which lead to the continuing dominance of hegemonic masculinities. These dominant places in gender relations, however, are vulnerable to disruption and even deconstruction. It is in such a time of disruption that the modern West now finds itself as hegemonic masculinity is being challenged from within and without at all levels of gender structure: power, production, and cathexis. There is no one masculinity. Rather there is, at any one given time and place, a theoretically limitless number of masculinities, of configurations of practice existing in individuals and corporations, contradictory and disruptive as well as vulnerable to disruption. It is through these many and varied configurations that are masculinities and femininities, that the body confronts history and is brought into history.

SUMMARIZING THE SOCIOLOGISTS

The sociologists in general, and Connell in particular, raise many interesting and poignant questions about the meaning of the human male as male. In particular, they raise the question as to whether anything universal can be said of the human male at all beyond a few paltry biological predications. The general answer to this is quite clear: there is no masculinity. Inevitably what one finds in the majority of societies are unjustified elaborations of the bodily differences between men and women that ultimately lead to the oppression of the group that is left with less power, wealth, and privilege. There can be no masculinity because there is no nature, at least at the level of human practice. At this level, worlds are made and destroyed according to the interactions of many and varied forces, beginning with the individual and ending in vast global structures. Thus, if you can step in the same river twice, it is only because that river has a definite interest in maintaining itself as such and controls most of the resources that would permit other forces to change it. Nothing, however, in principle maintains it as such. Its foundation could shift below it at any moment. Its existence is simply an historical confluence which, in principle, can be altered at any moment.

The searing, deconstructionist criticisms made by the sociologists bring to the foreground many questions: Is there such a thing as masculinity? What is its relationship to the male body? How does one explain the many cultural variations that are seen as answering to the term "masculinity"? How does one understand the often contradictory notions of masculinity that can exist even in one man, or the linguistic fact that masculinity can be said of women, tribes, or corporations? Are these univocal predications or is one usage more fundamental than another? Connell raises such questions and provides answers; for doing so, he is to be thanked.

PART II

A THOMISTIC ACCOUNT OF MASCULINITY AND FATHERHOOD

Chapter 8

St. Thomas on Sexual Difference

INTRODUCTION

This chapter makes no claim to give an exhaustive exposition of Thomas's teachings on sexual differentiation and the overall status of women in relation to men.¹ Such a task is beyond the scope of the present study. Rather, my purpose is to give a brief and accurate summary of the notions that consistently characterize Thomas's treatment of the differences between the sexes and the principles of sexual differentiation. My emphasis in this chapter is precisely upon those elements of Thomas's account, that, in my judgment, rely to some extent upon an Aristotelian biology that neither Aristotle nor St. Thomas would hold today in light of the tremendous advances in scientific observation. In the following chapter, I will offer an analysis of sexual differentiation according to the Thomistic tradition. The purpose of this chapter is to provide the proper context for the account that follows in the next chapter. I attempt to point out areas of controversy and disagreement. My current purpose is not to resolve such controversies, but rather to provide a fair, general reading of Thomas while taking into account the principal secondary literature.

The first notion treated here in Section I is inherited directly from Aristotle,² that of defining the female as misbegotten male (*femina est mas*

¹ For a good overview of St. Thomas on the question of relationship between the sexes see Prudence Allen, *The Concept of Woman: The Aristotelian Revolution, 750 BC - AD 1250* (Montreal: Eden Press, 1985) 392-399.

² See Aristotle, *Generation of Animals*, trans. A. Platt, ed. Jonathan Barnes (Princeton: The Princeton University Press, 1984), Book 2, Chapter 3, 737a 23-32: "For the female's contribution also is a residue, and has all the parts in it potentially even those parts which

occasionatus). The second notion I cover, in Section II, is the most central, that of the division of active and passive powers in generation, with the male having the active power and female having the passive power. I argue that this is the most fundamental distinction in Thomas's thought, which provides the defining difference between male and female and is the font of other distinctions between male and female, including the notion of *mas occasionatus*. Thus I briefly consider Thomas's treatment of the active and passive powers of generation as they apply in all instances of natural generation. Having seen these distinct powers as contrarities, I next, in Section III, consider the question of whether difference in sex results in a difference in species. Doing so gives yet more insight into the nature of the difference between male and female. Consideration of the idea of the female as in some way "misbegotten" leads to questions about the intention of nature in producing the female. Thus, in Section IV, I cover Thomas's interesting distinction between the intent of individual nature and the intent of general nature as it applies to sexual differentiation. Having treated the elements of a definition, in Section V, I offer a rendering of Thomas's definition of the male in terms of the four causes that account for maleness. Next, in a brief section (Section VI), I offer an initial rendering of the relationship of fatherhood to maleness. Finally, in Section VII, I draw out some implications of Thomas's understanding of the differences between the sexes.

I. MAS OCCASIONATUS

An objector, arguing that women should not have been made among the first production of things, makes his point by invoking Aristotle's claim that women are more or less failed attempts at producing males. "But nothing misbegotten or defective should have been in the first production of things."³ As "misbegotten"

differentiate the female from the male, for just as the young of mutilated parents are sometimes born mutilated and sometimes not, so also the young of a female are sometimes female and sometimes male instead. For the female is, as it were, a mutilated male, and the menstrual fluids are semen, only not pure; for there is only one thing they have not in them, the principle of the soul.... [T]he egg so forming has in it the parts of both sexes potentially, but has not the principle in question, so that it does not develop into a living creature, for this is introduced by the semen of the male."

³ "Videtur quod mulier non debuit produci in prima rerum productione. Dicit enim philosophus, in libro de Generat. Animal., quod femina est mas occasionatus. Sed nihil occasionatum et deficiens debuit esse in prima rerum institutione. Ergo in illa prima rerum institutione mulier producenda non fuit (ST.I.92.1 obj. 1)." English translation: Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, trans. The Fathers of the English Dominican Province. Westminster (Maryland: Christian Classics, 1981).

and defective, it follows that the production of something manifestly deficient could not have been produced in a pristine natural state, prior to the stain of sin. The objector concludes that woman, as defective, could not have been made in the state of innocence. Thomas's reply is interesting both as regards those aspects of the objection that he rejects, as well as those with which he agrees.

As regards the individual nature, woman is defective and misbegotten, for the active force in the male seed tends to the production of a perfect likeness in the masculine sex; while the production of woman comes from defect in the active force or from some material indisposition, or even from some external influence; such as that of a south wind, which is moist, as the Philosopher observes.⁴

Thomas goes on to distinguish the intent of human nature in general – according to which women are intended (a point to which I will return shortly) – but it is worth noting Thomas's apparent acceptance of Aristotle's theory that the female is the result of a less-than-perfect realization of the male seed.⁵ He does not simply reject the objector's minor premise – the women are defective. Rather, he makes a

⁴ “Ad primum ergo dicendum quod per respectum ad naturam particularem, femina est aliquid deficiens et occasionatum. Quia virtus activa quae est in semine maris, intendit producere sibi simile perfectum, secundum masculinum sexum, sed quod femina generetur, hoc est propter virtutis activae debilitatem, vel propter aliquam materiae indispositionem, vel etiam propter aliquam transmutationem ab extrinseco, puta a ventis Australibus, qui sunt humidi, ut dicitur in libro de Generat. Animal (ST.I.92.1 ad 1).”

⁵ The above reference is certainly not the only place in which St. Thomas apparently indicates his acceptance of Aristotle's biological account of sexual differentiation. For example, in the *Commentary on the Metaphysics*, in the course of arguing that difference in sex pertains to the matter and not to the substantial form, Thomas writes: “This is clear from the fact that same sperm insofar as it undergoes a different kind of change can become a male or female animal; because when the heat at work is strong, a male is generated, but when it is weak, a female is generated.” Thomas Aquinas, *Commentary on the Metaphysics*, trans. John P. Rowan (Chicago: Henry Regnery Company, 1961), Book 10, Lecture 11. [Hereafter referred to as CM.] See also, ST.I.99.2 and ST.Supplement.81.3. For further discussion and other references in the Thomistic corpus see Prudence Allen, *Concept of Woman*, 392-399. Some, however, argue that the idea of woman as “misbegotten male” must be understood as a position held more by Aristotle than St. Thomas. See Michael Nolan, “What Aquinas Never Said About Women,” *First Things*, 87 (November 1998): 11-12. And Pia Francesca de Solenni, *A Hermeneutic of Aquinas's Mens Through a Sexually Differentiated Epistemology: Towards an understanding of woman as imago Dei* (Rome: Edizioni Università della Santa Croce, 2003), 153ff.

distinction that appears to grant the premise as regards individual nature.⁶ Thus, elsewhere, Thomas writes: “And when nature is unable to bring a thing to a greater perfection it brings it to a lesser; thus when it cannot produce a male it produces a female which is “a misbegotten male.””⁷ In what, though, is this imperfection of the female rooted?

II. ACTIVE VERSUS PASSIVE POWER

Prominent in Thomas’s argument above is the notion that “the active force in the male seed tends to the production of a perfect likeness in the masculine sex.” In any individual instance of its dissemination in sexual intercourse the intent of the male seed is to produce another male. This deference to the male is in part because the intent is to produce another who also has the active power of generation, to produce another who can, in turn, produce his like. In the corpus of the article quoted above, Thomas makes the point that, in generation, in addition to the active power there must also always be the passive power. He notes a gradation in being and generation. Some plants and animals do not possess the active power within them. This power is rather provided by heavenly bodies. In all other living beings, there are distinct manners in which active and passive powers of generation relate to each other. Thomas describes how and why these powers exist in relation to each other:

[O]thers possess the active and passive generative power together; as we see in plants which are generated from seed; for the noblest vital function in plants is generation. Wherefore we observe that in these the active power of generation invariably accompanies the passive power. Among perfect animals the active power of generation belongs to the male sex, and the passive power to the female. And as among animals there is a vital operation nobler than generation, to which their life is principally directed; therefore the male sex is not found in continual union with the female in perfect animals, but only at the time of coition; so that we may consider that by this means the male and female are one, as in plants they are always united; although in some cases one of them preponderates, and in some the other. But man is yet further ordered to a still nobler vital action, and that is intellectual operation. Therefore there was greater reason for the distinction of these two forces in man; so that the female should be produced separately from the male; although

⁶ As mentioned above, a more detailed discussion of the crucial distinction between individual and general nature follows below.

⁷ ST.S.52.1 ad 2.

they are carnally united for generation. Therefore directly after the formation of woman, it was said: "And they shall be two in one flesh."⁸

There is much in this text, some of which will be revisited later; for now, I wish to focus on the notion of active and passive powers and their separation in some species.

The noblest operation of plants is generation. The active and passive powers of generation are therefore always present to the individual plant so that it might always - actually or potentially - be engaged in its highest operation. In animals, however, generation is not the highest operation. There is subsequently no need for the continual union of the active and passive powers of generation as the animal is ordered to yet higher operations. Because the lives of animals are not principally directed towards generation as their highest end, the co-powers of generation need not always be united in an individual living substance. The active and passive powers are rather divided and are joined not as the principal end of that form of life but are, as it were, subsumed into the end of a higher operation. This division of the active and passive power of generation is the division of male and female. More, then, must be said about the meaning of active and passive power.

Several texts from St. Thomas will be illustrative first in clarifying generally what is meant by active and passive powers and secondly by determining how this distinction applies particularly in the case of sexual differentiation. Thomas says:

Since every agent produces an effect like itself, to each active power there corresponds a thing possible as its proper object according to the nature of that act on which its active power is founded; for instance, the power of giving warmth is related as to its proper object to the being capable of being warmed.⁹

⁸ "Non enim est in plantis aliquod nobilius opus vitae quam generatio, unde convenienter omni tempore in eis virtuti passivae coniungitur virtus activa generationis. Animalibus vero perfectis competit virtus activa generationis secundum sexum masculinum, virtus vero passiva secundum sexum femininum. Et quia est aliquod opus vitae nobilius in animalibus quam generatio, ad quod eorum vita principaliter ordinatur; ideo non omni tempore sexus masculinus feminino coniungitur in animalibus perfectis, sed solum tempore coitus; ut imaginemur per coitum sic fieri unum ex mare et femina, sicut in planta omni tempore coniunguntur vis masculina et feminina, etsi in quibusdam plus abundet una harum, in quibusdam plus altera. Homo autem adhuc ordinatur ad nobilius opus vitae, quod est intelligere. Et ideo adhuc in homine debuit esse maiori ratione distinctio utriusque virtutis, ut seorsum produceretur femina a mare, et tamen carnaliter coniungerentur in unum ad generationis opus. Et ideo statim post formationem mulieris, dicitur Gen. II, erunt duo in carne una (ST.I.92.1)."

⁹ "Cum unumquodque agens agat sibi simile, unicuique potentiae activae correspondet possibile ut obiectum proprium, secundum rationem illius actus in quo fundatur potentia

The active power is the capacity of that which possesses a form to produce that same form in another. The passive power is that ability of that which lacks a form to assume that form. These powers regard both substantial and accidental being; there are agents with the active power to bring about substantial being and those with active power to produce accidental forms just as there are subjects with the ability to assume these forms – or, in the case of a substantial form to be corrupted so that a new substantial form may come to be. Thus an active power is such insofar as its subject is in act; a passive power is such insofar its subject is without some act which it is capable of having through the power to receive:

It is manifest that everything, according as it is in act and is perfect, is the active principle of something: whereas everything is passive according as it is deficient and imperfect... On the other hand, the notion of active principle is consistent with active power. For active power is the principle of acting upon something else; whereas passive power is the principle of being acted upon by something else, as the Philosopher says.¹⁰

The active is in that which is. The passive power is in that which lacks, that which, in some sense, is not.

It is worth making two points of clarification. First, the passive power is a true power. An active power can be in act as an active power only if there is some subject in potency to that form. Without suitable matter, a natural agent cannot exercise its active power. One cannot build a house from cooked spaghetti nor grow a horse from a pumpkin seed. Thus, the subject with the passive power is in act – it is not prime matter. It is not, however, in act with respect to the act it receives from the subject with the active power. As regards the change in question, the act of the passive power precisely regards an actuality in which there is a specific potency. Thus, the act of seeing regards the actuality of color in the power of sight, which is its proper passive power.

The second point will be of greater importance later, but bears mentioning now; it is related to the first. I just noted that not all things have the ability to become all things – pumpkin seeds do not become horses. However, even as regards certain accidental forms, a subject is not mutable. Thomas writes:

activa, sicut potentia calefactiva refertur, ut ad proprium obiectum, ad esse calefactibile (ST.I.25.3).”

¹⁰ “Manifestum est enim quod unumquodque, secundum quod est actu et perfectum, secundum hoc est principium activum alicuius, patitur autem unumquodque, secundum quod est deficiens et imperfectum.... Ratio autem activi principii convenit potentiae activae. Nam potentia activa est principium agendi in aliud, potentia vero passiva est principium patiendi ab alio, ut philosophus dicit, V Metaphys (ST.I.25.1).”

In the inferior bodies there is mutability both as regards substantial being, inasmuch as their matter can exist with privation of their substantial form, and also as regards their accidental being, supposing the subject to coexist with privation of accident; as, for example, this subject “man” can exist with “not-whiteness” and can therefore be changed from white to not-white. But supposing the accident to be such as to follow on the essential principles of the subject, then the privation of such an accident cannot coexist with the subject. Hence the subject cannot be changed as regards that kind of accident; as, for example, snow cannot be made black.¹¹

The passive power of a substance is not limitless even as regards its own accidental forms.¹²

The general application of the distinction of active and passive powers to male and female is relatively clear. The following text reiterates the central point:

[I]n every act of generation there is an active and a passive principle. Wherefore, since wherever there is a distinction of sex, the active principle is male and the passive is female; the order of nature demands that for the purpose of generation there should be concurrence of male and female.¹³

In the act of generation there is the agent who possesses the form. In addition to this there is the appropriate matter with the passive power to assume the form. Unlike plants where these powers exist together in the same primary substance, in animals the powers are split. The male has the active power. Through the instrumental causality of his sperm, his specific form can be reproduced. He does not generate *qua* individual, but rather *qua* human. Otherwise, Thomas notes, “Socrates would generate Socrates.”¹⁴ Nevertheless, the active power in the male tends towards the production of its like, that is another male, another human having the active power.

¹¹ “Unde in corporibus inferioribus est mutabilitas et secundum esse substantiale, quia materia eorum potest esse cum privatione formae substantialis ipsorum, et quantum ad esse accidentale, si subiectum compatiatur secum privationem accidentis; sicut hoc subiectum, homo, compatiatur secum non album, et ideo potest mutari de albo in non album. Si vero sit tale accidens quod consequatur principia essentialia subiecti, privatio illius accidentis non potest stare cum subiecto, unde subiectum non potest mutari secundum illud accidens, sicut nix non potest fieri nigra (ST.I.9.2).”

¹² This point is important when for the discussion of the ontological status of sexual difference and the question of whether a substance can undergo a change of such an accidental form such as “maleness.”

¹³ “In omni enim generatione requiritur virtus activa et passiva. Unde, cum in omnibus in quibus est distinctio sexuum, virtus activa sit in mare, virtus vero passiva in femina; naturae ordo exigit ut ad generandum convenient per coitum mas et femina (ST.I.98.2).”

¹⁴ ST.I.41.5.

Thomas is clear about this: "*Quia virtus activa quae est in semine maris, intendit producere sibi simile perfectum, secundum masculinum sexum.*"¹⁵ The male is more fully in act, more perfect, as possessing that in virtue of which new humans can be made. The male, then, in the individual active power in the semen, seeks to generate his *perfect* likeness; this means generating another of the masculine sex.

The female does not fare so well. She lacks the active power of generation, possessing rather the suitable matter for generation. The source of this deficiency presumably lies in the imperfect development of the female embryo, whether this is due to a "defect in the active force or from some material indisposition, or even from some external influence."¹⁶ The intent of that individual act of generation is unattainable. "And when nature is unable to bring a thing to a greater perfection it brings it to a lesser; thus when it cannot produce a male it produces a female which is "a misbegotten male."¹⁷

While it is evident that Thomas attributes the active power to the male of a species, care must be taken in applying this notion to the human male. Thomas writes:

But living bodies, as being more powerful, act so as to generate their like, both without and with a medium. Without a medium - in the work of nutrition, in which flesh generates flesh: with a medium - in the act of generation, because the semen of the animal or plant derives a certain active force from the soul of the generator, just as the instrument derives a certain motive power from the principal agent. And as it matters not whether we say that something is moved by the instrument or by the principal agent, so neither does it matter whether we say that the soul of the generated is caused by the soul of the generator, or by some seminal power derived therefrom.¹⁸

¹⁵ ST.I.92.1 ad 1.

¹⁶ "*Quia virtus activa quae est in semine maris, intendit producere sibi simile perfectum, secundum masculinum sexum, sed quod femina generetur, hoc est propter virtutis activae debilitatem, vel propter aliquam materiae indispositionem, vel etiam propter aliquam transmutationem ab extrinseco, puta a ventis Australibus, qui sunt humidi, ut dicitur in libro de Generat. Animal. (ST.I.92.1 ad 1).*"

¹⁷ ST.S.52.1 ad 2.

¹⁸ "*Sed corpora viventia, tanquam potentiora, agunt ad generandum sibi simile et sine medio, et per medium. Sine medio quidem, in opere nutritionis, in quo caro generat carnem, cum medio vero, in actu generationis, quia ex anima generantis derivatur quaedam virtus activa ad ipsum semen animalis vel plantae, sicut et a principali agente derivatur quaedam vis motiva ad instrumentum. Et sicut non refert dicere quod aliquid moveatur ab instrumento, vel a principali agente; ita non refert dicere quod anima generati causetur ab anima generantis, vel a virtute derivata ab ipsa, quae est in semine (ST.I.118.1).*"

In man, however, this active force does not extend to generating the full substantial form of a human. For, while the semen can educe an animal soul, which, being non-subsistent, is a corporeal form, its active force is not adequate to the educing of the subsistent form which is the soul of man. Thomas states his argument succinctly:

It is impossible for an active power existing in matter to extend its action to the production of an immaterial effect. Now it is manifest that the intellectual principle in man transcends matter; for it has an operation in which the body takes no part whatever. It is therefore impossible for the seminal power to produce the intellectual principle.¹⁹

Thus, the active generative power of man must be qualified. Man does not generate man in the same way that a plant produces a like plant, or horse produces horse. Being a corporeal form, the active power of the male horse is able to educe the form "horse" from the proper matter. Not so for the male human. Given the complexity of the active power of generation in man, human generation, as conceived by St. Thomas, warrants brief summary.

In perfect animals, the female provides the fetal matter, which matter, according to Thomas, has the first act of the vegetative soul. "In this matter the vegetative soul exists from the beginning, not as to the second act, but as to the first act, as the sensitive soul is in one who sleeps."²⁰ The power of the man's semen transforms the vegetative matter, endowing it with a sensitive form. The active power of the semen cannot however act beyond the production of the sensitive soul. It therefore, as it were, endows the fetal matter with a sensitive form that has the passive power to become human with the direct agency of God.²¹ In answering an objector who argues that if it be said that man begets man - as indeed it is said so - his active power must extend to the generation of the rational soul, Thomas responds as follows: "Man begets his like, forasmuch as by his seminal power, the matter is disposed for the reception of a certain species of form."²² The agency regarding the production of the rational soul is God's alone. The rational soul is

¹⁹ "Respondeo dicendum quod impossibile est virtutem activam quae est in materia, extendere suam actionem ad producendum immaterialem effectum. Manifestum est autem quod principium intellectivum in homine est principium transcendens materiam, habet enim operationem in qua non communicat corpus. Et ideo impossibile est quod virtus quae est in semine, sit productiva intellectivi principii (ST.I.118.2)."

²⁰ "In qua quidem materia statim a principio est anima vegetabilis, non quidem secundum actum secundum, sed secundum actum primum, sicut anima sensitiva est in dormientibus (ST.I.118.1 ad 4)."

²¹ See ST.I.118.1-2.

²² ST.I.118.2 ad 4.

immaterial; hence, man's activity through his semen cannot extend to its production. God, therefore, must create the intellectual soul; it cannot be educed from matter.²³ Man's active power, however, in disposing the matter provided by the female to receive the intellectual soul, according to Thomas, merits the predication of "begetting" regarding man.

In the end, it appears that the male plays a "mean proportional" role between woman and God. Woman possesses the passive power, the suitable matter for the active power of the male to act upon. The active force of the male then re-disposes this matter so as to educe the animal soul from the matter; it is upon this matter that the active force of God works so as to produce a new human. Thus, while the male human possesses the active power and the female the passive power, the active power of the human male extends only toward further disposing the matter in such a way that it is able to receive the intelligent soul. Though, of himself and his own active power, a man cannot produce another man, the act of disposing the matter to receive the intelligent soul, according to Thomas, can nevertheless be called begetting.²⁴

III. CONTRARIETY AND SPECIES

The offspring will be either male or female according to the factors noted above: strength of the active power, material disposition, and even external conditions such as the temperature and moisture of the wind. The male possesses the active power of generation. The female possesses the passive power of generation. As such, the difference that distinguishes male and female is a contrariety – active versus passive. Because male and female are contraries, and, as

²³ See ST.I.118.2. It should be noted as well that the introduction of each higher soul implies the corruption and virtual containment of the lower soul. Thus, with the introduction of the sentient soul from the active power of the male, the existing vegetative soul must corrupt so as to take on a new substantial form, in which form, however, a vegetative soul is virtually contained. Similarly, with the introduction of the rational soul, the sensitive soul is corrupted. Thus, there are not three souls in man or one soul that has passed through three stages. See ST.I.118.1-2 and ST.I.76.3.

²⁴ In ST.I.93.5.ad 1, Thomas notes that God's image is found in both male and female as regards its primary signification, which regards man's intellectual nature. In a secondary sense, however, man possesses God's image in a way that woman does not; "for man is the beginning and end of woman; as God is the beginning and end of every creature." In addition to the Genesis story in which woman is taken from man's rib, this argument would make sense also in terms of man's possessing the active power of generation. The argument in this article likewise places man as a kind of mean proportional between God and woman.

it is contraries that differentiate species, Aristotle is led to ask why the contrariety of male and female does not divide species into subspecies.²⁵

In addition to the fact that male and female are contraries, another point arises in the course of Thomas's commentary on Aristotle that renders even stronger the question as to why sex does not make a new species:

Again, since it has been shown that the nature of a genus is divided into different species by those differences which are essential to the genus [*per se differentiae generis*], the question also arises why a male and a female animal do not differ specifically, since male and female are essential differences of animal [*per se differentiae animalis*] and are not accidental to animal as whiteness and blackness are; but male and female are predicated of animal as animal just as the even and the odd, whose definition contains number, are predicated of number; so that animal is given in the definition of male and female.²⁶

Male and female are *per se* differences of animal as opposed to an accidental difference such as black or white. It is not a *per se* difference, however, in the sense that male or female enter into the definition of animal. It is rather the other way around. One can indeed define animal without male or female entering into that definition.²⁷ One cannot, however, define male or female without animal entering into the definition. Thus male and female can be said of animal insofar as it is animal as even and odd are said of number insofar as it is number. It is not that odd and even must be included in the definition of number but rather that odd or even cannot be defined without reference to number.

Given, then, that male and female are contraries and that they apply *per se* to animal, how is that they do not lead to distinct species? To resolve this question, Aristotle – followed by Thomas – distinguishes between those contraries that apply on the part of the matter from those which apply on the part of form.

²⁵ Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, trans. W. D. Ross, ed. Jonathan Barnes (Princeton: The Princeton University Press, 1984), Book 10, Chapter, 9, 1058a 29-1058b 26.

²⁶ "Et iterum cum ostensum sit, quod ipsa natura generis diversificetur in diversas species per differentias, quae sunt per se differentiae generis, quare animal masculinum et animal femininum non sunt diversa secundum speciem, cum masculinum et femininum sint per se differentiae animalis, et non se habeant per accidens ad animal, sicut albedo et nigredo, sed masculinum et femininum praedicentur de animali in quantum est animal, sicut par et impar de numero, in quorum definitione ponitur numerus, sicut in definitione masculini et femini animal." *Sententia Metaphysicae*, Liber 10 Lectio. 11.

²⁷ It appears that St. Thomas was unaware that some plants reproduce sexually. In fact, William Wallace notes that sexual reproduction was not discovered in plants until 1580 AD. William A. Wallace, *The Modeling of Nature* (Washington, DC: The Catholic University Press, 1996), 89, note 18.

Regarding these latter, new species indeed follow from such differences. A form, however, that exists in matter can be multiplied in terms of being actualized in different matter. Some contrarities can arise, then, not from the form - which is the same in all instances - but from the part of the matter, as a black man and white man differ not according their substantial form but according to something of the matter, or as a brass circle and wood circle differ not in form but matter.²⁸ Such differences, i.e. those arising from the matter and not the form, are differences in accidental form, not substantial form. For Aristotle and Thomas, though male and female are said *per se* of animal, they are differences that arise from the part of matter, not of the form. Thomas concludes his commentary:

He says that male and female are proper affections of animal [*proprie passiones animalis*], because animal is included in the definition of each. But they do not pertain to animal by reason of its substance or form, but by reason of its matter or body. This is clear from the fact that the same sperm insofar as it undergoes a different kind of change can become a male or a female animal; because, when the heat at work is strong, a male is generated, but when it is weak, a female is generated. But this could not be the case or come about if male and female differed specifically; for specifically different things are not generated from one and the same kind of sperm, because it is the sperm that contains the active power, and every natural agent acts by way of a determinate form by which it produces its like. It follows, then, that male and female do not differ formally, and that they do not differ specifically.²⁹

The active power of the male always tends towards the production of another male. The differences that lead to the production of a female versus a male arise not from the part of the substantial form, but from the part of the matter. The difference of male and female, then, when added to a species does not further divide that species into subspecies; adding the difference "male" or "female" to the species "human" does not result in two subspecies of human.

²⁸ See *Sententia Metaphysicae*, Liber 10, Lectio. 11.

²⁹ "Masculus et femina sunt proprie passiones animalis, quia animal ponitur in definitione utriusque. Sed non conveniunt animali secundum substantiam et formam, sed ex parte materiae et corporis. Quod patet ex hoc, quod idem sperma potest fieri masculus et femina, secundum quod diversimode patitur aliquam passionem; quia cum fuerit calor operans fortis, fiet masculus; cum autem erit debilis, fiet femina. Hoc autem non posset esse vel contingere, si masculus et femina different specie. Non enim ex uno semine diversa secundum speciem producuntur. Quia in semine vis est activa, et omne agens naturale agit ad determinatam speciem, quia agit sibi simile. Unde relinquitur quod masculus et femina non differant secundum formam, nec sunt diversa secundum speciem." *Sententia Metaphysicae*, Liber 10, Lectio. 11.

IV. INDIVIDUAL NATURE VERSUS GENERAL NATURE

Thomas makes the point that, while individual nature may intend only the production of males, human nature in general intends both male and female.

As regards the individual nature, woman is defective and misbegotten.... On the other hand, as regards human nature in general, woman is not misbegotten, but is included in nature's intention as directed to the work of generation. Now the general intention of nature depends on God, Who is the universal Author of nature.³⁰

The corpus of the same article makes it clear that, as the female is necessary for generation (and thus for preservation of the species), it follows that both male and female fall under the general intent of the nature to which the distinction applies, even if the active power of each individual male intends the production of another male. Thus, considering humans, human nature taken generally intends male and female.

The general intention of nature to produce male and female is especially poignant as regards animals with non-subsistent forms.

We must also observe that nature's purpose appears to be different as regards corruptible and incorruptible things. For that seems to be the direct purpose of nature, which is invariable and perpetual; while what is only for a time seemingly not the chief purpose of nature....³¹

Thomas goes on to note that, in corruptible beings, only the species is perpetual. Thus nature regards principally the good of the species. In perfect animals, the preservation of the species, however, demands generation, and generation requires both male and female. Thus nature intends both male and female for preservation of the species.

³⁰ "Ad primum ergo dicendum quod per respectum ad naturam particularem, femina est aliquid deficiens et occasionatum... Sed per comparisonem ad naturam universalem, femina non est aliquid occasionatum, sed est de intentione naturae ad opus generationis ordinata. Intentio autem naturae universalis dependet ex Deo, qui est universalis auctor naturae (ST.I.92.1 ad 1)."

³¹ "Est autem considerandum quod alio modo intentio naturae fertur ad corruptibiles, et incorruptibiles creaturas. Id enim per se videtur esse de intentione naturae, quod est semper et perpetuum. Quod autem est solum secundum aliquod tempus, non videtur esse principaliter de intentione naturae... (ST.I.98.1)."

The case of humans is more complex, having a corruptible body and an incorruptible intellectual soul.

Hence it belongs to man to beget offspring, on the part of the naturally corruptible body. But on the part of the soul, which is incorruptible, it is fitting that the multitude of individuals should be the direct purpose of nature, or rather the Author of nature, Who alone is Creator of the human soul.³²

Even for the human being, who has an incorruptible soul, it is fitting that there be generation, and so fitting that there be both man and woman. As regards his body, the human being is corruptible. Thus, as regards the preservation of the species, nature – regarding as it does that which is permanent – intends both male and female for the purpose of generation. Also regarding a human being as incorruptible, nature intends both male and female for the multiplication of such individuals. As enduring, at least in virtue of the intellectual soul, the human form is a chief purpose of nature. Individual humans, then, are a chief purpose of nature. But such individuals are produced by means of both male and female. Thus nature and its author intend male and female, *as individuals* in the case of humans.

Perhaps it is not surprising, then, that Thomas states that the existence of both male and female pertain to the perfection of human nature:

Nothing belonging to the completeness of human nature would have been lacking in the state of innocence. And as different grades belong to the perfection of the universe, so also diversity of sex belongs to the perfection of human nature.³³

Though, in and of itself less perfect, the quality of being female contributes to the overall perfection of humanity and thus is intended by nature. So, for Thomas, even after the resurrection of the body, where there will be no generation and thus no need for the distinction of male and female as regards the permanence of the species, there will nevertheless be male and female; for both together constitute the perfection of the species. Of the division of male and female after the resurrection, Thomas writes:

³² “Sic igitur homini ex parte corporis, quod corruptibile est secundum naturam suam, competit generatio. Ex parte vero animae, quae incorruptibilis est, competit ei quod multitudo individuorum sit per se intenta a natura, vel potius a naturae auctore, qui solus est humanarum animarum creator (ST.I.98.1).”

³³ “Respondeo dicendum quod nihil eorum quae ad complementum humanae naturae pertinent, in statu innocentiae defuisset. Sicut autem ad perfectionem universi pertinent diversi gradus rerum, ita etiam diversitas sexus est ad perfectionem humanae naturae (ST.I.99.2).”

In like fashion, also, the frailty of the feminine sex is not in opposition to the perfection of the risen. For this frailty is not due to a shortcoming of nature, but to an intention of nature. And this very distinction of nature among human beings will point out the perfection of nature and the divine wisdom as well, which disposes all things in a certain order.³⁴

In the resurrection, there is need for neither the continuance of the species – since there will be no death – nor the multiplication of individuals as the quantity ordained by God will have already been achieved. Thus, even in the absence of these functions of sexual difference, the existence of male and female nevertheless pertains to the perfection of the species. In the absence of one or the other, the species would be less perfect.³⁵

It appears, however, that Thomas nevertheless continues to maintain a certain notion of the inferiority of the female in the natural state. In fact, it seems that, in a way, the existence of different degrees of perfection of the species that contributes a greater richness thereof. The question of these varying degrees of perfection is manifest when Thomas treats of the natural subjection of women to men.³⁶

Subjection is twofold. One is servile, by virtue of which a superior makes use of a subject for his own benefit; and this kind of subjection began after sin. There is another kind of subjection, which is called economic or civil, whereby the superior makes use of his subjects for their own benefit and good; and this kind of subjection existed even before sin. For good order would have wanting in the human family if some were not governed by others wiser than themselves. So, by such a kind of subjection woman is naturally subject to man, because in man the

³⁴ “Similiter etiam nec infirmitas feminei sexus perfectioni resurgentium obviat. Non enim est infirmitas per recessum a natura, sed a natura intenta. Et ipsa etiam naturae distinctio in hominibus perfectionem naturae demonstrabit et divinam sapientiam, omnia cum quodam ordine disponentem. (SCG.4.88).” English translation: Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Contra Gentile Book III*, trans. Vernon J. Bourke (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1975). Also see *Commentary on Ephesians*, Chapter 4, Lecture 4.

³⁵ Catholic theology teaches that Mary, the Mother of Jesus was assumed into Heaven, body and soul. It is thus clear that, in Catholic thought, male and female are both intended in the state of perfection.

³⁶ For a discussion of subjection see de Solenni, *A Hermeneutic of Aquinas's Mens Through a Sexually Differentiated Epistemology*, pp. 134-136. De Solenni defends a position that seems to “soften” the notion of inferiority.

discretion of reason predominates [*quia naturaliter in homine magis abundat discretio rationis*]. Nor is inequality among men excluded by the state of innocence.³⁷

Thomas is here responding to an objector who argues that women would not have been made in the original, prelapsarian state, for they are naturally subject to men, and there would be no subjection prior to sin. Interestingly, the basis of the claim for natural subjection hinges upon possessing the active versus the passive power of generation: “But woman is naturally of less strength and dignity than man; for the agent is always more honorable than the patient.”³⁸ In his reply, Thomas appears to be conceding a difference in degree of perfection of the female that extends beyond the female’s lack of the active power of generation to a predominance of reason in men versus women.

The question of subjection returns in regard to the state of woman in the resurrection. If woman is naturally subject to man, the objector argues that all must therefore be resurrected as men; for, in the resurrection, there will be no subjection. Thomas’s reply confirms natural subjection but notes a distinction that will exist in the state of perfection:

Woman is subject to man on account of the frailty of nature, as regards both vigor of soul and strength of body. After the resurrection, however, the difference in those points will be not on account of the difference of sex, but by reason of the difference of merits. Hence the conclusion does not follow.³⁹

Naturally, woman is less vigorous of soul and of body. This is no doubt in large part due to her somewhat misbegotten beginnings when the active force of the male, for one reason or another was unable to produce another like itself, another having the active power – a male. By nature, then, woman is subject to man. In the resurrection, however, distinction in greater or lesser will not be due to nature, but according to merit.

³⁷ “Ad secundum dicendum quod duplex est subiectio. Una servilis, secundum quam praesidens utitur subiecto ad sui ipsius utilitatem et talis subiectio introducta est post peccatum. Est autem alia subiectio oeconomica vel civilis, secundum quam praesidens utitur subiectis ad eorum utilitatem et bonum. Et ista subiectio fuisset etiam ante peccatum, defuisset enim bonum ordinis in humana multitudine, si quidam per alios sapientiores gubernati non fuissent. Et sic ex tali subiectione naturaliter femina subiecta est viro, quia naturaliter in homine magis abundat discretio rationis. Nec inaequalitas hominum excluditur per innocentiae statum, ut infra dicitur (ST.I.92.1 ad 2).”

³⁸ ST.I.92.1 ad 2.

³⁹ ST.S.81.3 ad 2.

Notwithstanding these differences in degrees of perfection, rather, *due to these degrees of perfection*, male and female contribute to the overall perfection of nature. Thus, independent of the functions of sexual differentiation as regards the multiplication and preservation of the species, male *and* female are intended by nature. Thomas notes that, in the state of innocence, female children would indeed have been born. This would not have been due to any defect in the active or passive power of the parents. He writes that, in the state of innocence

The generation of woman is not occasioned either by a defect of the active force or by inept matter, as the objection proposes; but sometimes by an extrinsic accidental cause; thus the Philosopher says (*De Animal. Histor.* vi, 19): ‘the northern wind favors the generation of males, and the southern wind that of females’: sometimes also by some impression in the soul (of the parents), which may easily have some effect on the body (of the child). Especially was this the case in the state of innocence, when the body was more subject to the soul; so that by the mere will of the parent the sex of the offspring might be diversified.⁴⁰

Thus, even given the lesser degree of perfection in the female, parents in the state of innocence could and would have begotten females, and perhaps would have even done so by virtue of an act of the will that would dispose the mother’s body so as to produce one or the other.

V. DEFINITION OF THE MALE

First, male and female are not terms that are proper to humans. For Thomas, male and female are said univocally of humans and of perfect animals. According to Thomas there are some plants and animals that do not possess the power of generation; these are generated spontaneously by the power of heavenly bodies. The definition of male must account for all instances where it applies univocally, i.e., not just in humans but in also in all perfect animals.

⁴⁰ “Ad secundum dicendum quod generatio feminae non solum contingit ex defectu virtutis activae vel indispositione materiae, ut obiectio tangit. Sed quandoque quidem ex aliquo accidenti extrinseco; sicut philosophus dicit, in libro de animalibus, quod ventus Septentrionalis coadiuvat ad generationem masculorum, Australis vero ad generationem feminarum. Quandoque etiam ex conceptione animae, ad quam de facili immutatur corpus. Et praecipue in statu innocentiae hoc esse poterat, quando corpus magis erat animae subiectum; ut scilicet secundum voluntatem generantis, distingueretur sexus in prole (ST.1.99.2 ad 2).”

Based upon the discussion up to this point, I will attempt to offer an account of the male in terms of its four causes. Doing so permits me to succinctly summarize Thomas's thought on the question of the nature of maleness.

Formal Cause: Thomas indicated that which makes a male to be a male in a text quoted above. "Among perfect animals the active power of generation belongs to the male sex, and the passive power to the female."⁴¹ To be a male is to be a perfect animal that possesses the active power of generation. For Thomas, maleness cannot be defined without reference to the generation of animals. There are some plants and animals that do not have the power of generation; they are produced by that activity of some other agent and from some extraneous matter. Then there are the majority of plants that contain both the active and passive power of generation together within the same individual organism. For the majority of animals, however, the active and passive powers are divided. The male possesses the power to give the form of the species. The female possesses the fitting matter that has power to become a new individual of the species.

Final Cause: Generation always includes the active power and the passive power. As the active power of generation, the end of generation applies to it. I will therefore first briefly discuss the end of maleness as integral to generation and then its end precisely as the active power existing in an individual numerically distinct from the individual possessing the passive power. The end of generation for all living things regards the primary intent of nature, namely, that which is permanent, which, for all corruptible things is not the individual, but the species.

The end of generation is unique for the human species; for each individual possesses an incorruptible intellectual soul and a corruptible body. Thus the principal intent of nature applies both to the preservation of the species due to the corruptibility of the body and to the multiplication of individuals, which, according to their intellectual souls are each permanent and thus a principal intent of nature. Because having the active power of generation defines the male, the end of the male *qua* male is the end of generation. For all animals, the end of generation is the continuance of the species. For humans, to the end of continuance of the species, must be added the multiplication of individuals.

However, it must be remembered, that as regards the individual active power of the male, that capacity seeks to produce another male. As such, the active force itself intends the production of another male. It is the general intent of nature that permits and intends the production of the female either in terms of some deficiency in the active or passive power, or from some effect of the internal or

⁴¹ "Animalibus vero perfectis competit virtus activa generationis secundum sexum masculinum, virtus vero passiva secundum sexum femininum (ST.I.92.1)."

external environment. The end, then, of the individual active power is the production of its like; in the case of the male, this is the production of another male.

In humans, it must further be noted that the active power of the male does not in fact extend to the generation of another intellectual soul. As the active power, the end is to provide the form. However, the individual intent of the active power is, as it were, supervened and, because in perfect animals the active and passive powers are separated, nature in general intends the production of an equal number of individuals with the passive power as those with the active power.

In higher living beings there is an apparent paradox in the cross-purposes of individual and general nature: individual nature always seeks to produce a male. General nature seeks to produce as many females as males. In simpler beings, there is no such paradox. In plants, the active and passive powers are together; thus a single plant can produce another like itself. When the active and passive powers are split, this is no longer possible. So why are these powers split? Why is there male and female? For Thomas the separation of the active and passive powers, which occurs in higher living beings, is “to make room” for those higher operations. While generation is the highest operation of the vegetative soul, the acts of sentient and rational knowing are higher operations. Thus, the substance need not be so constituted so as to always have the immediate possibility of generation with the active and passive powers always conjoined. Rather, the active and passive powers are conjoined only during coitus. At other times, the animal is free to follow the higher operations of its soul. Thus, the separation of active and passive powers of generation is for the sake of the higher operations of soul – sentient operations in non-rational animals, and rational operation in humans.

Thomas adds that the gradation of degrees of perfection that results from the separation of the active and passive powers into numerically distinct though specifically like individuals augments the richness and perfection of nature in general. Thus, even beyond roles in generation, the distinction of male and female constitutes of greater perfection of nature.

Efficient Cause: The agent cause is, finally, the form in act in the father working through the instrumental causality of the semen. Thus it is the substantial form as perfectly in act – i.e., as having the power to produce another like itself – that is the agent. However, in the case of man as regards his intellectual soul, the direct agency of God is necessary.

Material Cause: The material cause is in the *mater*, in the mother, in whom is the passive power, the fitting matter without which generation cannot occur. Thus, the principles of nature play out in the male and female in the act of generation: The male plays the formal role. In the female, there is the matter with the privation of and potential for the form received from the male.

VI. FATHERHOOD AND MALENESS

Discerning the relationship of maleness to fatherhood is the primary query of this work as a whole. I will address the question formally in Chapter 11. However, the step from defining maleness to fatherhood is a short one for Thomas. Therefore, I will very briefly examine Thomas's thought on the question of fatherhood. It appears that, for Thomas, the relationship of maleness to fatherhood is that of a power to the perfection or completion of that power. To be male is to possess the active power of generation. To be a father is to stand in relation to one generated or begotten as his generator. Thus, fatherhood regards the operation and completion of the active power of generation. Thus fatherhood relates to maleness as the culmination of the operation of the power. In explaining why the term "generator" is not more fitting than the term "father" in reference to the First Person of the Trinity, Thomas writes:

According to the philosopher, a thing is denominated chiefly by its perfection, and by its end. Now generation signifies something in process of being made, whereas paternity signifies the complement of generation....⁴²

To be male refers to the active power of generation. To be a father refers not only to the power, but to the completion of that power. Fatherhood, then, is a kind of completion of maleness; it is the realization of that to which maleness is ordered.

VII. BEYOND THE ACTIVE AND PASSIVE POWERS

As I noted at the beginning of this chapter, it is not my intention to give an in-depth analysis of Thomas's position on sexual differentiation, but rather only the fundamentals of this position. However, it must be noted that the differences between the human male and female go beyond the having of the active or passive power of generation; the negative consequences of the less-perfect development of the female extend beyond the distinct roles in generation. I introduced the notion of the inferiority of the female above when discussing how the varying degrees of perfection in the human race, generally constituted by the distinction between man and woman, lead to a greater perfection of nature. The civic subjection of women to men is, then, not a result of sin, but part of the natural order.

⁴² "Ad secundum dicendum quod, secundum philosophum, in II de anima, denominatio rei maxime debet fieri a perfectione et fine. Generatio autem significat ut in fieri, sed paternitas significat complementum generationis. Et ideo potius est nomen divinae personae pater, quam generans vel genitor (ST.I.33.2 ad 2)."

Thomas sees a kind of weakness of both body and soul as at least consistent with, if not following from the imperfect begetting and lack of active power in the female. In texts quoted above regarding woman's natural subjection, Thomas characterizes woman as lesser regarding both the vigor of soul and of body.⁴³ Further, in men there is a greater abundance of the discretion of reason.⁴⁴ In the *Summa Contra Gentiles*, Thomas argues that the natural weakness of woman is not incompatible with her presence in the resurrection. In fact, "such weakness is no departure from nature, but is intended by nature. This natural differentiation will argue the thoroughgoing perfection of nature, and commend the divine wisdom that arranges creation in diversity of ranks and orders."⁴⁵

The nature and extent of the differences between male and female is certainly a matter of debate - a debate that I wish to avoid at this juncture. In *The Concept of Woman*, Prudence Allen devotes a section to Thomas's view of how men and women differ with regard to wisdom and with regard to virtue.⁴⁶ Pia de Solenni offers a rendering that emphasizes the general intent of nature in producing women and so emphasizes those aspects of Thomas's understanding of woman that manifest the complementarity of male and female.⁴⁷ I refer the reader to these works for a more detailed discussion of possible interpretation of Thomas' work as a whole regarding sexual differentiation.

Discussion and Conclusion

Thomas, up to a point, relied upon an understanding of biology inherited from Aristotle. In that biology, male and female are contrarities in which the male corresponds to act and the female to matter/potency. The explanation of the difference between male and female lies, in part, in the imperfect generation of the female. The form cannot achieve its full realization in the female and so settles for a lesser instantiation. Thus, the male possesses the substantial form more perfectly, though each indeed possesses the form - there is no difference in species.

A certain tension remains within Thomas's thought on sexual differentiation. This tension is, perhaps, manifest in the cross-purposes that exist between individual nature and general nature. Individual nature seeks always to produce a male. It is only the failure of individual nature that accounts for the production of the female. The male, by nature, possesses a greater degree of

⁴³ ST.S.81.2 ad 2.

⁴⁴ ST.I.92.1 ad 2.

⁴⁵ SCG.4.88.

⁴⁶ Allen, *The Concept of Woman*, 399-407.

⁴⁷ de Solenni, *A Hermeneutic of Aquinas's Mens Through a Sexually Differentiated Epistemology*, 124-266.

perfection in virtue of possessing the active power of generation. Thus, the begetting of the female is imperfect, a *mas occasionatus*, where the semen and its active power have failed to produce its like.

Yet nature in general intends this imperfection. In fact, in the state of innocence, Thomas hypothesizes that the parent could will the production of a male or female by willing the disposition of body that leads to one or the other. An objector states that every agent will always produce its like unless prevented by some deficiency either in the active power or in the matter (*vel propter defectum virtutis, vel propter indispositionem materiae*). But, the objector continues, in the state of innocence neither active nor passive power would be subject to defect; therefore, the active power would have always succeeded in producing its like, another male. Thomas responds that it is not only defects of the active or passive power that can produce a female; at times, either internal or external conditions can lead to the generations of a male or female. In the state of perfection, having greater control of her body, presumably the mother could *will* that disposition of her body that would lead to the production of a male or female. This would be, however, to thwart the intention of the individual active power. It is here that the dissonance arises: the production of the female is imperfect and contrary to the intention of the individual active power yet can be supervened, ironically, according to the will of woman, in favor of the general purpose of nature. This appears to mark a certain lack of harmony that is uncharacteristic of Thomas. The question of exactly to what extent Thomas embraced the equality of women, I leave to others. What appears clear is that the key to the distinction between male and female lies in the possession of the active or passive powers of generation. It was nature's intent to separate these powers in the male and female in certain species of animal. Further differences flow from this distinction.

As I now proceed to offer an account based upon all the evidence amassed up to this point, I hope to show how modifying the manner in which the distinction of the active and passive powers in male and female is understood resolves the dissonance found in Thomas's account while preserving his fundamental principles.

Chapter 9

Defining the Male: A Causal Analysis

INTRODUCTION

What is the essential difference between male and female? If one is to know the essential difference between two things, presumably, one must first know the essences of the entities one wishes to distinguish. In the previous chapter, I presented Thomas's position in which the male is defined in terms of having the active power of generation. In this chapter, I attempt to adapt Thomas's thought on the essence of maleness to the findings of contemporary science. I will argue that the key to understanding maleness is understanding its nature as a quality inhering in a substance, and understanding the relationship of that quality to the substantial form of the being in which it inheres. As a quality, maleness is a determination of substance according to a certain measure. This chapter seeks to elucidate that measure. I will argue that the measure that determines maleness centers upon a specific role in the divided power of generation, but cannot be understood as applying only to the act of generation. I offer that maleness must be considered as ordered not only to reproduction (understood narrowly as the generation of the substantial being of offspring), but also as regards the perfection of the substantial being in the offspring. Yet further, I offer that maleness must be understood in terms of its ordering to femaleness and to the common good of the species in which it inheres.

My principal concern is with maleness as it exists in human beings - that which I will refer to as masculinity. Maleness, however, is said of many living things, ranging from various species of plants to human beings. It appears that common speech uses the word "male" univocally when referring to maleness in various species. I therefore must consider the common notion of maleness, i.e. that in virtue

of which “male” is said of various species. However, the complexity of the predication “male” demands that the chapter begin with a discussion of the difficulties involved in understanding what is meant by the word “male.” Thus, Section I introduces questions regarding inter-special, intra-special, and intra-individual uses of the word “male.” In Section II, I discuss the common notion of maleness. In Section III, I treat maleness as it exists in humans, or masculinity.

In attempting to explain maleness generally, in Section II, and particularly, in Section III, I provide a causal analysis, i.e. I explain the reality that is maleness by means of understanding the causes that account for its existence. In both Sections II and III, I follow the same order: I begin with the formal cause and consider the powers and operations associated with the form. I next briefly consider the agent and material causes of maleness. Finally, I consider the final cause of maleness. Thus, I reflect on four questions, first generally – as regards the common notion of maleness – and then more particularly, regarding maleness in the human being: 1) What is maleness? (And following from this question: what can maleness do and what does maleness do? 2) What makes maleness? 3) What is maleness made from? 4) Why is there maleness?¹

I. QUESTIONS AND DIFFICULTIES

1. *Interspecial predication*

“Male” is said of many things. John is male. This dog is male. This cannabis plant is male. The predication is even regularly extended to inanimate objects, such as electrical plugs. How do these predications relate to each other? Does one mean the same thing by “male” when referring to a man, a monkey, a fish, or a plant? If there is a difference – if the predication is not univocal – how do the various predications relate? Is a man more male than a dog? If so, how are such degrees of maleness to be determined?

2. *Intraspecial predication*

Considering two members of the same species, is it proper to speak of gradations of maleness? Can one man be more male than another? Can one man be more masculine or manly than another? Regarding these latter two questions, are

¹ I have chosen to follow this order because I think it generally follows the order in which the mind comes to know causes in caused things. First the formal cause is generally understood (in which the material cause is implicit), next the agent cause, and lastly the final cause. For the purpose of greater precision, I have chosen to treat the material cause separately though briefly. See ST.I.5.4. Also see Stephen L. Brock, *Action and Conduct* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1998), 118-127 for a discussion of the order of causes.

they different questions, and, if so, how do they differ and how do they relate to each other?

3. *Intraindividual predication*

In Chapter 1, I noted Simon Baron-Cohen's categorizing of five levels of sexual difference.²

- a) Chromosomal: XY is male.
- b) Gonadal: Testes are male.
- c) Genital: Penis and scrotum are male.
- d) Brain: Greater lateralization of brain function is male.
- e) Behavior: A greater level of physical aggression is male.

Each of these levels marks a realm of predication within an individual. In nature's normal course, all of these levels are consistent, beginning with the first and flowing to the final manifestation of maleness in male-typical behaviors. However, it is evident from Chapter 1, that these levels of sexual difference are not always consistent. The intersex disorders seemingly render possible almost every permutation. For example, recall that in the case of complete androgen insensitivity (CAIS), the chromosomal composition is XY leading, the proto-gonads to form as testes. The cells that are supposed to react to androgens produced by the testes are unable to respond thereto and so form according the default pattern, which is female. If the cells that will become the external genital organs and the developing brain cannot respond to androgens - and so form according to a female pattern - behavior also tends to be female typical. Thus, levels a and b are "male" while c - e are seemingly "female."

Further, almost all differences in the latter two categories, "brain" and "behavior," exist in overlapping distributions. In this way, they are similar to physical differences such as height: while, on average, men are taller than women, there are some women who are taller than men. Similarly, while on average men may have smaller corpora callosa and tend to be more physically aggressive than women there are women with smaller corpora callosa and women who are more physically aggressive. Current scientific research indicates that many differences in brain structure, function, and organization, as well behavioral differences are distinctions *on average* or distinctions in *tendencies*; they are not absolute distinctions. Thus, it is reasonable to ask how each of the five predications of "male" relate to the predication "John is male." Is the essence of "maleness" contained in one of these levels while the others are merely modes of perfection of the essence? Or, is it rather

² Baron-Cohen, ED, 97-98. Baron-Cohen was making the point for human sexual difference - all these categories do not hold for all species. Nevertheless, the general point remains relevant.

the case that the essence is had in greater or lesser degrees - as whiteness, for instance, can be had in greater or lesser degree - with the above levels marking the measures of more and less? Obviously, these latter questions directly regard the question of the essence of maleness and so must be addressed in both of the following sections.

4. *Univocal and analogical*

Perhaps, each of the general questions listed above can be conceived as an aspect of a broader question regarding univocal versus analogical predication. The predication "male" is applicable in many instances. In which of these are the predications univocal, in which instances analogical, and in which perhaps even metaphorical?

Definitive resolution of all of these questions is beyond the scope of this dissertation. Nonetheless, the conclusion of this work will include a tentative solution and response to the above questions and difficulties. The research presented in Chapters 1-8 demonstrates that there is *some* common notion of maleness that applies across species. It is presumably in light of this common notion of sexual difference that Thomas said that male and female are *per se* predications of *animal*.

Considering the great differences in species in which the male-female division exists, the predications must obtain at a very high level, which includes not only almost all animals but also many plants. Perhaps the predication of maleness and femaleness are similar to that of the power of nutrition: the power of nutrition is said of the simplest living organism and is likewise said of humans. Even though there is a meaningful sense in which "nutrition" can be said univocally of man and bacteria, it is a predication that obtains at the level of "living substance;" when one arrives at the power of nutrition as it actually exists in a particular species, one finds great difference in the manifestation of the power of nutrition, even though the predication is univocal. In the case of the human and the amoeba, nutrition means fundamentally the same thing (e.g., the power of living thing to sustain its being by incorporating food into its being.) Though the means by which a human and simple organisms achieve nutrition vary vastly, the nutrition means the same thing when said of all living things. Is maleness similar to nutrition in that it means fundamentally the same thing when said of plant and of human or does the concept itself mean something different when said of various species such that predication must be considered analogical?³ With these questions and difficulties in mind, I

³ For a brief but informative discussion of analogy see Lawrence Dewan, O.P., "St. Thomas and Analogy: The Logician and the Metaphysician," in *Form and Being: Studies in Thomistic Metaphysics* (Washington, DC: The Catholic University of America Press, 2006), 81-95.

proceed to Section II to attempt to capture the common notion of maleness as it applies across species.

II. THE COMMON NOTION OF MALENESS

1. Definition: maleness as a quality

i. *General observations:* Before offering a definition of maleness, a few considerations regarding its general ontological status and the implication of this status for definition are in order. The first question regards whether or not maleness indicates a substance. At the beginning of the *Categories*, Aristotle observes that a substance, when taken as referring to a particular substance, is neither said of nor present in a subject, and, when taken as a universal, is said of but not present in a substance.⁴ Such predications either indicate a primary substance or say what that substance is simply. Thus, “John” indicates a primary substance. The phrase “John is human” says what John is. Humanity is said of John but is not present in John; human is what John is simply. The phrase “John is male” by contrast does not indicate what John is simply – John is human; it rather says something more about John – something in addition to his being human. Maleness is something said of John but also present in him as being something that does not name John’s essence simply but rather indicates a mode of the existence of that essence.

If maleness does not indicate the substance of a living thing, it must indicate some mode of accidental being in that substance. Thomas refers to maleness and femaleness as qualities.⁵ A quality, considered generally, is a determination of substance according to a certain measure.⁶ Maleness, however, indicates just that: a determination of substance. Much of this chapter is dedicated to refining the understanding of maleness as a quality. Based upon the insight of Aristotle and Thomas and the general agreement of the notion maleness with the notion of quality, I begin with the thesis that maleness is a quality. As the chapter continues, the nature of maleness as a quality should become clearer; thus the thesis that maleness is a quality is tested.

⁴ Aristotle, *Categories*, in *The Complete Works of Aristotle*, trans. J. L. Ackrill, ed. Jonathan Barnes (Princeton: The Princeton University Press, 1984), 2a.

⁵ Thomas Aquinas, CM, Book 7, Lecture 4, § 1350: “For there is no definition of odd without number, or of female, which signifies a certain quality of animal, without animal. (*Non enim definitio imparis est sine numero; nec definitio feminini, quod significat quamdam qualitatem animalis, est sine animali.*)” Also see Aristotle *Metaphysics*, Book 10, Chapter 9, 1058b 22.

⁶ See ST.I-II.49.2.

I begin formal consideration of maleness by offering a preliminary definition and then proceed to refine and expand that definition. However, yet one more preliminary point is in order before offering an initial definition: Definition applies principally to substance; most properly a definition can only be given of a substance.⁷ Sex, understood as a quality, must have reference to that in which it inheres. Thus, because sex – male or female – is an accidental property of substances, it can be defined only in a secondary sense of definition. In fact, its status as a quality is likely at root of many of the difficulties mentioned in the first section of this chapter. I will further argue that sex's reference to the substance in which it inheres is of great importance.

ii. *Preliminary definition:* As I noted in the introduction to this chapter, “male” is said of many species of living beings. Having made an initial argument and hypothesis that maleness does not refer to a substance, but a quality, I will begin by offering a definition of maleness as it is used in common speech and in typical biological parlance. I will then proceed to refine this definition. A definition could be worded as follows:

In those species that reproduce by means of the fusion of two cells, the nuclei of which each contain a separated strand of DNA which combine with each other, a male is that modality of a living substance which is ordered to the production of the simpler of these two cells, *viz.* spermatozoa.

Spermatozoa can be consistently distinguished from the other type of reproductive cell, ova, in that spermatozoa, generally speaking, contain only a nucleus, having the half strand of the father's DNA, and that which is necessary – in the case of motile sperm – to move towards the awaiting ovum, and to penetrate to its nucleus. Ova, by contrast, are larger cells, containing not only the mother's DNA, but also the other principal, inherent components needed for the survival and thriving of the offspring immediately after fertilization. Spermatozoa and ova are equally what are called haploid cells in that they each contain half the chromosomes proper to an actual individual substance. The male, then, is that member of the species ordered towards the reproduction of the species through the production and dissemination of spermatozoa. This is, more or less, the definition offered by Pinker, discussed briefly in Chapter 2. It defines maleness in terms of the proper power to which it is ordered.

One thing to note about the above definition is the level at which predication “male” obtains: Thomas thought that male and female were *per se* predications of *animal*. If, however, there are animals of whom male and female are

⁷ See Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, Book 7, Chapter 4, 1030a 18-1030b 14.

not said, e.g. starfish, and plants of which male and female are said, then “animal” cannot be the proper level of the predication. Neither can one raise the level of predication to the level of “living substance” – as is the case, for example, with nutrition – for “male” and “female” are not said of *all* living substances. Rather, it appears that male and female is said of all those substances that reproduce in a certain way, *viz.* by means of one parent splitting its DNA and combining it with that divided DNA of another member of its species.

At first evaluation, this determination of the level of predication may appear meaningless in that it may appear tautological: to say that male that maleness is predicated at the level of living things that reproduce by means of the genetic combining of two split nuclei is to say that sexual difference holds where there is sexual reproduction. While such a characterization of the level of predication of maleness might be true, it adds nothing to the conversation. In response to this objection, something observed in Chapter 2.III.2 must be recalled: reproduction by means two haploid cells does not in of itself imply sexual difference. In fact, as will be noted later in this chapter (Section II.4), biologists find it quite remarkable that what is commonly referred to as sexual reproduction occurs by means of only two mating types that can be consistently characterized as either male or female. Thus, it is not an *a priori* fact that reproduction by means of haploid cells is universally achieved by what can be consistently categorized as the two mating types, male and female. It is remarkable, then, that in all species that reproduce by means of the genetic contribution of two parents, that the two parents are distinct mating types and that they are, moreover, distinct in a manner that is fundamentally the same, *viz.* one mating type produces spermatozoa, and the other, ova. It is in virtue of the sameness of mating types that the name “male” is given across species from plant to human. Thus, to repeat, in living things that reproduce by means of the genetic contribution of two individuals of the species, the male is that member of a species ordered to reproduction by means of spermatozoa and the female is ordered to reproduction by means of ova.

While the above rendering is sufficient for identifying the male, it is not complete; much work remains to be done in filling out the meaning of maleness as a quality. However, before, exploring why the first definition offered is not complete, a few clarifying remarks must be made. I will then further clarify and expand the definition. The first point regards distinguishing power and essence. The second regards the mechanisms that lead to maleness or femaleness.

Point 1: Power and essence: One might be inclined to say that maleness precisely is the power to produce spermatozoa and femaleness the power to produce ova in a way similar to which one might say that the essence of the human being is

the power of reason. In both cases, identifying the essence with the power would be mistaken.⁸

If the power to produce spermatozoa were the essence of maleness, it would follow that until this power were actually present, the living being in question could not be called “male.” Thus, a pre-pubescent boy, who technically cannot yet produce spermatozoa, would not yet be male. Similarly, a postmenopausal woman would no longer be female.⁹ These conclusions would follow were the essence of being male or female identical with having the power. As such, the power to produce a gamete, while clearly related the essence of maleness, must not be the very essence.

Lawrence Dewan offers some useful observations on the distinction between human essence and powers as understood by Thomas; his observations are useful in understanding how sexual difference relates to the power of generation. Dewan’s discussion of power and essence centers on ST.I.77.1 where Thomas addresses the question of whether the essence of the soul is the power of reason. Dewan notes that Thomas’s argumentation in ST.I.77.1 depends upon his earlier argumentation in ST.I.54.1-3 where Thomas considers angelic knowledge. Dewan comments:

Thomas recalls the distinction between actions which remain in the agent, such as to sense, to understand, and to will, and actions which project forth and influence something else, such as to heat and to cut. The problem is not here with these latter, since they are not easily confused with the substance of the act of being of the agent. However, “I understand” and “I am” might be confused, and so the basis of distinction is the object of the operation: such operations as understanding and willing have an infinite object, *viz.* all things, whereas the creaturely act of being is finite.¹⁰

In order to distinguish the essence of human person from the power most associated with that essence, following Thomas, Dewan looks to the *object* of the essence versus the *object* of the power. The object of the essence of a substance is the being in act of that substance; the essence is directed towards and realized in the actual existence of the substance, which existence is finite. The object of the power of reason and will, however, is infinite. The human essence, therefore, is something that precedes and

⁸ For an explanation of why the power of reason is not man’s essence see ST.I.77.1.

⁹ It is not said of a postmenopausal woman that “she used to be a woman” in the same way that it is said of someone who can no longer throw that “he used to be a pitcher” or of a blind man that “he used to be able to see.”

¹⁰ Lawrence Dewan, O.P., “Nature as a Metaphysical Object,” in *Form and Being: Studies in Thomistic Metaphysics* (Washington, DC: The Catholic University of America Press, 2006), 218.

stands under the power, even though its perfection comes through the operation of its powers.¹¹

The case of the relation of sex to the power of generation, though very different in many ways from the relation of the soul's essence to its powers is, nevertheless, somewhat similar. The object of the power of generation, whether it is according to the male mode or the female mode, is the offspring. However, the object of the quality "sex," is the substance, which is modified according to a certain measure. Sex, male or female, is something that lies under and precedes the particular mode of having the power of generation.

A further argument can be made regarding the end of the qualities "male" or "female" and the end of the power of generation. While including the end of the power of generation, the *telos* of "male" and "female" is broader than the end of the power of generation.¹² Thus, again, the power of generation and the essence of maleness cannot be equated. As the substance's essence is something that underlies its powers, in a similar way, sex is something that precedes and supports the power of generation associated with it.

Point 2: Mechanisms of differentiation: With the recognition that the essence of sexual difference is not properly the male or female mode of having the power of generation, one might be inclined to place the essence of maleness in the Y

¹¹ See ST.I.77.1: "For as a form the soul is not an act ordained to a further act, but the ultimate term of generation. Wherefore, for it to be in potentiality to another act, does not belong to it according to its essence, as a form, but according to its power. So the soul itself, as the subject of its power, is called the first act, with a further relation to the second act." ("Non enim, in quantum est forma, est actus ordinatus ad ulteriorem actum, sed est ultimus terminus generationis. Unde quod sit in potentia adhuc ad alium actum, hoc non competit ei secundum suam essentiam, in quantum est forma; sed secundum suam potentiam. Et sic ipsa anima, secundum quod subest suae potentiae, dicitur actus primus, ordinatus ad actum secundum.") The question of the relationship of the substance's essence to its powers is indeed a difficult one. I will speak of this more when speaking of the emanation of *per se* accidents from the essence of a substance. See ST.I.77.6 and Dewan, *Form and Being*, 221-222.

¹² Thomas writes: "For as a form the soul is not an act ordained to a further act, but the ultimate term of generation." ("Non enim, in quantum est forma, est actus ordinatus ad ulteriorem actum, sed est ultimus terminus generationis (ST.I.77.1).") Strictly speaking, the end of the act of generation is the advent of the substantial form in the offspring. It will become clear throughout this chapter that the end of maleness and femaleness extends beyond the end of the act of generation strictly speaking (*viz.* the substantial being of the offspring) to the perfection of the offspring and to the common goods of the family and the *polis*.

chromosome. Doing so, however, immediately results in many difficulties. Biologist R. A. Lockshin poignantly summarizes these difficulties:

Likewise, a student's impression of sex as decided by X and Y chromosomes is a vastly anthropocentric oversimplification. Sex chromosomes are characteristic only of higher land animals. In fish, amphibians, or aquatic invertebrates, sex may be determined by single genes and readily reversed by exogenous steroids or other chemicals; there are even fish that casually switch from one sex to another, and fish in which different races manifest male heterozygosity or female heterozygosity. Reptiles may be parthenogenic, or the sex of the embryo may be determined by temperature. The Y chromosome has evolved rapidly and arbitrarily. In birds, the heterogametic sex is female and the sex chromosomes are not related to the sex chromosomes of mammals. This is true also of insects, for in flies the male is (usually) the heterogametic sex. The evolution of sex chromosomes has occurred several times, independently, among higher insects, birds and mammals. Presumably the individuation of the sex chromosome, as opposed to sex genes, has some value for the anatomical differentiation required for internal fertilization.¹³

There are many mechanisms that initiate the process of sexual differentiation. Sexual differentiation at the instigation of the Y chromosome is a method utilized only by humans and our closest neighbors in the scheme of living things.¹⁴ Thus the common notion of maleness cannot be defined in terms of the Y chromosome. Having offered a preliminary definition and having clarified that the common notion of maleness can be equated with neither the power of generation nor the Y chromosome, I must now to further refine the notion of maleness as a quality.

iii. *The qualities of qualities*: In order to understand maleness with greater precision, one must understand quality with greater precision; doing so is no easy task. Aristotle offers two divisions of quality, one in the *Categories* and one in the *Metaphysics*. These divisions are according to the nature of the sciences to which they pertain: logic in the first case, and metaphysics in the latter.¹⁵ I will use as my principal text for discussing the various aspects of quality Thomas's brief but incisive treatment of quality in ST.II.49.2. I have chosen to use this text for it deftly integrates the analyses offered by Aristotle in the *Categories* and the *Metaphysics*.

¹³ R. A. Lockshin, "Gender differences: the perspective from biology," *Lupus* 8 (1999): 364.

¹⁴ It is interesting to note in passing, that the position held by Aristotle and Thomas, viz. that temperature determined sex, appears to be vindicated - to a certain extent - in some reptiles for whom temperature plays the crucial role in determining sex.

¹⁵ For a commentary on the division given in the *Metaphysics* with reference to the divisions in the *Categories* that includes an explanation of discrepancies in the two divisions see Thomas Aquinas, CM, Book 5, Lecture 16.

A brief and somewhat simplified list of kinds of qualities as offered by Aristotle will be helpful. In the *Metaphysics*, Aristotle reduces the division of qualities to two general kinds. In his commentary on the *Metaphysics*, Thomas describes the first sense of quality as follows: "The term quality is used in one sense as "substantial difference," i.e., the difference by which one thing is distinguished substantially from another and which is included in the definition of the substance."¹⁶ Regarding the second fundamental sense of quality, Thomas writes: "The second basic sense in which quality is used is that in which the modifications of things which are moved as such, and also the differences of things which are moved, are called qualities."¹⁷ The kinds of quality enumerated by Aristotle in the *Categories* fall under the second general classification in the *Metaphysics*.¹⁸ The list of qualities as given in the *Categories*¹⁹ is as follows:

1. Habits and dispositions
2. Natural abilities and inabilities
3. Affections and affective qualities
4. Shape and external form

Explanation of each classification is a complex matter that has been much discussed throughout the history of philosophy.²⁰ My goal here is not to enter into such controversies, but rather to provide the proper context for the discussion of

¹⁶ "Dicit ergo primo, quod unus modus qualitatis est secundum quod qualitas dicitur differentia substantiae, idest differentia, per quam aliquid ab altero substantialiter differt, quae intrat in definitionem substantiae. Et propter hoc dicitur, quod differentia praedicatur in quale quid (CM, Book 5, Lecture 16, § 987)."

¹⁷ "Secundus modus principalis est, ut passiones motorum in quantum mota, et etiam differentiae motuum dicantur qualitates (CM, Book 5, Lecture 16, § 998)."

¹⁸ The first type of quality given in the *Metaphysics* is not included in the *Categories* for presumably, logically speaking, specific difference pertains to secondary substance. See CM, Book 5, Lecture 16, § 988. Further the second type of quality from classification in the *Categories*, 9a 14-27 – ability and inability – is not included among the kinds of quality in the *Metaphysics* as metaphysical consideration places "ability" and "inability" among powers. See CM, Book 5, Lecture 16, § 995: "Now he [Aristotle] omits the second of these senses of quality because it is contained rather under power, since it is signified only as a principle which resists modification. But it is given in the *Categories* among the kinds of quality because of the way in which it is named. However, according to its mode of being it is contained rather under power, as he also held above (§ 960)."

¹⁹ Aristotle, *Categories*, 8b 25-10a 16.

²⁰ For a general discussion Aristotle's division of quality including some of the principal controversies that surround his division see: Paul Studtmann, "Aristotle's *Categories*," *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Fall 2007 Edition), ed. Edward N. Zalta, <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2007/entries/aristotle-categories/> (accessed June 29, 2008).

maleness as a quality. As stated above, I will follow Thomas's interpretation of Aristotle primarily as this interpretation appears in ST.I-II.49.2.

To deepen the understanding of maleness as a quality I will first present the most fundamental characterization of quality offered by Thomas; this is to see quality as a certain measure of a substance. I then attempt to present how maleness is a measure. Next, I discuss the most basic division of quality: the distinction between specific differences and non-specific differences. I will then attempt to place maleness within one of the two fundamental categories of quality. Finally, I attempt to demonstrate the relationship of maleness to the essential principles of the substance in which it inheres and thereby make even more precise the nature of maleness as an accidental form. In this way, I hope to make clear the accidental form of maleness and the powers and operations associated with it.

In addressing the question of whether or not habit is a quality, Thomas offers a concise characterization of quality:

For quality, properly speaking, implies a certain mode of substance. Now mode, as Augustine says (*Gen. ad lit.* iv, 3), "is that which a measure determines:" wherefore it implies a certain determination according to a certain measure. Therefore, just as that in accordance with which the material potentiality is determined to its substantial being, is called quality, which is a difference affecting the substance [*quae est differentia substantiae*], so that, in accordance with the potentiality of the subject is determined to its accidental being, is called an accidental quality, which is also a kind of difference, as is clear from the Philosopher.²¹

In this text, one finds a fundamental definition of quality and the fundamental division of qualities:²² a quality is a certain mode of a substance. It determines a substance according to a certain measure. The determination of a substance can happen in two principal ways: First, the substance can be determined precisely *according to its substantial being*. This type of quality determines the potency of matter so as to give a thing its being *as the kind of thing it is*. For example, rationality

²¹ "Proprie enim qualitas importat quendam modum substantiae. Modus autem est, ut dicit Augustinus, *super Gen. ad litteram*, quem mensura praefigit, unde importat quendam determinationem secundum aliquam mensuram. Et ideo sicut id secundum quod determinatur potentia materiae secundum esse substantiale dicitur qualitas quae est differentia substantiae; ita id secundum quod determinatur potentia subiecti secundum esse accidentale, dicitur qualitas accidentalis, quae est etiam quaedam differentia, ut patet per philosophum in V *Metaphys* (ST.I-II.49.2)."

²² The first division of quality in ST.I-II.49.2 is the primary division noted by Aristotle in *Metaphysics* Book 5, Chapter 14, 1020a 33-1020b 17, and commented upon by Thomas in CM, Book 5, Lecture 16, § 987-988, 996.

determines the matter that will become human in such a way as to make it human.²³ Though not listed among qualities in the *Categories*, Aristotle claims that such a determination of matter, i.e. according to its substantial being, is the primary instance of quality.²⁴ The second general kind of quality does not determine the potency of matter simply, but rather determines the potency of a subject not according to its substantial being – which it already has – but to its accidental being. This kind of determination, while obviously less dramatic than the former, is nevertheless a mode of determination. This category is the second general category noted in the *Metaphysics* and regards “the modifications of things which are moved as such, and also the differences of things which are moved...”²⁵ Thus, the second division regards the determination of potencies of a substance not regarding that which defines its essence, but that which determines its accidental being. I will thus refer to the second general category as accidental qualities. Accidental qualities can be divided roughly according to the division of the *Categories*.

In order to sharpen the understanding of maleness as a quality, based on the preliminary definition, I will first discuss how maleness “measures” a substance. Next I will consider if maleness is a substantial quality or and accidental quality. Having concluded that it is an accidental quality, I will briefly discuss the kinds of accidental quality and discuss which of these categories best suits maleness.

iv. Mode and measure: Maleness, as a quality, determines *a substance* according to a certain measure. What is this measure? To be male is, first of all, to be determined to a certain role in the divided power of generation; it is to be determined as that member of the species which can provide spermatozoa in the act of generation. Thus the male is determined according to the measure of a role, which role minimally regards²⁶ production and dissemination of spermatozoa. Maleness is the modality of a member of a species that orders it to enacting this role. As such, the meaning of the accidental form “maleness” is bound to the power of generation; for the divided power of generation is the measure that defines it.

The term of generation is the substantial form of the offspring. While maleness and femaleness foundationally regard the act of generation, one must ask the question as to whether the measure that determines maleness extends beyond the term of the act of generation. To be male is to be determined according to a certain role in the act of generation; but, does maleness regard more than just the act of generation? Some of Thomas’s insights regarding the question of the sinfulness of

²³ Here I am speaking not of the power of reason, but of the rational soul. See ST.I.77.1 and the discussion above regarding the distinction between power and essence.

²⁴ *Metaphysics*, Bk. 5, Ch. 14, 1020b 15-17.

²⁵ CM, Book 5, Lecture 16, § 998.

²⁶ Throughout this chapter, I will develop the broader role of maleness.

fornication are helpful in understanding what could be called the amplitude of the measure that determines maleness. Thomas observes that:

man's generative process would be frustrated unless it were followed by proper nutrition, because the offspring would not survive if proper nutrition were withheld. Therefore, the emission of semen ought to be so ordered that it will result in both the production of the proper offspring and in the upbringing of this offspring.²⁷

While the operations proper to maleness are foundationally those in reference to the act of generation, nevertheless the operations of the accidental form extend beyond the generation of the substantial being of the offspring to the perfection of the offspring; without such "expansion," the act of generation would be in vain. The character of this extension, however, depends upon the substantial form in question. Thus, while the fundamental measure of maleness is the same for all species and regards the production and dissemination of spermatozoa, the accidental form of maleness is ordered to the perfection of the substantial form in the offspring in distinct manners in different species. As such, maleness must be understood in the context of its species. As Thomas indicates above, in the case of humans, the purpose of generation would be frustrated if the male did not contribute to the rearing of offspring. In other species, such is not always the case.

I will offer a more complete analysis of what might be called "the expansion of the measure" when treating the human male in Section II of this chapter. However, reflection on the phenomena presented in Chapters 1 and 2 provides enough data to offer some general characterizations of how the measure according to which a male is determined extends beyond being ordered to the production of the male gamete. I first argued above that, in addition to being ordered to the production of a gamete and the act of generation by means of that gamete, the powers and operations associated with maleness are also ordered to the *perfection* of the substantial form in the offspring. In addition to its ordering to the substantial form simply and in its perfection the offspring, maleness must also be seen in virtue of its ordering to the female. To have the male mode of the generative power is necessarily to be ordered to the female. The male mode without the female obviously cannot achieve its primary end, which is generation; in a sense, the unification of the male and the female completes the nature of given species by unifying a divided power. Though the exact nature of what is needed varies from species to species,

²⁷ "Frustra autem esset hominis generatio nisi et debita nutritio sequeretur: quia generatum non permaneret, debita nutritione subtracta. Sic igitur ordinata esse seminis debet emissio ut sequi possit et generatio conveniens, et geniti education (SCG.3.122)."

nevertheless, successful mating – successful unification of the divided powers of generation – is not simply a matter of having the power to produce the gamete. There are generally other abilities that precede and facilitate the act of mating. An elephant seal must compete violently with other elephant seals; certain male birds are judged by their plumage or the quality of their song. Maleness determines an individual not only according to the power to produce a gamete; it also determines the substance according to a mode of relating to the female. In simpler species, such as plants, the unfolding effects of this determination may be few. In more complex species the determination extends to morphological differences, such as size, musculature, and plumage, but also regards certain behaviors, such as a bird's song or a male bear's scuffle with another male in order to win a female. The ordering of maleness to femaleness is also the basis for sexual desire and that which facilitates such desire in the brain and other organs. The precise character of the determination depends upon the species.

Maleness determines a substance according to a certain measure. The primary aspect of this measure determines a male to a certain role in the divided power of generation. The male is further determined however in its ordering to the flourishing of its offspring and to the female. Later, I will further expand the measure that determines maleness by arguing that maleness must be understood in terms of the common good.²⁸

v. *Substantial qualities*: Subsequent to the above understanding of quality, the first task is to determine what kind of quality maleness is. Is it a *differentia substantiae* or a *qualitas accidentalis*? Interestingly, this is effectively the question taken up by Aristotle in the *Metaphysics* and so by Thomas in his commentary thereon.²⁹ The issue of whether sexual difference in fact divided beings into separate species was pressing for Aristotle and Thomas, for, as I discussed in Chapter 8, both considered the difference between male and female to be a difference of contrariety. The male has the active power; the female lacks the active power of generation. Since it is contraries that divide genera into species, it would seem that male and female are in fact specific differences; and so, where these differences obtain, new species are made. If it were true that “maleness” and “femaleness” differentiated a species, man and woman would be different species.

²⁸ I will first take up the argument of ordering of the male to the common good in Section II.4.

²⁹ Aristotle, *Metaphysics* Book 10, Ch. 9, 1058a 29-1058b 25, and Thomas Aquinas, CM, Book 10, Lecture 11.

Aristotle and Thomas both argue against considering sexual difference as a specific difference.³⁰ Detailed review of these texts is not necessary here, primarily because the question of whether sexual difference is the kind of quality that divides genera into species presupposes that male and female are contraries. As I discussed in Chapter 8, modern biology precludes this understanding, thus eliminating the driving force of the question for Aristotle and Thomas.

In the absence of the idea of contraries, it becomes evident that male and female do not create new species, but rather *must* pertain to the same species. Male and female, rather than dividing a species, can be said to mutually complete it; for the generative power, which is necessary for the existence of the species, is divided between male and female and is complete only with the union of male and female. Male and female contribute equally but in a complementary manner to the form of the offspring – they equally possess the active power of generation. Thus, male and female, as opposed to dividing species, *must* be of the same species as they together complete a *per se* power of the species. If male and female are necessarily members of the same species, it follows that maleness is not a specific difference. Maleness must therefore be what Thomas calls an accidental quality, the type of quality that determines the potency of the subject according to a certain measure.

vi. *An accidental quality*: Maleness determines a substance according to a certain measure. First, I gave a general characterization of the measure in virtue of which maleness modifies a substance. Next, I generally followed Aristotle and Thomas in arguing that maleness does not determine a substance according to its very being as a substance; i.e. it is not a specific difference. I will now further consider the ontological status of the accidental form that is maleness by briefly examining the kinds of quality in an attempt to discover in which category of accidental quality maleness falls.

In describing accidental qualities, Thomas writes:

Now the mode of determination of the subject to accidental being may be taken in regard to the very nature of the subject (*in ordine ad ipsam naturam subiecti*), or in regard to action, and passion resulting from its natural principles, which are matter and form; or again in regard to quantity.... But the mode of determination of the subject, in regard to action or passion, is considered in the second and third species of quality. And therefore in both, we take into account whether a thing be done with ease or difficulty; whether it be transitory or lasting. But in them, we do not consider anything pertaining to the notion of good or evil: because movements and

³⁰ Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, 1058a 29-1058b 25 and Thomas Aquinas, CM, Book 10, Lecture 11, § 2134.

passions have not the aspect of an end, whereas good and evil are said in respect of an end.³¹

Most generally, qualities are divided according to those which determine the substantial form and those which determine accidental form. Of those qualities which determine the accidental form, there are those which determine a substance in regard to its nature, those which determine a substance according to actions and passions that result from the substance's natural principles of matter and form, and those that determine a substance according to its quantity. Thomas observes the second category - actions and passions - correspond to the second and third of Aristotle's classifications in the *Categories*, viz. natural ability and inability, and affects and affective qualities. I will first consider the third category of qualities, affections and affective qualities, and then consider the second category, abilities and inabilities.

As examples of affects and affective qualities, Aristotle gives sweetness, bitterness, sourness, hotness, coldness, paleness, and darkness.³² He also notes how being ashamed can lead to a change of color. The color in this case, however, is not an affective quality but is rather is an effect of the affective quality of being ashamed.³³ Aristotle summarizes this category of quality as follows:

They are called *affective* qualities not because the things that possess them have themselves been affected somehow - for honey is not called sweet because it has been affected somehow nor is any other such thing. Similarly, hotness and coldness are not called affective qualities because the things that possess them have themselves been affected somehow, but it is because each of the qualities mentioned is productive of an affection of the senses that they are called affective qualities.³⁴

³¹ "Modus autem sive determinatio subiecti secundum esse accidentale, potest accipi vel in ordine ad ipsam naturam subiecti; vel secundum actionem et passionem quae consequuntur principia naturae, quae sunt materia et forma; vel secundum quantitatem.... Modus autem sive determinatio subiecti secundum actionem et passionem, attenditur in secunda et tertia specie qualitatis. Et ideo in utraque consideratur quod aliquid facile vel difficile fiat, vel quod sit cito transiens aut diuturnum. Non autem consideratur in his aliquid pertinens ad rationem boni vel mali, quia motus et passionem non habent rationem finis, bonum autem et malum dicitur per respectum ad finem (ST.I-II.49.2)."

³² *Categories*, 9a 30-31.

³³ *Categories*, 9b 10-15.

³⁴ *Categories*, 9a 34-9b 7.

Thomas notes that the third category of quality (action and passion) pertains to the “modifications of mobile substances according to which bodies are changed *through alteration*....”³⁵ Regarding alterations, Aristotle notes in the *Physics* that

states, whether of the body or of the soul, are not alternations. For some are excellences and others defects, and neither excellence nor defect is an alteration: excellence is a perfection (for when anything acquires its proper excellence we call it perfect, since it is then really in its natural state...) while defect is a perishing or departure from this condition.³⁶

The actions and passions of which Aristotle speaks in the third category of quality primarily regard movements of sensation; e.g. something is qualified as sweet that has a certain effect on the sense of taste. Thomas notes that movements associated with this category do not have the notion of an end regarding the perfection of the substances in which they inhere. Thus, in and of themselves, such qualities do not have the notion of good or evil.³⁷ Maleness, however, is not an affection that primarily regards sensation, such as sweet or bitter, hot or cold. Further, as I will argue shortly, maleness is ordered to the very nature of the substance; as such, it is an end or perfection in the substance in which it inheres. Thus maleness is not to be placed primarily in the third category of quality.

Regarding the second category of quality, Aristotle speaks of the natural ability in virtue of which one is said to be a good boxer or healthy. “For it is not because one is in some condition that one is called anything of this sort, but because one has a natural capacity for doing something easily or for being unaffected.”³⁸ Thomas refers to this types of quality as “signified only as a principle which resists modifications.”³⁹ He further notes that this classification of quality is not included in

³⁵ “Tertio ponit ibi, amplius quaecumque dicit, quod etiam qualitates dicuntur passiones substantiarum mobilium, secundum quas corpora per alterationem mutantur... (CM, Book 5, Lecture 16, § 993).” Emphasis added.

³⁶ Aristotle, *Physics*, in *The Complete Works of Aristotle*, trans. R. P. Hardie and R. K. Gaye, ed. Jonathan Barnes (Princeton: The Princeton University Press, 1984), 246a 10-16.

³⁷ See ST.II.49.2: “But in them, we do not consider anything pertaining to the notion of good or evil: because movements and passions have not the aspect of an end, whereas good and evil are said in respect of an end.” See also Aristotle, *Physics*, 246b 4-247a 19.

³⁸ *Categories*, 9a 16-19.

³⁹ “Praetermittit autem inter hos modos secundam qualitatis speciem, quia magis comprehenditur sub potentia, cum non significetur nisi ut principium passioni resistens; sed propter modum denominandi ponitur in praedicamentis inter species qualitatis. Secundum autem modum essendi magis continetur sub potentia, sicut et supra posuit. (CM, Book 5, Lecture 16, § 995).” Thomas here explains why the second kind of given in the *Categories* is omitted from the list in the *Metaphysics*. See also CM Book 5, Lecture 14, § 960.

Aristotle's division in the *Metaphysics*. "But it is given in the *Categories* among the kinds of quality because of the way in which it is named. However according to its mode of being it is contained rather under power...."⁴⁰ When one says "John is healthy" (meaning that John has a healthy constitution - i.e. he does not get sick easily), or "John is a naturally good runner" one predicates these attributes of John according to the mode of a quality. Maleness, however, is not primarily a natural capacity like that in virtue of which one is said to be a good boxer. Neither is maleness a principle which resists modifications like a capacity for health resists the disintegration of health.

The final division of quality is shape: "a fourth kind of quality is shape and the external form of each thing...."⁴¹ Thomas notes that this kind of quality regards the determination of a substance as to its quantity. "And because quantity, considered in itself, is devoid of movement, and does not imply the notion of good or evil, so it does not concern the fourth species of quality whether a thing be well or ill disposed, nor quickly or slowly transitory."⁴² As with the third kind of quality - affections and affective qualities - shape, taken in and of itself, neither implies movement towards an end nor good or evil. It is only in relation to the form of the substance in which the quality inheres that good or evil are considered. While maleness in a given species may have a certain shape that is readily identifiable as being that of a male rather than that of a female (as, for instance, male elephant seals are seven-times larger than females) nevertheless, such differences in shape do not constitute the essence of maleness. To get to the essence of maleness, one must look to the first category of quality.

Maleness regards that mode of determination of substance taken "*in ordine ad ipsam naturam subiecti*." Of the first kind of quality Thomas writes:

[T]he mode or determination of the subject, [T]he regard to the nature of the thing, belongs to the first species of quality, which is habit and disposition: for the Philosopher says (Phys. vii, text. 17), when speaking of habits of the soul and of the body, that they are "dispositions of the perfect to the best; and by perfect I mean that which is disposed in accordance with its nature." And since the form itself and the nature of a thing is the end and the cause why a thing is made (Phys. ii, text. 25), therefore in the first species we consider both evil and good, and also

⁴⁰ CM, Book 5, Lecture 16, § 995.

⁴¹ *Categories*, 10a 11.

⁴² "Et quia quantitas, secundum sui rationem, est sine motu, et sine ratione boni et mali; ideo ad quartam speciem qualitatis non pertinet quod aliquid sit bene vel male, cito vel tarde transiens (ST.I-II.49.2)."

changeableness, whether easy or difficult; inasmuch as a certain nature is the end of generation and movement.⁴³

The first kind regards those qualities that are ordered to the nature of the substance; they are determinations of the substance ordered to the perfection of the substance. As such, in and of themselves they pertain to the goodness of the substance since they regard the perfection of the substance. As determinations of substance, they form a substance and so, in a way, regard movement. The first sense of quality given in the *Metaphysics* regards that which determines a substance to is substantial form. The substantial form in itself does not move; it either exists or does not. Thomas says the second general category of quality from the *Metaphysics* “is used in that in which the modifications of things are moved as such.”⁴⁴ The second general category refers to ways in which an existing substance is moved or modified. The primary category of second general group is closest to the first general category for it includes determinations of the substance that are ordered toward the perfection of the substance and so regard its form. Thus, Thomas says that the first kind of accidental quality considers good and bad; for it is the category of accidental quality that is ordered to the nature of the substance, which means that it is ordered to the perfection of the substance in which it exists.

Before considering why it is that maleness should be included in the first category of accidental quality, a brief review of the scheme of understanding quality I am utilizing will be helpful. Quality is first divided into two general categories. 1) Qualities which determine the potency of matter as to its substantial being. This category refers to specific differences that as it were form matter so as to bring about a substance. 2) Qualities that determine a substance as to its accidental being. The second general category regards the determining of an existing substance. The most radical determining of being is achieved in the first category, regarding which determination a new thing comes to be. The second category refers to how a substance is determined beyond its specific difference.

The second category is subdivided according to those determinations of a substance that are ordered to the very nature of the substance (first kind of quality from the *Categories*), determinations that, though consequent to the matter and form

⁴³ “Sed modus et determinatio subiecti in ordine ad naturam rei, pertinet ad primam speciem qualitatis, quae est habitus et dispositio, dicit enim philosophus, in VII Physic., loquens de habitibus animae et corporis, quod sunt dispositiones quaedam perfecti ad optimum; dico autem perfecti, quod est dispositum secundum naturam. Et quia ipsa forma et natura rei est finis et cuius causa fit aliquid, ut dicitur in II Physic. ideo in prima specie consideratur et bonum et malum; et etiam facile et difficile mobile, secundum quod aliqua natura est finis generationis et motus (ST.II.49.2).”

⁴⁴ CM, Book 5, Lecture 16, § 998.

of the substance, do not in and of themselves regard the nature of the substance (kinds two and three from *Categories*), and those that regard the quantity of the substance (*Categories* kind 4). Thomas evaluates the four kinds of accidental quality as they relate to good and bad, motion, and durability. The fourth type of quality, shape, considered in itself, is not related to motion; hence notions of durability or good and evil do not apply to shape simply as shape. Kinds two and three – natural abilities and affections – do regard movement; thus consideration of whether they are transitory or lasting is in order. However, by definition, they do not regard the very nature of the substance in which they inhere; hence they do not imply the notion of good and evil.

The first category regards determinations of a substance that are ordered to the perfection of the substance, hence they imply good and evil in virtue of how they determine a substance vis-à-vis its perfection. These qualities dispose a thing well or badly regarding its nature. Thomas explains the ordering to the good of the first kind of secondary quality and how it applies chiefly to living things:

For virtue and vice indicate certain differences of motion and activity based on good or bad performance. For virtue is that by which a thing is well disposed to act or be acted upon, and vice is that by which a thing is badly disposed. The same is true of other habits, whether they are intellectual, as science, or corporal, as health. But the terms well and badly relate chiefly to quality in living things, and especially in those having “election,” i.e., choice. And this is true because good has the role of an end or goal. So those things which act by choice act for an end. Now to act for an end belongs particularly to living things. For non-living things act or are moved for an end, not inasmuch as they know the end, or inasmuch as they themselves act for an end, but rather inasmuch as they are directed by something else which gives them their natural inclination, just as an arrow, for example, is directed toward its goal by an archer. And non-rational living things apprehend an end or goal and desire it by an appetite of the soul, and they move locally toward some end or goal inasmuch as they have discernment of it; but their appetite for an end, and for those things which exist for the sake of the end, is determined for them by a natural inclination. Hence they are acted upon rather than act; and thus their judgment is not free. But rational beings, in whom alone choice exists, know both the end and the proportion of the means to the end. Therefore, just as they move themselves toward the end, so also do they move themselves to desire the end and the means; and for this reason they have free choice.⁴⁵

⁴⁵ “Virtus enim et vitium ostendunt quasdam differentias motus et actus secundum bene et male. Nam virtus est, per quam se aliquis habet bene ad agendum et patiendum; vitium autem secundum quod male. Et simile est de aliis habitibus, sive intellectualibus, ut scientia, sive corporalibus, ut sanitas. Sed tamen bene et male maxime pertinet ad qualitatem in rebus animatis; et praecipue in habentibus prohaeresim idest electionem. Et hoc ideo, quia bonum

Being ordered to the perfection of the substance, the first kind of quality applies chiefly to that which is able to order itself to its own end.

One further point must be made before considering maleness in terms of the above divisions of quality. Characteristics that pertain to categories 2-4 of the accidental qualities - i.e. to those qualities that are not *per se* ordered to the nature of the substance - can be considered in the first category of accidental qualities insofar as they are related to the nature of the substance. Thomas responds to an objector who states that *dividing* qualities according to whether or not they are ordered to good and evil is incorrect for *all* qualities are ordered to good and evil:

Disposition implies a certain order, as stated above (1, ad 3). Wherefore a man is not said to be disposed by some quality except in relation to something else. And if we add "well or ill," which belongs to the essential notion of habit, we must consider the quality's relation to the nature, which is the end. So in regard to shape, or heat, or cold, a man is not said to be well or ill disposed, except by reason of a relation to the nature of a thing, with regard to its suitability or unsuitability.⁴⁶

What might be called "pure" first category accidental qualities are in and of themselves ordered to the perfection of the substance. However, qualities such as shape, or temperature considered in relation to the end of the substance can be seen as suitable or not to that substance and thus considered under the aspect of a first category accidental quality.

habet rationem finis. Ea vero, quae agunt per electionem, agunt propter finem. Agere autem propter finem maxime competit rebus animatis. Res enim inanimatae agunt vel moventur propter finem, non tamquam cognoscentes finem, neque tamquam se agentes ad finem; sed potius ab alio diriguntur, qui eis naturalem inclinationem dedit, sicut sagitta dirigitur in finem a sagittante. Res autem irrationales animatae cognoscunt quidem finem et appetunt ipsum appetitu animali, et movent seipsa localiter ad finem tamquam iudicium habentes de fine; sed appetitus finis, et eorum quae sunt propter finem, determinatur eis ex naturali inclinatione. Propter quod sunt magis acta quam agentia. Unde nec in eis est iudicium liberum. Rationalia vero in quibus solum est electio, cognoscunt finem, et proportionem eorum, quae sunt in finem ipsum. Et ideo sicut seipsa movent ad finem, ita etiam ad appetendum finem, vel ea quae sunt propter finem, ex quo est in eis electio libera (CM, Book 5, Lecture 16, § 999-1000)."

⁴⁶ "[D]ispositio ordinem quendam importat, ut dictum est. Unde non dicitur aliquis disponi per qualitatem, nisi in ordine ad aliquid. Et si addatur bene vel male, quod pertinet ad rationem habitus, oportet quod attendatur ordo ad naturam, quae est finis. Unde secundum figuram, vel secundum calorem vel frigus, non dicitur aliquis disponi bene vel male, nisi secundum ordinem ad naturam rei, secundum quod est conveniens vel non conveniens (ST.II.49.2 ad 1)."

To understand how to classify maleness as a quality, one must understand the ordering of maleness to the very nature of substance. At first glance, this ordering seems evident. I have argued that maleness determines a substance to a certain role in the divided power of generation. The role is defined by the kind of gamete that is contributed in the act of generation. I further argued that, while maleness has reference to a certain mode of having the power of generation it cannot be identified with that power. Maleness underlies the power. A living being is not male because it produces a certain kind of gamete; it produced a certain kind of gamete (spermatozoa) because it is male. In virtue of its ordering to the power of generation, maleness is ordered *per se* to the perfection of the substance.

In order to see more fully the extent of the relationship of maleness to the nature of the substance in which it inheres, it will be helpful to consider in more detail the essential power in terms of which maleness and femaleness are principally defined. In ST.I.77.6, Thomas asks the question whether all the powers of the soul flow from the essence of the soul. In responding, Thomas first utilizes the same fundamental distinction that divides the primary and secondary senses of quality in the *Metaphysics*:

the substantial form makes a thing to exist absolutely, and its subject is something purely potential. But the accidental form does not make a thing to exist absolutely but to be such, or so great, or in some particular condition; for its subject is an actual being.⁴⁷

The actuality of the substantial form is prior to that of the accidental forms that qualify the already existing substantial being.⁴⁸ That which is prior in being accounts for that which is posterior in being. Thus, the powers of the soul that exist in a living thing flow from or receive their being from the essence of the substance. Having received its being from the essence of the substance, the powers of the soul are ordered to the perfection of the substance.⁴⁹

Generation is a power common to all living things. It is that power in virtue of which a species maintains its existence; along with growth and nutrition, it is a fundamental power of soul taken simply – i.e. it is a power of the vegetative soul that pertains to all living things. If one were to consider a simple asexually reproducing

⁴⁷ “forma substantialis facit esse simpliciter, et eius subiectum est ens in potentia tantum. Forma autem accidentalis non facit esse simpliciter; sed esse tale, aut tantum, aut aliquo modo se habens, subiectum enim eius est ens in actu (ST.I.77.6).”

⁴⁸ I will discuss Thomas’s teaching on the flow of powers from the essence of the soul and the relationship of the powers to each other in greater detail in Section II.1 of this chapter when discussing maleness in humans.

⁴⁹ ST.I.77.6.

animal, the power of generation could be considered like any of the other essential powers of the soul: each power of the soul (excepting reason in humans) exists in an organ.⁵⁰ The organs that are part of a substance develop according to the nature of the substance; they are part of the substance. The powers of the soul associated with a substance's organs flow from the essence of that substance. Thus, in an asexually reproducing being, the organs associated with reproduction can be considered like any other organ associated with an essential power. The stomach, for instance, is a part of an animal's substance; it exists with the *esse* of the substance itself. The stomach is also, together with the other organs of the digestive system, the seat of the power of nutrition, which is a power flowing from the essence of the animal. The power of nutrition is not the essence of the substance; the power is an accidental form that determines the substance. It is something that the substance, in a way, has. It is, however, an aspect of the substance itself that flows from the essence and that is ordered to the substance. Thus, the power of nutrition can be considered in the first category of accidental quality that has as its subject the organs of the living thing's digestive system.

Consideration of asexual reproduction would proceed according to exactly the same model. The power of reproduction is a first category accidental quality that has as a subject organs that are simply part of the substance itself – the organs of reproduction do not add an accidental form to the being any more than do the organs of digestion add accidental form to the subject.

The case with sexual reproduction, however, is more complex. Where sexual reproduction obtains, an essential power of the soul – the power of generation – is divided among two members of the species. In a way similar to the example of nutrition, it can be said that the power of generation exists as a quality in the generative organs of the substance and that those organs exist with the very *esse* of the substance itself. The substance, however, in a way, divides into two modes that facilitate the division of the generative power. Ordinarily, organs associated with an essential power simply develop according to the nature of substance. In the case of sexual reproduction, a modal distinction is added to the substance (i.e. an existing subject is determined) in order to divide an essential power. One such modality of a substance is “maleness;” the other is “femaleness.” To be male, at root, is to be determined as generating in virtue of spermatozoa. To be female is to be determined as that member of the species who will generate by means of ova. The modalities that constitute maleness and femaleness are *in ordine ad ipsam naturam subiecti*. They determine a substance regarding modes of having an essential power of the soul. As modes of a substance, maleness and femaleness are qualities. As ordered to the

⁵⁰ See ST.I.77.5.

perfection of the substance in which they inhere, they are first category accidental qualities.

Maleness and femaleness are defined in terms of the divided power of generation. It should be noted that such a division is unique in the realm of living substance; there is no other instance where an essential power of the soul is divided among two members of species. Certainly, various members of a species might facilitate the operation of a power – a mother bird, for instance, feeds her chicks; she does not, however, have a part of the chick's very power of nutrition. Thus, in sexually reproducing beings, the power of generation is complete only with presence of male and female modes of the generative power. As such, the nature of a sexually reproducing being is complete only with both male and female; for with only one and not the other, an essential power of the soul remains incomplete. The modalities of male and female thus touch upon the very nature of the substance; for only together they complete that nature.

It is likely for reason of its unique and profound relation to the nature of the substance that humans “naturally” understand sexual difference as fundamental. When a baby is born, the child's sex always seems to be among the first things asked about. A typical sequence at a child's birth is: 1) Is the baby healthy? 2) Is it a boy or girl? The first question regards the substantial being in its being itself, i.e. the normal unfolding of the organs, their power and operations, and their harmony. The second question regards the most basic division of the substance for it regards a division of an essential power that in turn regards the very well being of the species. Thus, there is a natural concern for sex of offspring, for the nature of a sexually producing species is incomplete without both male and female.

It is worth noting here that my position is something of a departure from the position held by Aristotle and Thomas. As discussed in Chapter 8, Thomas held while general nature intended both male and female, the particular nature of a substance as manifest in the seed of a male always sought the production of a male offspring. General nature sought both male and female as both are needed for generation; and generation maintains the existence of a species, which for all corruptible being is the principal concern of nature. Individual nature however always seeks a male for the male has the active power of generation and, as such, is more perfect. Contemporary biology has demonstrated, however, that, with the possible exception of some reptiles, the individual nature of a species is responsible for determining the sex of offspring. For instance, in humans and other species that utilize the Y chromosome for sexual differentiation, the generative power of the male, through the process of meiosis, produces half of his spermatozoa with the X chromosome, and half with the Y. I have noted that other species employ other means of sexually differentiating individuals of the species. The general point here is that, notwithstanding the distinctions in mechanism, the *individual* nature of the

species equally regard both male and female. Thus, male and female complete a species not as in terms of an order of having greater and lesser instances of a nature, but as each possessing part of a divided essential power and contributing in a complementary manner to a common good, which is principally the existence of the species.

I further argued when discussing the measure by which maleness determines a substance that the amplitude of maleness extends beyond simply an ordering to a mode of participating in the act of generation, but also to mode of participating in the perfection of the substantial form in the offspring, and yet further in contributing to the common good of the species. I will make this argument more forcefully when discussing maleness in humans. However, ordering to the perfection of the substantial form in the offspring, and ordering to the common good of the species reinforce the notion that maleness is *in ordine ad ipsam naturam subiecti*.

Before summarizing the discussion of the form of maleness and powers and operations that follow from that form, I must make one final point regarding the relationship of maleness, considered as an accidental form, to the essence of the substance in which it inheres. When Thomas distinguishes the *power* of reason from the essence of the human soul, he must answer an objector who protests that doing so would reduce the power of reason to an accidental form. Thomas's reply is helpful for the considerations at hand:

If we take accident as meaning what is divided against substance, then there can be no medium between substance and accident; because they are divided by affirmation and negation, that is, according to existence in a subject, and non-existence in a subject. In this sense, as the power of the soul is not its essence, it must be an accident; and it belongs to the second species of accident, that of quality. But if we take accident as one of the five universals, in this sense there is a medium between substance and accident. For the substance is all that belongs to the essence of a thing; whereas whatever is beyond the essence of a thing cannot be called accident in this sense; but only what is not caused by the essential principle of the species. For the "proper" does not belong to the essence of a thing, but is caused by the essential principles of the species; wherefore it is a medium between the essence and accident thus understood. In this sense the powers of the soul may be said to be a medium between substance and accident, as being natural properties of the soul.⁵¹

⁵¹ "[S]i accidens accipiatur secundum quod dividitur contra substantiam, sic nihil potest esse medium inter substantiam et accidens, quia dividuntur secundum affirmationem et negationem, scilicet secundum esse in subiecto et non esse in subiecto. Et hoc modo, cum potentia animae non sit eius essentia, oportet quod sit accidens, et est in secunda specie qualitatis. Si vero accipiatur accidens secundum quod ponitur unum quinque universalium,

Maleness and femaleness are the foundations of a species' power of generation. The power of generation, as I have argued, is an essential power of a species and flows from the essence of a species. Maleness and femaleness are also caused by the essential principles of a species. As just discussed, various species employ various means for determining the sex of individuals, but each species consistently employs the means appropriate to it to determine roughly half of its members as male and half as female. Thus, the human power of generation, which flows from the essence of the human, in the male produces half of his spermatozoa that will produce males and half that would produce females. The determination as male or female is achieved by genetic and thus material means, but it is the nature that produces the means. Thus, maleness and femaleness should be considered as *per se* accidental forms.

The conclusion that maleness and femaleness are *per se* accidental forms can also be seen by considering further their relationship to the power of generation: the power of generation is *per se* accidental form. This power does not exist in the abstract; it exists in particular reproductive organs. In sexually reproducing beings, the power exists in two modes: either as male or female. While I have argued that maleness and femaleness precede and underlie the modes of the power of generation associated with them, I will argue that these powers and the organs in which they reside are perfection proper to maleness and femaleness. Thus, having a certain mode of the power of generation is a perfection proper to the male of a species; one can be said to be male prior to actually having the male mode of the power of generation (a prepubescent boy is male), but having the power is a perfection of *maleness*. Thus, since the power of generation does not exist except in a certain modality – i.e. as either male or female – and the power is a *per se* accident, maleness as a modality of that through which the power is actual must be a *per se* accident; for the power does not exist except as male or female.

Summary and conclusion: form, power, and operation: In this subsection, I have attempted to characterize the formal cause of maleness considered generally. I began by noting that both Aristotle and Thomas considered maleness and femaleness to be qualities. Thus, the section began with the hypothesis that maleness is a quality and with an initial characterization of the quality based upon the research presented in Part I. After clarifying two common misunderstanding regarding maleness (one

sic aliquid est medium inter substantiam et accidens. Quia ad substantiam pertinet quidquid est essentiale rei, non autem quidquid est extra essentiam, potest sic dici accidens, sed solum id quod non causatur ex principiis essentialibus speciei. Proprium enim non est de essentia rei, sed ex principiis essentialibus speciei causatur, unde medium est inter essentiam et accidens sic dictum. Et hoc modo potentiae animae possunt dici mediae inter substantiam et accidens, quasi proprietates animae naturales (ST.I.77.1.ad.5).”

regarding power and essence, the other regarding the Y chromosome), I attempted to sharpen the proposed preliminary definition and confirm Thomas's position that maleness is a quality. I first consider that maleness indicates neither primary nor secondary substance. As such, maleness must be a kind of accidental predication. Following Thomas's lead in considering maleness as a quality, I examined the nature of qualities utilizing Thomas's synthesis of Aristotle. I conclude that maleness and femaleness pertain to the first category of accidental qualities. Maleness determines a substance according a mode of participating the divided power of generation. Because it concerns an essential power of the soul, it is both ordered to the perfection of the substance in which it inheres and flows from the essential principles of that substance. Though maleness underlies the male mode of the power of generation, it reaches a certain perfection in the possession of the power to produce spermatozoa and inseminate the female of the species. The power of generation is ordered to its operation in the act of generation. I further argued that maleness is ordered not only to the production of offspring, but also to that which is necessary to properly reunite the divided power of generation and to the flourishing of offspring once generated. Thus, having considered the formal cause of maleness, I must briefly consider the efficient and material cause before treating the final cause.

2. *The efficient cause of maleness*

I will reflect on the question of the efficient cause of maleness in more detail when discussing maleness in human beings. Brief treatment here, however, will be instructive. I have argued that maleness is essentially linked to the power of generation. I will therefore first consider the efficient cause of the soul's essential powers. I will then adapt the understanding of efficient causality as it applies to other powers to the unique case of sexual difference.

i. *The efficient cause of essential powers:* In the previous section, I briefly discussed ST.I.77.6 in which Thomas asks if the powers of the soul flow from the essence of the soul. In the following article he asks if the powers of the soul, in flowing from the essence, do so by means of the higher powers; i.e. do the lower powers of the soul flow from the higher powers? In the course of responding, Thomas addresses the question of the efficient, final, and material causes of the soul's powers:

But since the *essence of the soul* is compared to the powers both *as a principle active and final*, and *as a receptive principle*, either separately by itself, or together with the body; and since the *agent and the end are more perfect*, while the receptive principle, as such, is less perfect; it follows that those powers of the soul which precede the

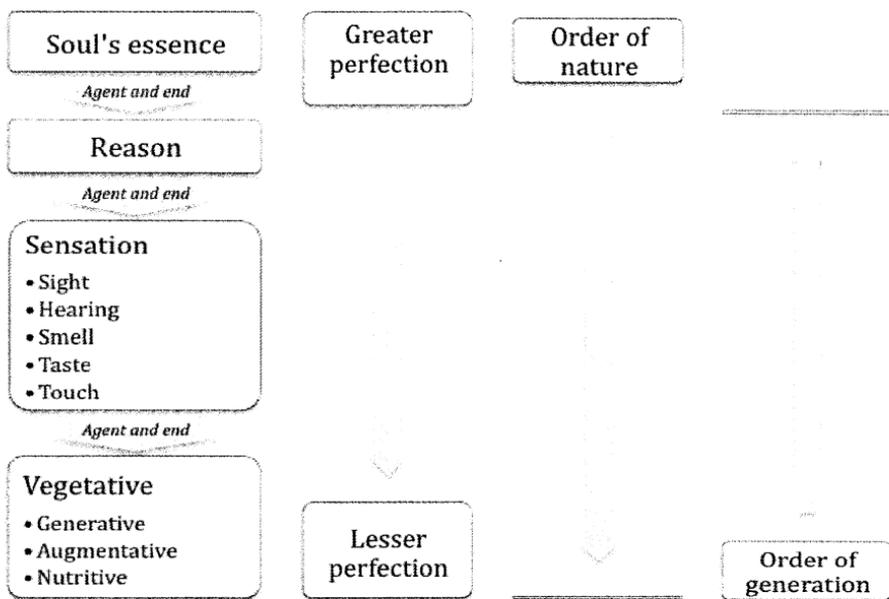
others, in the order of perfection and nature, are the principles of the others, after the manner of the end and active principle.⁵²

There is much in this text that merits comment. My concern at this point is understanding the efficient cause of the soul's powers. Thomas is clear on that point: the essence of the soul is both the active and final principle. The soul's essence is the moving cause that forms the soul's powers; it is also the end that provokes that movement. Thomas takes the point further by arguing that that essence of the soul causes the less noble powers *through* the higher powers. Thus, in humans, the power of reason stands to the sensitive powers as an active and final principles, and so the sensitive to the vegetative. It is clear from ST.I.77.4 that there is likewise an order within the sensitive powers and from ST.I.78.2 that there is an order within the powers of the vegetative soul. I have graphically represented the flow of the powers of the soul from the essence in Diagram 1. I have offered the scheme of the flow of powers from the soul's essence considering the full scope of living material beings.⁵³ Thus, in the diagram, if the nature of the being in question is animal, the level of the powers of reason must be omitted. For example, consider the power of sight in animals. The essence of the animal moves and guides the development of the animal, including the organs in which the power of sight will reside. Those organs are part of the animals substance. The proper organs receive the power of sight from the essence of the animal. According to Thomas, the lower powers of the soul are ordered to the higher powers; a higher power thus stands as an end to a lower powers. Further, the higher power is the agent of the lower. The relationship of the higher power as final and active principle of the lower powers is according to the order of nature. The order of generation is the opposite; according to generation, the lower powers precede the higher.⁵⁴

⁵² "Sed quia essentia animae comparatur ad potentias et sicut principium activum et finale, et sicut principium susceptivum, vel seorsum per se vel simul cum corpore; agens autem et finis est perfectius, susceptivum autem principium, inquantum huiusmodi, est minus perfectum, consequens est quod potentiae animae quae sunt priores secundum ordinem perfectionis et naturae, sint principia aliarum per modum finis et activi principii (ST.I.77.7)." Emphasis added.

⁵³ I will discuss the flow of powers from the soul's essence in greater detail in Section III.1. The question of the flow of the lesser powers from the higher powers is more difficult to see than the flow of the powers in general from the essence of the soul. Because my concern in the section is with sexual difference as it applies in all sexually reproducing species, I now focus on the general agency of the substance's nature regarding the powers; in Section II, I will focus more on the flow of powers through the power of reason. Also, note that the essence of soul precedes the powers of the soul in the order of generation.

⁵⁴ See ST.I.77.4.

Diagram 1: *The flow of powers from the soul's essence*

ii. *The efficient cause of maleness:* In the case of sexually differentiated animals, there is an additional step in the unfolding of powers that must be considered. With all other powers of the soul, the organs associated with the powers form according to the same pattern for all individuals of a species. There is a material component to such formation. For instance, there are numerous genes involved in the formation of the human liver; a genetic irregularity may result in a disease of the liver. In the case of sexually differentiated living beings, however, first the nature of the being employs some means for determining sex – a gene, a chromosome, a balance of genes. For example, as I discussed above, human meiosis results in half of male spermatozoa having an X chromosome and half having a Y chromosome. Thus, first the essence of the substance *in the parent* working through its generative power is the active principle in determining the sex of an offspring. Once an offspring is formed, the essence of the substance in the offspring responds to that nature's mode of determining sex and sets the substance on one of two developmental paths. It is as if the agency of the essence of the soul is channeled in one of two parallel developmental courses. The nature of the substance thus produces different organs that will receive the generative power from the essence of the soul according to a modality determined by the modality of the reproductive organ. The first efficient cause of sexual difference, then, is the nature of living substance that moves and forms the proper matter in such a manner so as to form according to a male or

female mode. The first step of this differentiation is made by the essence of the substance in the parent. The nature of the substance in the offspring then completes the work sexual differentiation by means of the material mechanism of differentiation appropriate to that nature.

Once the initial determination of the substance as male or female is made, at least in higher animals, that in virtue of which the initial formal determination is made (e.g. in the case of higher land-dwelling animals, the Y chromosome) then plays the role of a moving cause regarding subsequent modifications associated with the initial determination. For example, as noted in Ch. 1, the Y chromosome, through the testes determining factor, causes the proto gonads to form as testes, which in turn produce androgens that lead to further sexually differentiated determinations of the substance. First the nature of the substance acts as agent; that nature then works through the mode of sexual determination it produced. The pattern is similar to that of the relationship between the essence of the soul and its powers: the essence of the soul is the agent cause of the highest power; the higher power then stands as agent to the lower. Similarly, the nature of the substance is the agent in making that which determines the sex; that factor then stands as agent to subsequent changes.⁵⁵

3. *The material cause of maleness*

As has been the case throughout this section on the common nature of maleness, I must speak generally of the material cause of maleness so as accommodate all instances of maleness. Thus, generally speaking, that which becomes male is the substance of the living being in question. Maleness is an accidental form. As such, it is a determination of an existing substance. The pervasiveness of the determinations associated with maleness vary from species to species. What is constant is the determination of the reproductive organs according to a certain modality. For instance, in Chapter 1, I discussed how the proto-gonads are determined according the male or female modes according to the presence or absence of the Y chromosome. The determination of the gonads, however, is subsequent to the initial determination of the substance in virtue of the Y chromosome. Thus, it is first the substance itself that is receptive of the determination as male or female.

4. *The final cause of maleness*

I will discuss final causality more completely in Chapters 10 and 11 when speaking of the natural law. A few words, however, are in order as to the general

⁵⁵ I give a detailed example of this process when discussing maleness in humans (See Section III.2 of this chapter.)

nature of the final cause of maleness. Thomas writes: “*Nam finis non est causa, nisi secundum quod movet efficientem ad agendum; non enim est primum in esse, sed in intentione solum.*”⁵⁶ The end moves the agent to act. It involves the recognition of goodness on the part of the agent, which is moved from inaction to action. What is the good, then, that moves nature in general and individual natures to consistently bring about the accidental form maleness? This question will, of course, become sharper in the following section when it is asked regarding precisely regarding man. There is, however, a likeness in the manner in which nature has chosen to bring about reproduction by means of male and female. It is at this level of commonness that I now ask the question regarding the good that provokes the division of the generative power into two modalities.

i. The biological account: All of the theories discussed in Part I have insights to offer regarding the good that is achieved by dividing the reproductive power among two members of the species. I will begin with a brief review of the responses offered by modern biology to two fundamental questions. First, why is there sexual reproduction when asexual reproduction appears to be a simpler solution to the problem of projecting one’s genes into the future? Second, assuming that there is some mode of reproduction that involves the genetic contribution of two members of a species, why are these two unequal? Why male and female? Why must it be the case that a male must find a female with whom to mate and vice versa? Again, would it not be simpler if any member of the species could mate with any other member of the species?

Biologist Bernice Wuerthrich succinctly explains the seeming improbability of sexual reproduction:

Sex is a paradox in part because if nature puts a premium on genetic fidelity, asexual reproduction should come out ahead. It transmits, intact, a single parental genome that is by definition successful. Sexual reproduction, on the other hand, involves extensive makeovers of the genome. The production of gametes requires recombination, in which the two copies of each chromosome pair up and exchange DNA. Fertilization, in which genes from different parents fuse, creates yet more genetic combinations. All this shuffling is more likely to break up combinations of good genes than to create them – yet nature keeps reshuffling the deck. This paradox is compounded by the cost of sex – which is primarily the cost of producing a male. Imagine 1 million sexually reproducing snails and a single asexual female mutant. Say that she has two daughters, who (on average) have another two daughters, and so on. Meanwhile, the sexually reproducing females would be diligently producing a female and a male – who would not directly produce any progeny. Soon, the few sexual organisms would be lost in a sea of asexuals and find

⁵⁶ *De Potentia*, 5.1 corpus.

it all but impossible to locate a mate. All else being equal, the asexual clone would entirely replace its sexual counterparts in only about 52 generations, says evolutionary biologist Curtis Lively of Indiana University in Bloomington. Yet this happens rarely, if ever. Despite the cost, sexual species persist, while most asexuals quickly go extinct.⁵⁷

Sexual reproduction appears to be biologically counterintuitive: if the genetic makeup of the parent is successful, why alter it by commingling it with the DNA of another? Further, the general burden of reproduction falls upon the female. Why expend all the investment that is involved in reproduction on producing an individual who will do little else regarding the prolongation of the species other than provide a half strand of his DNA? It would appear that the cost of producing males, as Wuerthrich put it, would far outweigh any benefits. Nevertheless, nature, especially for more advanced species, has clearly favored sexual reproduction. What is the good achieved that outweighs “the cost of producing a male?”

In Part I, I outlined the major theories that are currently offered as biological justification for sustaining the cost of the male. All of those theories center on benefits realized in virtue of having the genetic contribution of two parents. David Geary separates these theories into three general categories.⁵⁸ Briefly to review, the first school of thought claims that the genetic contribution from two parents serves to eliminate harmful mutations that would otherwise accumulate over time if reproduction were simply genetic “photocopying”⁵⁹ generation after generation after generation. The second general group of theories centers on the greater capacity for ecological adaptation that genetic variation subsequent to sexual reproduction offers offspring. Genetic variation provides the possibility for alterations in form and or behavior – phenotypic variations. In stable environments, stable genotypes and phenotypes are favored.

However, if the condition that support survival change from one generation to the next, then the characteristics that enable the reproduction and survival of the parent may or may not be well suited to the new ecological conditions, the conditions in which the offspring must survive and reproduce.⁶⁰

⁵⁷ Bernice Wuerthrich, “Why Sex? Putting Theory to the Test,” *Science* Volume 281, Issue 5385 (September 25, 1998): 1980.

⁵⁸ Geary, *Male, Female*, 16-20.

⁵⁹ In fact, one might think of a document that has been photocopied over and over again – the quality of the thousandth generation is always far inferior to that of the original.

⁶⁰ Geary, *Male, Female*, 17.

Sexual reproduction gives offspring a better chance of survival by affording them the possibility of phenotypic adaptation to changing ecologies. The third theory is that embraced by Steven Pinker. It focuses on the adversarial relationship between complex organisms and the parasites that attack them. According to this theory, the genetic variation produced by sexual reproduction confounds pathogens' attempts to invade and destroy a host organism. Nature thus favored a method of reproduction that included the genetic contribution of two parents.

All three categories of theories center on two fundamental aspects: the variation that results from the genetic contributions of two parents, and, more importantly, the effect that such variation has on the survival of the offspring. Survival is the operative factor. That which enhances survival is selected. That which diminishes survival fades and, finally, vanishes. Considerations of any notion of common good are accidental and relevant only insofar as they contribute to an *individual gene's* ability to prolong its existence.

As I noted earlier, these theories explain why there is genetic contributions from two parents; they do not explain why there is male and female. Why are there two sexes? And why are they consistently divided into those who produce spermatozoa and those who produce ova? Laurence Hurst acutely presents the biologist's quandary:

That species should ever have evolved two mating-types when initially there were none, is as paradoxical as is the fact that when mating-types are present they are typically binary. Consider a system in which only two gametes must meet for zygote formation. Consider also then that there were no mating-types. If this was true, a gamete could mate with any other gamete. If however there are two mating-types then any gamete can mate with only half the population. Hence, the transition from having no mating-types to having two is one in which the problem of finding a mate becomes harder and hence problematic.⁶¹

Hurst goes on to consider that even if one were to begin by positing two mating types, if there were to appear a mutant in the population who could mate with both of the two existing mating types, it would be easier for this new mating type to find a mate. Thus, he argues that the number of mating types would be expected to increase, more or less, to infinity. Yet, as it is, one finds in nature there are typically only two mating types. And these two are consistently distinct, i.e. they can be meaningfully characterized as male and female.

⁶¹ Laurence D. Hurst, "Why are there only two sexes?" *Proceedings: Biological Sciences* Vol. 263, No. 1369 (April 22, 1996): 415.

In Part I, I offered Hurst's response to this quandary, which, according to Pinker, is the most cogent resolution to date.⁶² It centers on the DNA which exists in a cell's cytoplasm; DNA which is independent of the DNA of the nucleus - the mitochondrial DNA. Hurst's theory suggests that the cytoplasmic DNA from one parent would have been in conflict with that of the other parent when they combined in the zygote. Unlike the DNA offered by the *nuclei* of the gametes, which fuse to become one, it is presumed that the cytoplasmic DNA from each equal gamete would maintain their independence and, as such, war for ascendancy.⁶³ For the sake of peace in the zygote, one parent had to cede the cytoplasm. Hurst argues that

if species with two mating-types coordinate uniparental inheritance of cytoplasmic genes more effectively than do those with three, then, assuming the costs to mate finding are not too high, evolution from three to two sexes is expected as a response to the invasions of a costly selfish cytoplasmic factor that disrupts the normal pattern of inheritance.⁶⁴

The answer to why there are two sexes is that having two sexes is the most efficient way to achieve "uniparental inheritance of cytoplasmic genes." The good achieved by having the male - that which offsets the cost of producing the male - is that he provides genetic variation but does so without introducing rival cytoplasmic DNA into the mix. Thus the male gamete is the simple sperm, a nucleus and little more. As Pinker observes, all of the various male characteristics in various species begin from the fixed point that the male is to provide the simpler, more economical cell. Subsequent organs, such as the penis, are ordered to the purpose of delivering this cell, as are many sex-based traits, be they morphological or behavioral. The female sex is closer to asexual reproduction. The male contribution is, at root, minimal - nature requires that there be an offspring with the genetic contribution of two parents. In the male gamete, that task is stripped to its barest essentials; spermatozoa contain the needed DNA and, depending on the species, that which needed to get to and penetrate the ovum. Thus nature achieves reproduction that includes the

⁶² See Laurence D. Hurst, "Why are there only two sexes?" *Proceedings: Biological Sciences*, Vol. 263, No. 1369 (April 22, 1996), pp. 415-422, and Laurence D. Hurst and William D. Hamilton, "Cytoplasmic Fusion and the Nature of Sexes," *Proceedings: Biological Sciences* Vol. 247, No. 1320 (March 23, 1992): 189-194. Also see Pinker, *HMW*, 461-464.

⁶³ The modes of activity of the DNA of the nucleus and the cytoplasm are interesting metaphors for mutual commitment through complementary roles to the common good versus the quest for power, the latter of which is an underlying assumption of the deconstructionist position.

⁶⁴ Hurst, "Why are there only two sexes?" 415.

genetic contribution of two parents but avoids the cytoplasmic conflict that would “disrupt the normal pattern of inheritance.”

ii. *Other voices*: In considering the views regarding the final cause of maleness according to the other thinkers treated in Chapters 2-8, I will move quickly to Thomas, more or less skipping over Freud, Jung, and Connell. I do this for a very particular reason: Thomas is, more or less, the only other thinker who addresses the question. As for why there is the biological reality of sexual differentiation, this was an issue they did not intend to resolve. Freud and Jung were both medical doctors who accepted the versions of Darwinism in vogue at the time. Hence, regarding the “why” of masculinity as an ontological question, they would defer to an evolutionary response. Their primary concern was with the psychology of masculinity – i.e., the rapport that exists between the conscious mind, the unconscious mind, and the biological fact of sex, with all the conscious and unconscious desires that accompany it.

For Jung more than Freud, there is a kind of teleology at work that explains the existence of the masculine and the feminine. It is a teleology, however, that is always relative to the workings of the psyche. Male and female, as understood by humans, are projections of the human psyche. The psyche functions according to fixed and one might say eternal laws and hence has the aspect of the divine. The opposite sex represents the entry way into another world, into the unconscious world of the psyche, which shapes the fullness of human experience in a manner similar to the way Kantian categories shape simple experience. Thus, the biological categories of male and female are bearers of the psyche’s self-revelatory projection. They play a definite and crucial role in the revelation of the self to the self, which, in large part, is the integration of the conscious and the unconscious – the unification of the male and the female aspects of the self. This dynamic interplay of masculine and feminine is certainly relevant in the life of the human individual and has definite purpose in the life and development of the psyche, but it precisely regards the mind and its understanding and projection of itself. It explains human understanding of male and female. It does not explain male and female.

For Connell, the question of maleness does not seem to be one of much interest. He is clearly concerned only with his notion of human reality; and, for Connell, human reality is a world of social construction. Certainly, there is a rapport with the physical, such that the male body must be headed and permitted as an interlocutor in the social discourse, but questions of nature are questions of fancy. Questions of the intrinsic meaning of maleness are the queries of those with power who profit from the constructing of such meanings. In and of itself, maleness is meaningless.

iii. *Thomas and the liberation of higher faculties*: Perhaps the most striking point in the transition from the evolutionists to Thomas is the change in perspective

regarding the good to which the accidental form “maleness” is ordered. For the evolutionists, all argumentation is in terms of efficacy regarding survival and subsequent reproduction. There is, of course, no agent intentionally acting for a good. There is random mutation and “natural selection” of that which is best adapted to a given ecology. “Selection” is said metaphorically – there is no one or no thing to do the selecting. By contrast, for Thomas sexual difference is explained not only as regards the ability to maintain the foundational but lower operations of the soul – i.e. survival and reproduction – but is also ordered to the higher powers of the soul in the species where it obtains. Thomas and the evolutionists have fundamentally distinct “directions” of explanation. One looks up while the other looks down. Thomas explains sexual difference in terms of its ordering to the higher powers of the soul. The evolutionists explain the higher powers of the soul in terms of their ordering to the efficacy of survival and reproduction.

In a text I referred to in the previous chapter, Thomas asks whether woman should have been created among the first things. His response bears repeating here:

I answer that, It was necessary for woman to be made, as the Scripture says, as a “helper” to man; not, indeed, as a helpmate in other works, as some say, since man can be more efficiently helped by another man in other works; but as a helper in the work of generation. This can be made clear if we observe the mode of generation carried out in various living things. Some living things do not possess in themselves the power of generation, but are generated by some other specific agent, such as some plants and animals by the influence of the heavenly bodies, from some fitting matter and not from seed: others possess the active and passive generative power together; as we see in plants which are generated from seed; *for the noblest vital function in plants is generation*. Wherefore we observe that in these the active power of generation invariably accompanies the passive power. Among perfect animals the active power of generation belongs to the male sex, and the passive power to the female. And as among animals *there is a vital operation nobler than generation, to which their life is principally directed*; therefore the male sex is not found in continual union with the female in perfect animals, but only at the time of coition; so that we may consider that by this means *the male and female are one*, as in plants they are always united; although in some cases one of them preponderates, and in some the other. But man is yet further ordered to a still nobler vital action, and that is intellectual operation. Therefore there was greater reason for the distinction of these two forces in man; so that the female should be produced separately from the male; although they are carnally united for generation. Therefore directly after the formation of woman, it was said: “And they shall be two in one flesh” (*Genesis 2:24*)⁶⁵

⁶⁵ “Respondeo dicendum quod necessarium fuit feminam fieri, sicut Scriptura dicit, in adiutorium viri, non quidem in adiutorium alicuius alterius operis, ut quidam dixerunt, cum ad quodlibet aliud opus convenientius iuvari possit vir per alium virum quam per mulierem;

In Chapter 8, I pointed out some of the shortcomings of Thomas's understanding of woman. At this juncture, I am more interested in points of agreement. While there are obvious references to scripture, Thomas's argumentation is philosophical. Underlying his argument is a point made clear earlier in the *Summa*: the lower powers of the soul are ordered to and for the sake of the higher powers. And the higher powers are for the sake of the essence of the soul.⁶⁶ The power of generation, therefore, while the highest of the powers of the nutritive soul,⁶⁷ is ordered to the sensitive powers in animals, and to sensation and intellect in man. A modification of the power of generation, therefore, is for the sake of the higher powers and the essence of the beings in which they inhere; it is to facilitate a greater good. This greater good, however, is not simply a greater chance for survival – though this may be true as well – but also and primarily a greater realization and thriving of the higher parts of the soul and thereby a greater thriving of the organism as a whole.

Thomas makes the argument that dividing the generative power between male and female, in a sense, frees the higher powers for their proper operations. Because there are powers higher than the generative power, the sexually reproducing being can dedicate itself to these higher operations and re-unite the power of generation at the fitting time. There is more freedom for higher powers to flourish. It thus make sense that the powers of generation are *not* divided in plants; for generation is their highest power and so is always present to them. Sexual

sed in adiutorium generationis. Quod manifestius videri potest, si in viventibus modus generationis consideretur. Sunt enim quaedam viventia, quae in seipsis non habent virtutem activam generationis, sed ab agente alterius speciei generantur; sicut plantae et animalia quae generantur sine semine ex materia convenienti per virtutem activam caelestium corporum. Quaedam vero habent virtutem generationis activam et passivam coniunctam; sicut accidit in plantis quae generantur ex semine. Non enim est in plantis aliquod nobilius opus vitae quam generatio, unde convenienter omni tempore in eis virtuti passivae coniungitur virtus activa generationis. Animalibus vero perfectis competit virtus activa generationis secundum sexum masculinum, virtus vero passiva secundum sexum femininum. Et quia est aliquod opus vitae nobilius in animalibus quam generatio, ad quod eorum vita principaliter ordinatur; ideo non omni tempore sexus masculinus feminino coniungitur in animalibus perfectis, sed solum tempore coitus; ut imaginemur per coitum sic fieri unum ex mare et femina, sicut in planta omni tempore coniunguntur vis masculina et feminina, etsi in quibusdam plus abundet una harum, in quibusdam plus altera. Homo autem adhuc ordinatur ad nobilius opus vitae, quod est intelligere. Et ideo adhuc in homine debuit esse maiori ratione distinctio utriusque virtutis, ut seorsum produceretur femina a mare, et tamen carnaliter coniungerentur in unum ad generationis opus. Et ideo statim post formationem mulieris, dicitur Gen. II, erunt duo in carne una (ST.I.92.1).” Emphases added.

⁶⁶ See ST.I.77.4 & 7.

⁶⁷ ST.I.78.1 & 2.

differentiation is proper to animals because animals by definition have powers more noble than the highest power of the vegetative soul.⁶⁸

It should be noted as well, that Thomas adds that the presence of male and female add something to the richness of creation. Thus, even independent of the roles in generation, male and female contribute to the richness of being and so have an intrinsic goodness that expresses the fullness of the natures of substances in which they inhere.⁶⁹

iv. Integration: The evolutionists argue that sexual difference in reproduction is explained by the need for genetic variation and the need to avoid cytoplasmic conflict. Thomas holds that the division of the powers of generation is for the purpose of liberating the higher powers of the soul. I will argue that that the division of the sexes achieves all of these ends, and more. There are two question that considerations of final causality must address: Why is the power of generation divided? Why is divided unequally, i.e. into male and female? I offer that power of generation is divided, in addition the reasons given by the evolutionists and Thomas, in order to establish a mode of ordering individuals of a species to a common good. Sexual reproduction establishes a necessary ordering of members of species to each other (male to female and female to male) for the purpose of achieving a common good. Thus, I argue that the power of generation is divided precisely so that in its reunification the basis of communal ordering to a common good is founded. I will further argue that the asymmetry of the division between male and female establishes the notion of ordering to the common good that, in addition to being collaborative is also complementary. Thus, though this discussion includes sexual difference it plants, its trajectory extends towards the nature of human political union and ordering to the ultimate common good, which is God. As such, the discussion that I begin here but will be continued when discussing maleness in the human being in Section III of this chapter.

To make my position clear, I must first note some fundamental differences between evolutionary and Thomistic thought. I mentioned in the prior subsection that there is a different “directionality” of explanation in the evolutionary position and in the Thomistic position. For the evolutionist, the gene is the irreducible element of explanation when explaining any phenomena in a living thing. As I noted in Chapter 2.II, natural selection chooses the most selfish and megalomaniacal genes. Nature fundamentally regards the gene in living things; for the gene is a living thing’s smallest trait-bearing replicating unit. The organism, as such, is accidental; what is truly operative in explaining something’s existence is a

⁶⁸ See ST.I.78.1.

⁶⁹ SCG.4.88.

genes ability to survive and be projected into the future.⁷⁰ Organisms are selected by nature because the random mutations that led to their greater complexity resulted in the genes involved in the organism surviving and being reproduced more effectively than other genes. Nature has regard for the organism only insofar as it leads to the prolonged existence of the gene. Thus, the organism is ordered to the survival of the gene. The general explanatory movement is downward towards the smallest trait-bearing replicating part. The downward movement also results in a divisive movement; for the organism loses any principle of its unity considered as a whole. The organism is a vehicle of the selfish gene the existence of which is accounted for by random mutation and its ability to project genes into the future.⁷¹

The vision of Thomas (and the vision I embrace) stands in sharp contrast to the evolutionary position. Because Thomas accepts formal causality he is able to see an organism as a unified whole, the being of which is not simply an accidental unity of parts. Except in simple spiritual beings, a whole implies the unification of parts. The parts of a whole are unified by the form of the being. A plant, for example, is more than simply an assembly of cells and genes; it is fundamentally *one* thing, not many. The genes in a plant are ordered to the good of the plant, not the plant to the genes.⁷² The part is understood in terms of the whole, rather than the whole being reduced to its parts. The result is that the good of an organism is, in fact, a good of

⁷⁰ See Pinker, HMW, 397-399. For instance: “[E]ven if your mother had cloned herself, she would not have replicated; only her genes would have.... Genes, not bodies replicate, and that means that genes not bodies should be selfish (398-399).”

⁷¹ It must be noted that there are clear parallels between most social contract conceptions of the state and the evolutionary understanding of explaining natural phenomena. Like the gene entering an organism, an individual enters a state not because there is any intrinsic goodness in so doing. The individual enters the state and curtails his or her individual freedoms because doing so provides security. It is, as it were, the best chance for survival. The state is thus a necessary evil into which the individual enters to serve his or her individual needs. The state itself is a kind of monster lacking any intrinsic unity. The lack of regard for the formal unity of living beings and a fractured understanding of the state are indeed related; both result from the tendency to reduce higher order realities to their materially simplest and blindly selfish elements. Whether it be an organism or a state, the unity thereof is only explained insofar as it accommodates the desire of its elemental constituents.

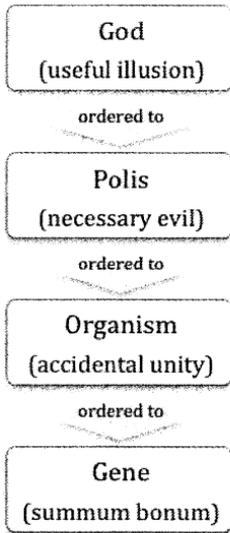
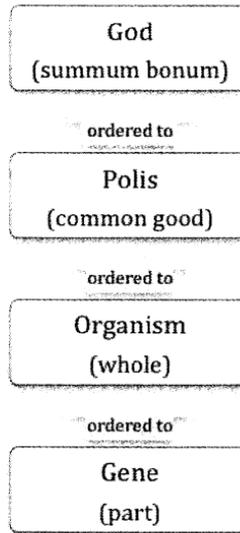
⁷² In *Form and Being*, Dewan reflects on the idea of “emergence” in contemporary physics. Emergence notes that there realities at more complex levels of beings that simply do not exist at simpler levels of being. Temperature, for instance, has no meaning at the level of an individual particle; the concept “emerges” as particles combine and become more complex. Dewan comments: “What I find about this discussion of emergence is that it constitutes a move from potency to act, from material preparations to a new form or actuality.... In the line of final causality, they give meaning to the existence of the electrons, protons, and neutrons, (102).”

that organism, not simply a good of the genes that constitute it. It is in virtue of the existence of the *oneness* of the whole that Thomas can say that the division of the power (generation) is ordered to the flourishing of other and higher powers in that organism, and finally the flourishing of the whole. The general movement of the Thomistic is upward towards richer levels of being. The whole unites and gives meaning to the parts.

The point must be pushed yet further, for not only is there unity in an individual organism, there is unity in a species. Thus, there is not only a true good of an individual, there is further a common good of species. Members of a species are unified in sharing the same form. There are various common goods that are shared by members of a species. The highest common good is God. Individual goods are thus ordered to common goods.⁷³ Questions of final cause are thus radically different for the evolutionists and the Thomist: for the evolutionist the question is how does *x* serve the existence of the gene. The good of the species does not exist for there is nothing which regards the good of the species. For Thomas, the good of the part must be seen in relation to the good of the whole. Thus, the question is how does *x* serve the highest good, where the highest can be seen as, first, the highest good of the individual, then the species, but ultimately the highest good simply. I have depicted the general movement of the evolutionary and Thomistic explanations in Diagram 2.

For the evolutionist, sexual reproduction is a paradox because it breaks the pattern of the gene seeking to reproduce itself; only half of the parents' genes are expressed in the offspring. Thus, as Wuerthrich noted above, the expected mode of reproduction is asexual; for according to asexual reproduction, all genes are preserved. Nevertheless, sexual reproduction must be explained in terms of the preservation of genes. I offer, that the reality of sexual reproduction must be understood not *only* by looking to how sexual reproduction serves the good of individual genes but also to how it serves the common good of a species. Sexual reproduction, in fact, precisely breaks out of the gene-centered evolutionary model and demonstrates an instance of corporate ordering to the common good of a species. In order for the species to continue, which is clearly a common good of the species, two members of that species must unify and work together to achieve a common good.

⁷³ A detailed discussion of the relationship of the individual and common good is impossible here. See Charles De Koninck, "On the Primacy of the Common Good against the Personalists," *Aquinas Review* 4 (1997): 1-71. Lawrence Dewan, "St. Thomas, the Common Good, and the Love of Persons," in *Wisdom, Law, and Virtue* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2008), 271-278. Michael Waldstein, "The Common Good in St. Thomas and John Paul II," *Nova et Vetera*, English Edition, Vol.3, No.3 (2005):569-578.

Diagram 2⁷⁴*Evolutionary paradigm**Thomistic paradigm*

Sexual reproduction thus establishes the paradigm of corporate action towards the fulfillment of a common good. This is true whether the individuals involved are plants or human beings: the common good of generation can only be achieved by two members ordered towards that end.

The corporate ordering of individual members of the species to the common good of the species means that the individual members of the species are ordered towards each other. The good in question (the offspring, reproduction, and preservation of the species) is held together and is achieved together. Such a union is precisely not a necessary evil but rather, in a sense, the unification of a greater whole, a community that works towards a common good. Thus, sexual reproduction orders members of species to each other for the achieving of a common good. This corporate ordering to the common good is itself a good that begins with plant life and finds fruition in the human being. Thus, in dividing the power of generation, the higher faculties (in those sexually reproducing species that have higher faculties) are liberated for their proper operation. In addition to this benefit for the individual, members of the species are ordered to each other for the achieving of the

⁷⁴ I have included God in the evolutionary paradigm in part to maintain symmetry but also because, insofar as God can be said to exist, it is for the sake of maintaining social order or the psychological equilibrium of an individual. Thus, the notion of God exists for the sake of the polis and the individual.

common good. Corporate ordering to the common good proves to be an essential element of the thriving of higher species.

As I have already noted, the idea of the ordering of individuals to the common good runs contrary to the evolutionary position. At root, in living organisms, it is “each gene for itself;” any mode of communal existence – and finally even the organism as such – is ordered to the gene. Connell’s deconstructionist understanding functions according to the same fundamental paradigm – only the seat of selfish desire has changed. For the evolutionists, it is the gene; for Connell it is the individual will to power. A Thomistic understanding of a corporate ordering to the common good transcends the solipsistic paradigms of both the ravenously self-centered gene and fundamentally isolated and lonely will to power.

A corporate ordering to the common good explains the involvement of two parents in reproduction; it does not explain sexual *difference*. While not denying the benefit of avoiding cytoplasmic conflict, I offer that the asymmetry of sexual difference accentuates the rupture between the Thomistic and evolutionary paradigms by ordering one member of the species to another who is truly other. The evolutionary paradigm is almost literally narcissistic: the goal is to produce a perfect genetic reflection of the self. The ideal system is closed and contains only a gene and its replicas. An *other* is naturally a rival, another genotype seeking ascendancy in a given ecology. Sexual reproduction by contrast orders one individual to another who is unlike the self. The ordering to the common good is corporate, collaborative, and complementary. The offspring is not a perfect replica of one parent but rather a combination of two that entwines the lives of two notably different individuals. Sexual difference breaks out of the megalomaniacal vision of the evolutionist by ordering one to another who is truly other. It is the part of the one to send forth, the part of the other to receive. The division of the generative power into these two modes – the one of sending forth, the other of receiving – permits not only the flourishing of those goods proper to the individual substance but also the good of the species, which is inclusive of the individual good but, at the same time, greater. Reproduction by means of two parents creates a corporate ordering to the common good. Sexually differentiated reproduction creates a complementary corporate ordering to the common good.

The final cause of maleness in general, therefore, is to order individual members of a species towards the common good of the species, and to do so in a precise way. The order towards the common good is in and through another; an other who is precisely other than the self, distinct in possessing a power that is the complement to and fulfillment of the power possessed by the self. The self is thus forced to look outside of itself to another. In the case of the male, he is constrained to go out the self to the other. In the case of the female, she is constrained to receive the other for the sake of the common good.

A more complete understanding of the nature of the ordering of maleness to the individual and common good will unfold as attention is turned to the case of maleness as it exists in the human person; it is to this task that I now proceed. Before beginning my consideration of the human male, however, I must add that holding that part of the final cause of maleness regards establishing a paradigm of corporate and complementary ordering to the common good through the fruitful ordering of male to female and female to male in no way negates the fact that reproduction by means of two genetically distinct parents also has biological benefits regarding the survival of offspring. That the fusion of the DNA of two parents leads to an offspring who is better equipped to combat pathogens or adapt to his or her environment strengthens rather than weakens the argument that sex difference is ordered to the individual and common good of the species. For the health of the individual helps it flourish. And the flourishing of the individual contributes to the common good. My position, therefore, does not negate or spurn advantages to individual genes. I simply claim that to understand the part, one must understand the whole.

III. THE HUMAN MALE: MASCULINITY AND MANLINESS

INTRODUCTION

It will be helpful before proceeding, to review the ground covered up to this point. Maleness is a quality. It determines a substance according to a measure; the principal aspect of which measure is a particular role in the divided power of generation. Further, as a quality, it is an accidental form; it is something existing in and modifying a subject. Maleness is, nevertheless, something that flows from the essential principles of the substance. As something underlying a particular mode of having the power of generation, it is ordered to generation. Maleness determines a substance not only according to the capacity to produce and disseminate the male gamete, but also according to that which is necessary realize this power. Such a determining means that the male is ordered to the female and that which he must do in order to unite his "half" of the generative power with that of the female. As such, the operations of maleness extend beyond the power of producing a certain type of gamete to determining a male according the ability of winning a suitable mate. In varying degrees, likewise depending upon the species, maleness also determines the individual according to certain powers and operations regarding the care of his offspring. Levels of direct interaction with offspring vary vastly, thus generalization is difficult. Finally, I have argued that, in virtue of its intrinsic ordering to the good of the species *through and with another*, that the generativity associated with maleness is precisely ordered to the common good.

I will now look at maleness as it exists in the human species. In the prior section I argued that, though maleness is an accidental form, it is a *per se* accident. Maleness can be understood as a *per se* quality if it is caused by the essential principles of the substance in which it inheres. I will explore the relationship of maleness in man to the essence of the human being. Thus, this section begins with a discussion of the emanation of proper accidents from the essence of the human soul, and the place of maleness in this emanation. Next, I will track another sort of emanation, *viz.* the cascade of effects that flow from a zygote's initial determination as male. I noted earlier how the particular determination of maleness depends upon the substance in which it inheres. Examining maleness in the human being affords the opportunity to see concretely how the amplitude of the accidental form extends beyond reference simply to the power of generation. In general, the first two subsections – the emanation of maleness from man's essence, and the cascade of effects from man's initial determination as male – serve to delineate the boundaries of the accidental form “male” in man and indicate its proper powers and operations. I then offer brief discussions of the efficient and material causes and finally, to conclude the chapter, I consider the final cause of maleness in the human being.

1. *First emanation: the flow of per se accidents from the essence*

In Section I.1, I offered some reasons why maleness should be considered a *per se* accident. Presently, I will attempt to further support those reasons in the context of the particular case of maleness in man. In this discussion, I will return to ST.I.77 where Thomas treats the powers of the soul in general.⁷⁵ As discussed in Section I.1, Thomas asks whether the powers of the soul flow from its essence. His reply is rich.

The substantial and the accidental form partly agree and partly differ. They agree in this, that each is an act; and that by each of them something is after a manner actual. They differ, however, in two respects. First, because the substantial form makes a thing to exist absolutely, and its subject is something purely potential. But the accidental form does not make a thing to exist absolutely but to be such, or so great, or in some particular condition; for its subject is an actual being. Hence it is clear that actuality is observed in the substantial form prior to its being observed in the subject: and since that which is first in a genus is the cause in that genus, the substantial form causes existence in its subject. On the other hand, actuality is observed in the subject of the accidental form prior to its being observed in the accidental form; *wherefore the actuality of the accidental form is caused by the actuality of the subject. So the subject, forasmuch as it is in potentiality, is receptive of the accidental*

⁷⁵ I am deeply in debt to the comments of Fr. Lawrence Dewan upon ST.I.77. See “Nature as a Metaphysical Object.” In *Form and Being*, especially pp. 216-228.

form: but forasmuch as it is in act, it produces it. This I say of the proper and “*per se*” accident; for with regard to the extraneous accident, the subject is receptive only, the accident being caused by an extrinsic agent. Secondly, substantial and accidental forms differ, because, since that which is the less principal exists for the sake of that which is the more principal, matter therefore exists on account of the substantial form; while on the contrary, the accidental form exists on account of the completeness of the subject.⁷⁶

It is in virtue of the substantial form that a thing exists; the subject of the substantial form is *ens in potentia tantum*. The substantial form accounts for a thing’s being simply. The accidental form, by contrast, is posterior to the existence of the subject. So, regarding those accidental forms which are not from an extraneous source – the “*proprie et per se accidente*,” one of which I argued in Section I.1 is maleness – the font of accidental form must be that which is prior in being, the substantial form. Dewan comments:

The doctrine of the powers flowing from the essence of the soul is thus based on the priority as to actuality of the subject of the accidental form over the accidental form itself; which in turn is based on the priority of substance and hence of substantial form over accident. It is a fundamental doctrine of being which is in play.⁷⁷

As such the *per se* accidents, as they are posterior in being, must flow from the essence of the soul.

⁷⁶ “Respondeo dicendum quod forma substantialis et accidentalis partim conveniunt, et partim differunt. Conveniunt quidem in hoc, quod utraque est actus, et secundum utramque est aliquid quodammodo in actu. Differunt autem in duobus. Primo quidem, quia forma substantialis facit esse simpliciter, et eius subiectum est ens in potentia tantum. Forma autem accidentalis non facit esse simpliciter; sed esse tale, aut tantum, aut aliquo modo se habens, subiectum enim eius est ens in actu. Unde patet quod actualitas per prius invenitur in forma substantiali quam in eius subiecto, et quia primum est causa in quolibet genere, forma substantialis causat esse in actu in suo subiecto. Sed e converso, actualitas per prius invenitur in subiecto formae accidentalis, quam in forma accidentali, unde actualitas formae accidentalis causatur ab actualitate subiecti. Ita quod subiectum, in quantum est in potentia, est susceptivum formae accidentalis, in quantum autem est in actu, est eius productivum. Et hoc dico de proprio et per se accidente, nam respectu accidentis extranei, subiectum est susceptivum tantum; productivum vero talis accidentis est agens extrinsecum. Secundo autem differunt substantialis forma et accidentalis, quia, cum minus principale sit propter principalius, materia est propter formam substantialem; sed e converso, forma accidentalis est propter completionem subiecti (ST.I.77.6).” Italics added.

⁷⁷ Dewan, *Form and Being*, 222.

Thomas notes several interesting characteristics regarding the relationship of *per se* accidents to the substance in which they inhere: First, the substantial form is that for the sake of which the accidental forms exist. As I noted in Section I.2, Thomas refers to the essence of the soul as the “final principle” of its *per se* accidents.⁷⁸ In the article quoted above he states that that which is less principal exists according to that which is primary. And because the substantial form is clearly ontologically prior to the accidental forms, the accidental forms are for the sake of the completion of the substance.

The priority of being of the essence of the substance leads to this essence being the active principle of its proper accidents (see Diagram 1); thus, the substance is, in a way, the cause of the proper accidental forms that flow from its essence. It is, however, also that which is formed by them. “[W]herefore the actuality of the accidental form is caused by the actuality of the subject. So the subject, forasmuch as it is in potentiality, is receptive of the accidental form: but forasmuch as it is in act, it produces it.”⁷⁹ The substance is, in a way, both in act and in potency regarding the same accidental forms.⁸⁰ It is both the active and the passive principle of its proper accidents.

It is helpful to expand a point I made in Section I.2 in discussing the efficient cause of maleness in general. The proper accidents of the soul are ordered to the essence of the substance – *forma accidentalis est proper completionem subiecti*. But there is also an order among the accidental forms. A more detailed look at *how* the powers of the soul flow from the essence of soul is in order. (Once again, Diagram 1 is helpful here):

In those things which proceed from one according to a natural order, as the first is the cause of all, so that which is nearer to the first is, in a way, the cause of those which are more remote. Now it has been shown above that among the powers of the soul there are several kinds of order. Therefore one power of the soul proceeds from the essence of the soul by the medium of another. But since the essence of the soul is compared to the powers both as a principle active and final, and as a receptive principle, either separately by itself, or together with the body; and since the agent and the end are more perfect, while the receptive principle, as such, is less perfect; it follows that those powers of the soul which precede the others, in the order of perfection and nature, are the principles of the others, after the manner of the end and active principle. For we see that the senses are for the sake of the intelligence, and not the other way about. The senses, moreover, are a certain imperfect participation of the intelligence; wherefore, according to their natural origin, they

⁷⁸ ST.I.77.7.

⁷⁹ ST.I.77.6.

⁸⁰ For a discussion of how the substance can be both active and passive regarding the same form, see Dewan, *Form and Being*, 223-228.

proceed from the intelligence as the imperfect from the perfect. But considered as receptive principles, the more perfect powers are principles with regard to the others; thus the soul, according as it has the sensitive power, is considered as the subject, and as something material with regard to the intelligence. On this account, the more imperfect powers precede the others in the order of generation, for the animal is generated before the man.⁸¹

In Article 4 of the same question, Thomas established that there is an order among the powers of the soul. The foundation of the order is the unity of the soul. First, there is the order of nature, according to which the more perfect powers are prior to the less perfect. In this order, reason is prior to sensation, as sensation is to the vegetative powers. Then, there is the order of generation, which is the inverse of the order of nature; the least perfect come in time and generation prior to and ordered to the more perfect.⁸² Thomas adds, moreover, that not only is there order between the powers, but that the less perfect emanate from the more perfect, even if they come prior in time and generation. The essence of the soul is the agent and end of soul's proper accidents. It precedes them in being. They are for its sake. The higher powers precede the lower powers in being. The lower powers are for the sake of the higher – as sense is for the sake of intellect. Because a more perfect power is prior in being, a lower power flows from it and is ordered to it. Because the less perfect is ordered to the more perfect, the more perfect is an end for the lower power. The higher power is more perfect in being; it is, therefore, the active principle for the lower.

⁸¹ “Respondeo dicendum quod in his quae secundum ordinem naturalem procedunt ab uno, sicut primum est causa omnium, ita quod est primo propinquius, est quodammodo causa eorum quae sunt magis remota. Ostensum est autem supra quod inter potentias animae est multiplex ordo. Et ideo una potentia animae ab essentia animae procedit mediante alia. Sed quia essentia animae comparatur ad potentias et sicut principium activum et finale, et sicut principium susceptivum, vel seorsum per se vel simul cum corpore; agens autem et finis est perfectius, susceptivum autem principium, inquantum huiusmodi, est minus perfectum, consequens est quod potentiae animae quae sunt priores secundum ordinem perfectionis et naturae, sint principia aliarum per modum finis et activi principii. Videmus enim quod sensus est propter intellectum, et non e converso. Sensus etiam est quaedam deficiens participatio intellectus, unde secundum naturalem originem quodammodo est ab intellectu, sicut imperfectum a perfecto. Sed secundum viam susceptivi principii, e converso potentiae imperfectiores inveniuntur principia respectu aliarum, sicut anima, secundum quod habet potentiam sensitivam, consideratur sicut subiectum et materiale quoddam respectu intellectus. Et propter hoc, imperfectiores potentiae sunt priores in via generationis, prius enim animal generatur quam homo (ST.I.77.7).”

⁸² See ST.I.77.4.

The ordering of the powers of the soul speaks to the unity of the substance – something which, for instance, Pinker denies. Dewan writes: “My point is, as always, that the order of causal flow of the powers pertains to the doctrine of the unity of the source, and so to the vision of the essence of the soul as a nature, a nature with a certain proper perfection.”⁸³ The soul’s essence, which is one, stands to the powers of the soul as an agent and end. Though the powers flow from each other, the source of their actuality is the being of soul’s essence. The *per se* accidents are therefore unified by the soul’s essence.

As underlying and modifying the power of generation, maleness flows from the essence of the human person. It does so, however, in the unique way I mentioned in Section I.1. The power of generation flows from the essence of the soul. That power is modified according to agency of the essence working through the generative power of the parents in producing a mechanism to modify the power of generation by modifying the organ into which it is received. The essence is its agent; it is also its end. Maleness is ordered to the completion of the human person in that the power of generation must be had in *either* the male mode *or* the female mode; it is ordered to the perfection of the species in that the power of generation and thus human nature is incomplete without both male and female. As part of a causal chain that flows from the hierarchy of being, maleness is ordered to the powers nobler than the power it principally modifies. Thus, maleness in the human person is ordered to the exercise of intellect and will, man’s highest powers.

More can and must be said about the relationship of maleness to the perfection of the human person. However, at this point, having examined more closely how it is generally that the proper accidents flow from the soul’s essence, attention must now be refocused on the particular accidental form “maleness.” As I have mentioned, human nature employs the Y chromosome as the initial determinant of the human substance as male; it is in virtue of the presence of the Y chromosome that a human substance is first said to be male. However, as I noted in Section I.2, the Y chromosome though first considered as a formal element in determining the substance to maleness, then becomes partner with the agency of human nature in working to bring about the perfections associated with maleness. Thus the Y chromosome can be considered as a formal cause regarding the initial existence of maleness and as an agent cause in conjunction with the soul’s essence as regards the perfections of maleness. In tracking the agency of the Y chromosome one finds that modifications of the human substance subsequent to the initial determination as male regard more than just the power of generation; for, as maleness modifies the power of generation by modifying the organs into which that power is received, so, to a lesser extent, the Y chromosome modifies organs

⁸³ Dewan, *Form and Being*, 223.

associated with other powers. In order to understand the agency of the Y chromosome, and to attempt to discern the purpose of human nature in its joint agency with the Y chromosome in modifying more than only the organs associated with the power of generation, I will briefly track the series of effects that follow from the initial determination of a human zygote as male.

2. *Second emanation: the cascade of the effects of maleness*

To be male is to be determined according to a certain mode of having the power of generation. I have argued that generation is ordered to the flourishing of the offspring and to the higher powers of the soul. The various orders that pertain to the soul and its powers are functions of the unity of living substance, the principle of which unity is the substantial form, *viz.* the soul. Nevertheless, all that follows *strictly* from the determination of the power of generation through the determination of the genital organs is a distinct male and female mode of participating in *the act of generation*. In tracking the effects of the Y chromosome, it will become clear that human maleness regards more than just a mode of participating in the act of generation; it is certainly possible that sex based difference would extend only to that which facilitates the act of reproduction. In following the Y chromosome, I am seeking to identify further sex-based determinations or accidental forms that modify the human substance and its essential powers and to discern the purpose of such determinations.

Following the Y-chromosome: Determining the amplitude of the accidental form, maleness, is in a way the work of a tracker, though it cannot be limited to that. It is clear that, in the human being, the initial determination of the developing human person as male is in virtue of the presence of the Y-chromosome in the nucleus of the microscopic new being; this is the initial determination of the new human being as male. Subsequent determinations of the substance follow, in one way or another, from this initial determination in virtue of the Y-chromosome.

In Part I, significant attention was given to the effects of the Y-chromosome; I will not repeat such treatment here, but rather offer a brief review of the work of the Y-chromosome focusing, however, on its role as the instigator of an accidental form. It must be said that this subsection is in no way intended to be an exhaustive exposition of the effects of the Y-chromosome – especially as it is clear that much remains to be discovered regarding its impact on the human organism.

Gonads: With little doubt, the most momentous activity of the Y-chromosome is the cueing of the proto-gonad structures to form as testes rather than ovaries. It is worth taking a moment here to consider the general definition of masculinity in light of this action, i.e. to consider the determination of substance according to a certain mode. The substance already exists and is developing. At about six-weeks after gestation, under the influence of the Y-chromosome, the very

same structures that will become the ovaries in females are cued to form as testes. Thus, as regards maleness and femaleness, there is at once sameness and difference. Both organs - testes and ovaries - when they reach maturity, will produce something uniquely human; they will each form a haploid cell with a unique potency for becoming human, both kinds of gamete are necessary for the generation of new human life. The distinction comes in the way in which the gametes are formed and how they function subsequent to their formation. Compared to the ovaries, the testes form many more germ cells. Unlike the male reproductive cell, ova are rich and more costly cells; their production is limited. Thus, the female body rhythmically prepares one ovum each month from the limited and steadily declining store of ovarian follicles. As for the male, spermatozoa are mass-produced and distributed lavishly. The organs that produce and distribute them are external. The cells are small, motile, and multitudinous. Their task is to go out to the awaiting ovum, find it, penetrate it to its nucleus, and fuse with that nucleus so as to spark the flame of a new human life. The first known task of the Y-chromosome is to cue the proto-gonads to become the kind of organ that makes such cells. By so modifying the male organ of generation, the power of generation is modified.

Genitalia: The ovaries and the testes are the same in that they each produce a haploid cell with the unique potency to become human. The ability to form such cells is the foundation of the human active power of generation. The cells, however, are significantly different. And so the organs that support the cells are different. Perhaps it is not surprising, then, that the next realm in which the effects of the Y-chromosome can be seen is regarding the organs that surround the gonads. As discussed in Part I, the influence of the Y-chromosome is mediated, however, through the influence of androgens produced by the testes. The male external organ is formed to accommodate the male gamete and its role vis-à-vis the female gamete. The internal organs of the female protect the more precious ova. The male organ, by contrast, is made precisely to enter into the internal organs of the female so as to deliver the male gamete to the awaiting ovum. Thus, as discussed in Chapter 1, androgens from the testes cause a penis and scrotum to form from the same structures that, in a woman, form the clitoris and the labia. Further, androgens in combination with Müllerian Inhibiting Factor lead to the ascendancy of the male internal "duct work" versus the female structures that flourish in the absence of male hormones. The male modality of genitalia is ordered to the female mode and vice versa.

Up to this point, all is as might be expected. Maleness is a determination of the substance according to a mode of participating in the divided power of generation. Clearly, all the organs just mentioned have direct and proper reference to power of generation. If sexual differences only regarded the *act* of generation, one might expect that the effects of the Y chromosome would end with the determining

of the reproductive organs. Such, however, is not the case. The further determination of the human substance based upon the initial determination as male or female extends well beyond the reproductive organs.

Secondary sex characteristics: Though moving ahead in time, the clearest place to look next is to the so-called secondary sex characteristics. Principal among these are breast formation in women as well as distinct patterns of male and female muscular and skeletal formation. The general result of these differences is a male who is larger, faster, and stronger than the female, and a female with a pelvic skeletal structure suited for childbirth and breasts required for the early survival of infants. As was discussed earlier, male size and strength have implications for male-male competition for females, but also for the provisioning and defense of his family and the broader community.⁸⁴

In non-surgical births, the differences in the female pelvic skeletal structures are of great importance. In times pre-dating baby formula the purpose of the the breasts, was unambiguous and indispensable. Nevertheless, even if modern societal structures and technological advances limit the impact of and need for such a secondary sex characteristic, women nevertheless universally remain as children's primary caregivers.⁸⁵

The brain and beyond: Neither does the difference in modality end with the secondary sex characteristics. Again, as was noted in Chapter 1, the effects of androgens have significant impact upon the developing brain leading to what can be called a male-typical or male mode of brain. The male and female modes of the brain affect the senses, inclinations and appetites, and thought processing. The extent and possible applications of such differences have already been discussed.⁸⁶ Taken together, differences in brain form and function, in tandem with distinct capacities of sensation, nervous system reactions, hormone environments, and inclinations contribute to what could be called a generally and modally distinct psychology.⁸⁷

Signs of difference in brain function, nervous system function, hormone difference, and inclination can perhaps be seen most clearly in children's spontaneous play, story-telling, picture drawing, group dynamics, and general

⁸⁴ I should note that Geary holds that secondary sex characteristics such as size and strength, and behavior characteristics such as dominance seeking and aggression are results solely of sexual selection. That is to say they are the result of male-male competition the result of which are better mating opportunities. Any further application of characteristics such as size and strength to a sex-based division of labor is an evolutionary afterthought in which a trait that exists for one motive is co-opted for another. See Geary, *Male, Female*, 92-94.

⁸⁵ See Geary, *Male, Female*, 98-105.

⁸⁶ See Chapter 1.III-V.

⁸⁷ In Chapters 3-6, I discussed various visions of male and female psychology.

behavior. Briefly to recall the research of Chapter 1,⁸⁸ boys' play is more expansive, more rough-and-tumble with typical wrestling and various levels of physical aggression. Sticks become swords and blocks become trucks. Pictures are full of movement and conflict. Stories tend towards themes of heroic conquest or saving of the city. Friends tend to be judged by their abilities; and a boy readily understands his place of rank within the pack.

Girls, by contrast, consistently tend towards the personal; not that they are without their own mode of aggression and hostility – but even aggression tends to be more relational rather than centering on physical conquest. Play and communication tend to be more communal. Baron-Cohen generalized the tendency by saying that girls in their communication style and group dynamics tend to make room for others. Pictures tend to be of families looking outward toward the viewer. Further, girls tend more towards play-parenting.⁸⁹

Summary: When one considers the constellation of determinations that follow from a newly conceived human's initial determination as male, it becomes clear that the accidental form "maleness" is ordered toward more than only the act of generation. Dewan writes: "Obviously one can associate a merely chaotic variety of accidental entities with a substance, but they are not *per se* associates if they do not have something to do with the very unity of the substance."⁹⁰ *Per se* accidents, in some way, regard the unity of the substance in which they inhere. Maleness has a unity of its own; it can be understood as a kind of form. Its unity, however, is derived from and ordered to the unity of the substance – in this case, the unity of the human person. The question, then, is what is it that unifies maleness. What is it that makes maleness one? Maleness flows from the essential principles of the human being – it pertains to the unity and completion of the human person as a distinct modality through which the power of generation is realized. However, from a new human being's initial determination as male, there flows further determinations that pertain to the perfection of the accidental form maleness and, through the perfection of the accidental form, to the perfection of the human form. The further determinations that follow from the initial determination as male indicate that form "maleness" is ordered to more than just the act of generation.

I have noted before that, through maleness, a man is determined, is ordered to both the female and to his offspring. The male must unite the divided powers of generation. As such, he is ordered to the female. In the male one sees the effect of Y-chromosome not only shaping a gamete, and reproductive organs that clearly find their complement in the female, but also the male's brain, nervous system, senses

⁸⁸ See Chapter 1.V.3-5.

⁸⁹ Geary, *Male, Female*, 234-236.

⁹⁰ Dewan, *Form and Being*, 219.

and hormones are “modified” so as to facilitate that which leads to those operations which enable him to have the proper rapport with women – she through whom the power of generation is made complete. Thus the male is given the size, strength, aggression, and inclination to compete with other males and merit election by the female. These same characteristics serve to aid in providing for offspring, the fruit of their union. They likewise extend towards the service of the community in which such offspring must flourish, and without which they will not flourish. So, the measure by which a substance is determined as male has as its foundation in a certain role in reproduction. The accidental form of maleness, however, is ordered to the substantial form. And the substantial form, whose highest operations are that of intellect and will, require that maleness be ordered to more than just the producing sperm; it is ordered to the operation reason and will.

3. *The efficient cause of maleness in the human being*

In tracking the effects of the Y-chromosome, I have been attending to the efficient cause of maleness in the human being. However, in the previous section, my focus was more upon the accidental form that resulted from the agency rather than the agency itself. In this section, I will briefly focus on the agency that leads to the maleness in the human being.

As I noted in Section II.2, the primary agent cause of maleness is the individual nature of the substance in which it inheres. In the human being, sexual differentiation begins with the agency of the male generative power *in the parent*. In the process of making his gamete, the male generative power splits the 23 pairs of chromosomes in his DNA in a process called meiosis. Because in the male the 23rd pair contains an X and a Y chromosome, the result is that half of his gametes have X chromosomes and half have Y chromosomes. If the ovum is fertilized by a gamete that has the X chromosome, a female results; if a sperm bearing the Y chromosome fertilizes the ovum, a male results. Thus, there appears to be a certain level of chance involved as to whether an X or Y spermatozoon will be reach the nucleus of the awaiting ovum.

From the moment of conception, the new substance is determined as either male or female in virtue of the presence of either the Y or X chromosome. Thus, as I noted, the initial causal role of the Y chromosome is formal. As discussed in the prior subsection, having determined the substance as male, the Y chromosome then takes on the role of agent cause in cueing the proto-gonads to form as testes. The testes then take on the role of agent in producing androgens that in turn are agent causes in the masculinization not only of the external genitalia, but also of the myriad of effects discussed in Chapter 1.

The primary moving cause in human development is human nature. Metaphorically, it could be considered as a train engine driving development. The Y

chromosome is something like a track-switch which channels development onto one of two parallel tracks. Human nature remains the principal agent, but is guided and modified by the presence of the Y chromosome. The Y chromosome, however, while maintaining its proper agency, also “delegates” agency, first to the testes and then to the androgens formed by the testes.

It is further interesting to consider the flow of powers from the soul’s essence. The soul’s essence is the agent and end of all the soul’s powers; the powers however flow from one another according to the order of their perfection. Thus, according to the order of nature, the reason is agent and end of sensation and so on for all the powers as described in Diagram 1. The order of generation is the reverse. Now, sexual difference primarily regards the power of generation. Thus, the most dramatic work of the Y chromosome is to determine the proto-gonads as testes. As stated above, human nature is the primary agent in causing the power of generation, which it does *through* the power of reason and sensation, and in producing the organs associated with the power. Sexual difference modifies the organs into which the power is received. Interestingly, however, the modification of the organs of generation then has an effect on the organs associated with the higher powers. As I noted in Chapter 1, all of the senses are affected by sexual difference. Reason itself is an immaterial power of the human person and, as such, has no organ associated with it. However, the brain is intimately related to human reason. As I demonstrated in Chapter 1.III, there is significant difference in male and female typical brain development.⁹¹ Thus, a fascinating dynamic exists between the flow of powers from the soul’s essence and the modifying effect of sexual difference: the power of generation, which is the primary locus of sexual difference, flows from the soul’s essence through the higher powers. The Y chromosome modifies the power of generation. This modification occurs relatively early in the development of the fetus (i.e. early in the order of generation). The modification in the power of generation then causes modification to the organs of the higher powers (the organs of sensation and imagination) which are subsequent in the order of generation. The principle of maleness (the Y chromosome) thus modifies not only the organs of reproduction, but also the organs of higher powers. Below, in Subsection 5, I seek to determine to what end these modifications are made.

4. *The material cause of maleness in the human being*

The Y chromosome is in every cell of the human body. Therefore, it must be said that the human substance is that which is determined by sexual difference.

⁹¹ The question of how sex difference relates to differences in the power of reason by means of modifying the organs and powers related to reason (primarily the brain and the senses) is of great interest and complexity. I must, however, leave that question for future research.

Subsequent to the initial determination as male or female, the subject of a modification that is a perfection of maleness can be specified to particular organs or systems within the organism. Thus, for example, the material cause of the formation of the testes are the proto-gonads. The material of the masculinized brain is, of course, the brain. The foundational determination is that of the substance by means of the Y chromosome; this determination of the existing substance appears to stand towards subsequent perfections of maleness as do the essence of the soul stands to its perfections.

5. *The final cause of maleness in the human being*

What is the good that explains maleness? What is it that moved the agent to act to bring about maleness? I have already considered this question generally in the Section II.4. Here, I will apply what I have already said generally to the particular case of the human male. I will examine the question of the final cause of the human male first by considering maleness as a mode of the power of the generation. Thus, I consider maleness first as ordered towards the generation of a new member of the species. Next, I consider the maleness as ordered to the flourishing of the offspring. Finally, I consider the human male as ordered to woman and together with woman as ordered to the common good.

The human male is an integral part of human generation. The end of the maleness is, therefore, entwined with the end of generation. For humans, the end of generation is somewhat distinct from the end of generation for other animals. As discussed in Chapter 8, each individual human person is incorruptible in its intellectual soul. Nature's purpose regards principally that which is permanent. The human person is permanent. Therefore, in addition to the preservation of the human species, the purpose of nature in human generation also principally regards the generation of *individual* incorruptible human persons. As an integral part of the power of generation, maleness is ordered to the generation of subsisting individuals, and the to preservation of the human species.

As Thomas clearly observed, were a man to abandon his child, his generative act would be frustrated if the child were not to survive and thrive. Proper upbringing must therefore be secured for the child. However, the necessity of parental investment does not in and of itself speak to *sexually differentiated* parental investment. Examining a father's role as distinguished from a mother's role in facilitating the development of offspring is a principal task of Chapter 11. I therefore leave detailed discussion until then. However, when looking to the extent of the effects of the Y chromosome, it is clear that maleness is ordered to more than only a mode of participating in the act of generation. Female secondary sex characteristics and, as noted in Chapter 1, brain formation incline the female more towards immediate care of infants. Male secondary sex characteristics and brain formation

are more ordered to provision and protection of developing children. Maleness as such, therefore, is ordered to the flourishing of the child in a uniquely male way.

In many ways, understanding the intention of the agent that makes maleness regarding the male's role in the rearing of offspring is the work of the remainder of this thesis. Detailed discussion of the male role in the flourishing of his offspring is therefore left for Chapters 10 and 11. However, in understanding man's role in the flourishing of his children and in better understanding the final cause of maleness in man, it will be enlightening to look to the final cause of the division of male and female in the human beings and to their asymmetry.

In order to understand why the power of generation is divided in man one must understand how it contributes to human flourishing. The evolutionists understand the division of the sexes in terms of its benefits for survival. While not denying these benefits, one must also look to how dividing the power of generation promotes not only the survival of a human *qua* organism, which is an aspect of human good, but also how such a division promotes the perfection of the human *qua* human, i.e. how it follows the creative trajectory of the act of generation.

I have already discussed Thomas's idea that the power of generation is divided in more perfect animals in order to liberate the animal for the operation of its higher powers. In humans, the need for this division is even greater: "But man is yet further ordered to a still nobler vital action, and that is intellectual operation. Therefore there was greater reason for the distinction of these two forces in man; so that the female should be produced separately from the male."⁹² The division of the generative powers frees man and woman for their higher perfection, for the operation of intellect and will. The accidental forms are for the sake of the perfection of the substance and so are for the sake of the higher powers.

Earlier, I argued that there is yet a further reason for the dividing of the sexes: the sexes are divided so that they can be reunited in a complementary manner that provides a foundational community ordered to a common good. In the *Ethics*, Aristotle, in commenting upon friendship between man and wife, observes a kind of primacy of the bond between man and woman and its necessity regarding the common good:

Between man and wife friendship seems to exist by nature; *for man is naturally inclined to form couples-even more than to form cities*, inasmuch as the household is earlier and more necessary than the city, and reproduction is more common to man with the animals. With the other animals the union extends only to this point, but human beings live together not only for the sake of reproduction but also for the various purposes of life; *for from the start the functions are divided, and those of man and*

⁹² ST.1.92.1.

woman are different; so they help each other by throwing their peculiar gifts into the common stock. It is for these reasons that both utility and pleasure seem to be found in this kind of friendship. But this friendship may be based also on virtue, if the parties are good; for each has its own virtue and they will delight in the fact. And children seem to be a bond of union (which is the reason why childless people part more easily); for children are a good common to both and what is common holds them together.⁹³

The inclination of man and woman towards one another is even more fundamental than that of human beings to form cities. As Aristotle observes, the union of male and female goes on to serve the common the good of the community even beyond the great good of providing, providing for, and educating their children. Functions are divided, and each contributes to the common good in virtue of his or her strengths. A result of this collaborative effort is friendship – and, where there is virtue, true friendship. The friendship between man and woman is then furthered by the “common good” which is the child.

The union of male and female unifies the divided powers of generation and so completes an essential power of human nature. The union of male and female is also the foundational unit of political association; for, in human beings, the union of male and female is not a momentary liaison only for the purpose of sexual intercourse. Rather, the union of man and woman should result in true and lasting friendship between the man and the woman, in part for the sake of their offspring but also for the sake of other common goods. In this friendship, man and woman collaborate in achieving the common good precisely by offering unique contributions towards its fulfillment. “[F]rom the start the functions are divided, and those of man and woman are different; so they help each other by throwing their peculiar gifts into the common stock.”⁹⁴

It could be argued, as discussed in Section II.4, that the need for corporate action would be addressed by reproduction by two parents who are alike. Thus, one must further explain why sexual reproduction is asymmetrical. To respond, I generally return to my comments in Section II.4. The communal effort of male and female to promote the common good is not only collaborative, it is complementary. Yet further, as I noted earlier, ordering of one to another who is truly other, ruptures the paradigm of self-enclosed self-interest. In order for the human being to thrive, he or she must be a part of a community. Communal life implies an ordering towards a common good. The tendency of the human being generally is to focus

⁹³ Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, trans. W. D. Ross, *The Basic Works of Aristotle*, ed. Richard McKeon (New York: Random House, 1941), Book 8, Chapter 12. 1162a 16-29. Italics added.

⁹⁴ Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, 1162a 19-21.

inordinately on the self. The ancient myth of Narcissus makes the point forcefully: the human person inclines too easily towards staring at his own image. The ordering of male to female and female to male serves to break the narcissistic paradigm.

The otherness of male and female also leads to the common good by means of a certain diversification. For humans, more complex goods are achieved by many operations.⁹⁵ Human goods require a society to achieve its greatest goods. The society works based upon various works being done by various individuals. Such diversification is epitomized in the difference of male and female where internal gestation and post-partum suckling give to women a specific task in the work of procreation and to the male a related but distinct role, while each is equally committed to the common good. The mutual ordering of male to female and female to male, once again, forms a kind of paradigm for the ordering of human society to the common good.

The union of male and female in true friendship ordered to the common good in a complementary fashion thus provides a kind of microcosm of the broader society. It also provides the proper environment for the flourishing of the offspring. Thus, in being ordered to the proper unification with the woman, maleness is ordered to the good of the family and the good of the city.

A sign of something greater? Jung saw the division of male and female as revelatory of the relations between the conscious and unconscious mind. Christianity, which was also very influential in Jung's life, through the writings of St. Paul has long held that the relationship of man and woman is a sign of the love that Christ has for the Church and that the Church has for Christ. In both cases, the relationship of male and female reveal some deeper facet of reality. Is it possible that philosophy can see some deeper purpose that further explains the form of maleness? For the present, I leave this as a question; in the conclusion to this dissertation, I will offer some thoughts as to a response.

Conclusion

I have argued that, in order to understand maleness in the human person, one must understand two emanations or processions: the procession of the powers

⁹⁵ See ST.I.77.2 for an interesting discussion of the achieving of the perfect good by many operations. In this article, Thomas is speaking of the many powers of the soul that are utilized to achieve the perfect good, however, the same idea can be applied by extension to the action of many individuals within the *polis* acting to achieve the common good. Thus, by analogy, as the diverse powers each have their proper operations that achieve the good of the soul, so the perfection of the common good of the *polis* is achieved only by the corporate and complementary actions of its members. The relationship of male and female is the primary instance of such an ordering.

of the soul from the soul's essence and the procession of effects from the initial determination of the human being as male by means of the Y chromosome. Understanding the form of maleness in the human being is a matter of understanding the relationship of these two emanations and the order that exists between them. It is through understanding the order of the emanations that unity of maleness become clear. Thus, in order to summarize the form of maleness, I will look to the unity that is the source of maleness and the unity that is maleness. In so doing, I will, once again, follow Dewan as he follows Thomas. I will first offer a few thoughts about form and unity and then proceed to discuss how the different aspects of maleness can be understood to flow from a unified source.

A few words about unity, identity, and form are in order. Dewan writes: "a thing's substantial nature is its *selfhood*... I say this because, among the modes of unity, sameness or identity or selfhood is the mode proper to substance as substance."⁹⁶ Thomas argues that "each thing is 'one' by its substance."⁹⁷ "One" is convertible with "being." "To be" is "to be one." Hence Thomas adds that "everything guards its unity as it guards its being."⁹⁸ A thing, however, exists in virtue of its form or its substantial nature. The substantial form is the principle of a thing's unity; it is the principle of its identity.

To be a principle of unity is said most properly of a *substantial* form; it is also, however, true to a lesser extend of an accidental form. Thomas observes that "since being and unity signify the same thing, and the species of things that are the same are themselves the same, there must be as many species of being as there are of unity, and they must correspond to each other."⁹⁹ As being is said analogically of substance and quality, so unity is said analogically. My current task is to summarize the form of maleness. To do so is to summarize masculine identity, which, in turn is to see that which unifies maleness. To understand that which unifies maleness is, in

⁹⁶ Dewan, *Form and Being*, 201, and Note 52. For an interesting discussion of form and identity as they assist in making the distinction between form and *esse*, see "St. Thomas and the Distinction between Form and *Esse* in Caused Things," in *Form and Being*, 188-204, especially 201-204. In continuing the above quotation, Dewan says: "This makes it even clearer what we must distinguish between the *form*, whereby the effect has its own identity as a being, and its *esse*, whereby it partakes in what is 'owned' (my 'own' is what relates to my 'self') by higher reality (201-202)." The form is that "whereby the effect has its own identity." *Esse* is received from the efficient cause, which, ultimately, must be a "higher reality."

⁹⁷ ST.I.11.1 ad 1.

⁹⁸ ST.I.11.1.

⁹⁹ "Dicit ergo primo, quod ex quo unum et ens idem significant, et eiusdem sunt species eadem, oportet quod tot sint species entis, quot sunt species unius, et sibiinvicem respondents (CM, Book 4, Lecture 2, § 561)."

part, to understand the order of the elements that constitute it. Thus my current task is generally twofold: 1) To summarize how maleness relates to the unity of the substance in which it inheres. 2) To summarize the unity that is maleness. Thus, there are, as were, two “unities” to attend to: the unity of the human substance, and what might be called the sub-unity of “maleness” inhering in that substance.

In arguing that the powers of the soul *could not* possibly flow from the essence of the soul, an objector puts forward that many things cannot follow from one simple thing. The soul’s essence is simple; therefore, many powers cannot flow from it. Thomas displays his usual incisiveness in replying:

From one simple thing many things may proceed naturally, in a certain order; or again if there be diversity of recipients. Thus, from the one essence of the soul many and various powers proceed; both because order exists among these powers; and also by reason of the diversity of the corporeal organs.¹⁰⁰

Many things can flow *naturally* from one simple thing. Such diversification takes place in virtue of two factors: first, there is the diversification of an ordered procession. Secondly, a simple thing can be diversified according as it received in distinct recipients. Both means of diversification are important for understanding sexual difference.

I have discussed above how the powers of the soul flow from the essence of the soul. They do so according to an order. Each nobler power is the final and efficient principle of the lesser powers. All of the powers are unified in being ordered to and flowing from the soul’s essence. The unity of the source leads to the ordering of the powers while the ordering of the powers reveals the unity of the source. The powers are further determined, as Thomas noted in the text quoted above, by the organs into which they are received. Thus, one source – the soul’s essence – unfolds in many powers in virtue of the ordering of these powers to each other and to the soul’s essence, and in virtue of the various organs into which the powers of the soul are received.

I have argued that sexual difference *primarily* regards a modification of the power of generation by modifying the complex of organs into which the power is received. The source of the power of generation in both man and woman is the same; the source is the one and simple human nature, regarding which nature, *as such*, there is identity between man and woman; man and woman are identically

¹⁰⁰ “Ad primum ergo dicendum quod ab uno simplici possunt naturaliter multa procedere ordine quodam. Et iterum propter diversitatem recipientium. Sic igitur ab una essentia animae procedunt multae et diversae potentiae, tum propter ordinem potentiarum, tum etiam secundum diversitatem organorum corporalium (ST.I.77.6 ad 1).”

human. Human nature, however, has found and employed a means, as it were, to create a multiplicity from a unified source in producing instances of human nature in two modalities: male and female. Human nature accomplishes this by means of the X and Y chromosomes. A unified source - human nature - is modulated by a genetic component of the matter into which it is received. Like the powers of the soul, the modalities of male and female have human nature as a final and active principle. The accidental forms of maleness and femaleness are unique, however, in that, to varying extents in various species, they modify not only the power of generation, but also other powers of the soul. Thus, to understand maleness, one must not only understand its relationship to the power of generation, but also all that which flows from the original determination of a substance as male or female. One must further recognize how all such determinations are finally ordered to the unity of the substance; such an ordering is a sign of unity of the accidental form "maleness."

The original presence of the XY genotype is the first determination of the human substance as male. In a way similar to the powers of the soul from the soul's essence, the unified source of the accidental form "male" - as marked by the Y chromosome - is the source of a series of effects that proceed from the source according to an order and that are further diversified according to the organs in which such effects are received. The primary effect of the Y chromosome is to modify the power of generation by modifying the genital organs. Human nature is thus "directed" to form male gonads and genitalia. As the intersex disorders attest, the receptivity of the matter also plays a part in how the potential effects flowing from the Y chromosome are realized in a given individual. The effects of the Y chromosome, however, are not limited to the gonads and genitals - the effects are pervasive, involving the brain, the senses, the formation of the body, and character of the psyche. The constellation of the effects of the Y chromosome are unified in their source and thus can be said together to constitute the perfection of the form "maleness" in the human person. As the human form itself unifies the various parts that constitute a human substance, so the accidental form "maleness" unifies the various effects that flow from its source.

In *Form and Being*, Dewan discusses and the emphasizes the importance of order and unity as they relate to something's nature:

My point is, as always, that the order of causal flow of the powers pertains to the doctrine of the unity of the source, and so to the vision of the essence of the soul as a nature, a nature with a certain proper perfection.¹⁰¹

¹⁰¹ Dewan, *Form and Being*, 223.

Earlier in the same essay, Dewan comments:

The idea that one must proceed from one to many by virtue of an order is linked to the *coherence* of the procession, its *per se* character. Obviously one can associate a merely chaotic variety of accidental entities with a substance, but they are not *per se* associates if they don't have something to do with the very unity of the substance.¹⁰²

Maleness is not a “chaotic variety of accidental entities.” It is an *accidental* form, but it is unified in virtue of its source and its end.

Maleness, thus, must be seen as a kind of harmony of ordered modifications of various powers of the human person. The final principle of such harmony is the ordering to the completion of human nature. In virtue of its ordering to the perfection of human nature, maleness is also, in a sense, ordered to, or perhaps better, harmonized with femaleness.¹⁰³ In understanding maleness, one must, be mindful of both processions mentioned above. The unity of maleness can be seen in the unity of its source, which source is finally the principle of unity of the human substance itself. Maleness is thus unified in terms of its agent and its end, both of which are proximately human nature, but finally lie in the source of human nature, which is finally God.

¹⁰² Dewan, *Form and Being*, 219.

¹⁰³ It is difficult to find the proper musical metaphor: one might say that male and female are the same chord played on different parts of the register or formed by different instruments in the orchestra. Or one might say that they are fragments of a chord that are, in and of themselves, harmonious, but that together form the whole chord. Together, maleness and femaleness complete human nature first by completing an essential power of human nature, but also by further complementary, generative roles regarding human goods.

Chapter 10

Natural Law and Masculinity: Towards an Understanding of Fatherhood

INTRODUCTION

The goal of the previous chapter was to provide some insight into the nature of masculinity first by discerning its form (which, as was shown, is an accidental form), the powers and operations associated with the form, and the goodness which accounts for the the form. In this chapter, the emphasis shifts to understanding more fully that which accounts for the activity proper to man as male and that which, though not proper to the male, is bound to or flows from his proper action. Throughout this work, I (and those whose thought I have presented) have spoken of various tendencies of the male, of various inclinations that males have to act in one manner rather than another. How, though, is one to judge such tendencies vis-à-vis that which makes a human male to be a man? In Part I, it was clear, for instance, that men have a greater tendency than women to seek no-strings-attached sexual encounters. Does such a *tendency* reveal something of the nature of the human male? Is there any way to judge that such behavior is in fact “manly” or does the mere fact that a majority of men engage in it make it so? In this chapter, I propose that understanding masculinity in terms of the natural law is in fact a necessary step for understanding the nature of masculinity as ordered to the end of the human person in general.

In order to see if and how the quality maleness modifies the manner in which man is directed to his end, obviously I must say a few words about my general conception of natural law. A full explanation of this conception is impossible here. In Section I, therefore, I simply state my theoretical allegiances and offer a few thoughts as to how these allegiances affect the arguments I make in this and the

following chapter. Next, in Section II, I place my understanding of natural law in what I refer to as a “causal context.” In the prior chapter, I attempted to elucidate the causes that account for masculinity. In this section I attempt to deepen the understanding of the causes that account for masculinity precisely by considering the human person as a cause, but a caused cause. Thus, I seek to discern the manner in which the human person is both *directed to his end* and, at the same time, a free agent able to *determine his end*. Such an understanding is necessary to further comprehend if and how it is that maleness modifies human directedness. Next, in Section III, I briefly examine the nature of the inclinations that direct the human person to his end. As mentioned above, there are many inclinations which appear to move man towards one action or another. In this section, I discuss the relationship between such inclinations. In Section IV, I discuss generally how the natural law is divided according to the three levels given by St. Thomas in ST.I-II.94.2. Having understood generally how natural law directs the human person to his end, I finally, in Section V, consider if and how maleness modifies this directedness. Seeing the manner in which maleness modulates the human person’s ordering to his end prepares the way for the final chapter of Part II in which I explore in what manner man is ordered towards fatherhood. I should add that this chapter is by design incomplete. In the following chapter, I discuss fatherhood properly. Thus, in this chapter, I set aside detailed treatment of fatherhood. It will be my argument, however, that understanding fatherhood is, in fact, the central aspect of understanding man as male. This chapter, therefore, serves as something of an introduction for the one to follow.

I. GENERAL THEORETICAL CONTEXT

Most generally, in this chapter I place myself within that version of moral enquiry that Alasdair MacIntyre refers to as “tradition” in his Gifford lectures.¹ This is to say that I place myself within the ethical tradition begun in ancient Greece and which found a certain apex in St. Thomas. More particularly regarding natural law, I follow the recent work of scholars Russell Hittinger, Pamela Hall, and Fr. Robert Gahl.² Based upon their work, I see natural law as integrally incorporated into the ethical life individually, communally, and historically.

¹ See Alasdair MacIntyre, *Three Rival Versions of Moral Enquiry: Encyclopedia, Genealogy, and Tradition* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1991).

² See Russell Hittinger, *A Critique of the New Natural Law Theory* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1987). Pamela M. Hall, *Narrative and the Natural Law: An Interpretation of Thomistic Ethics* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1994). Robert A. Gahl, Jr.

Individually: Natural law is not somehow opposed or set against virtue-based ethics with the former being a rigid, possibly regressive clinging to an abstract, rule-based world that eschews the intricacies and inevitable contradictions of lived life.³ Neither is natural law the baton with which the vicious are bludgeoned, while virtue and natural right are the province of those who embrace the good and seek to do the good for its own sake.⁴ Rather, virtue and natural law work together and, in some way, are mutually dependent for their perfection. Virtue is impossible without the initial ordering and defining of the will regards the good that is to be done. Yet, without virtue, the intellect and will lose their grasp of the good, become disoriented, and fall prey to the legion of false goods that continually plague the human person.

Communally: While natural law is implanted in each individual heart, like everything man does, it is affected by, takes place within, and to a certain extent dependent upon the community in which the individual human person acts and comes to maturity as an ethical agent, as a subject of human acts. As lack of virtue can obscure one's vision of the good, so the character of one's community profoundly affects the ease or difficulty with which virtue is able to take root in the soul. Though never eradicating the first principles of the natural law, a corrupt polis can serve to effectively obscure them and thwart their application.

Historically: Just as one cannot escape the extension and influence of his community, neither can he escape the influence of his community through time and the inheritance that he has received from those who came before him. As he is affected by his community, so his community is affected by its history in virtue what they have inherited from those who came before them. Just as there can be an inherited intellectual tradition, so there can be, in a way, an inherited ethical tradition.

On all of these levels - individual, communal, historical - therefore, narrative is present. One's personal story is of supreme relevance as regards one's ability to know and implement the principles of the natural law. Similarly the current story of one's community and its history are also extremely significant in affecting one's hold of the first principles of practical reason.⁵ Though the principles of the natural law are self-evident, the further one moves from the first principle, the

"From the Virtue of a Fragile Good to a Narrative Account of Natural Law," *International Philosophical Quarterly* Vol. XXXVII, No. 4 (December 1997): 457-472.

³ See Hall commenting on Nussbaum, *Narrative and Natural Law*, 6-12 and Gahl, "Fragile Good", 461-462.

⁴ See Hall, *Narrative and Natural Law*, 14-16, and Gahl, "Fragile Good," 462.

⁵ For a discussion of narrative as it applies to natural law see Hall, *Narrative and Natural Law*, especially Chs. 2 & 5, and Gahl, "Fragile Good," especially pp. 464-472.

more easily they can become obscured. As with principles of the speculative intellect, there are self-evident principles of the practical reason that are not in fact known as such by all. In ST.I-II.94.2 Thomas makes the point that there are principles of the speculative intellective that are known only to the wise. What a narrative understanding of the natural law helps to show is that there are also those who are wise in practical reason. It is to the practically wise that certain self-evident principles of the natural law are evident. Wisdom in practical reason, however, comes through virtue and virtue, at least in part, comes from one's community. Thus, while principles of natural law are fixed principles directing the human person to his end, they are always realized in a particular personal, communal, and historical situation, in which situation virtue - and particularly prudence - is necessary both for their discovery and for their proper application. This insight is of great importance in responding, as I must, to thinkers such as Connell; for the understanding of natural law I have just briefly outlined, permits me to explain the various manifestations of masculinity throughout time and place, without losing grasp - as Connell does - of man's consistent ordering to his end, which ordering underlies the countless historical and social contexts in which he lives.

II. THE CAUSAL CONTEXT

The emphasis of all Part II of this work is upon understanding masculinity and, thereby, fatherhood in terms of the causes that constitute these realities. Up to this point, I have primarily examined maleness as the unfolding of a natural process. The agent in question when explaining maleness has been nature. However, in the human being, the question of maleness in its perfection is not only a question of the unfolding effects of the Y chromosome. The fullness of maleness in the human being involves human acts - free, deliberate acts based upon man's being as male. I must expand the understanding of causality, therefore, to include human action, man's free agency. I will argue that this is a matter of seeing man as a caused cause. Natural law plays the role of directing or determining man precisely according to a rational mode through inclining his will to certain goods. However, before moving to treating natural law proper, it will be useful to review a proper understanding of human action. To this end, I will provide a brief summary of Stephen Brock's work on the relationship of form, agency, and the good.⁶ Doing so will help in understanding how man is inclined through the natural law, the various levels of inclination - intellectual, sentient, and, a category that I will add, psychological - and, finally, will be of great use in understanding how the human male is inclined to fatherhood.

⁶ See Brock *Action and Conduct*, primarily, Ch. 3, "Agent-causality and finality," pp. 95-136.

Form, power, and action: Much of Chapter 9 was spent exploring the form of masculinity. Action, however, follows form.

[I]f the phenomenon of motion induces the mind to form at once the notion of an origin, then the kind of thing that it will naturally “conjecture”, as the motion’s origin, will be something to which the motion is configured or conformed; something which, as it were, enjoys the paternity of motion.⁷

The cause of a motion, or, more broadly, of an action is something conformed – something like in form – to that action. At little later, Brock adds: “To act is nothing other than to communicate that through which the agent is in act, insofar as it is possible.”⁸ To act, then, is, to a certain extent, the agent’s sharing of its form.⁹ By definition, then, the agent, at least initially, must possess the form more perfectly than that which it enacts.¹⁰

An agent’s form explains the definiteness of an effect. Thus, to a certain extent the finality of an action is explained in virtue of the agent’s form; the form in the cause leads to the form in the effect according to the mode of receiver. Further, power in the agent accounts for the agent’s ability to act. What form and power taken together, however, do not explain is why an agent acts at all.

These explanations of the principle of finality serve only to give a more detailed statement of what it is that an agent acts for. That is, they are still in the order of the specification of the direction of action. The agent’s definiteness accounts merely for why it does this rather than that; its having power account merely for the fact that something else comes to be conformed to it or is influenced by it, receives an “influx” from it. But these are not, by themselves, sufficient to explain the very fact that the agent actually engages in action. They only explain why it can act, and what sort of act it will engage in, if it engages in any. If it actually engages in action, this can only be because it has some appetite or inclination to do so. That is there must be some tipping of the balance between its not acting and its acting.¹¹

⁷ Brock, *Action and Conduct*, 106.

⁸ Brock, *Action and Conduct*, 109.

⁹ I will return to this idea in the following chapter when discussing fatherhood in particular. Reproduction is the most perfect instance of this sharing of form. The dynamics that underlie it, therefore, must be understood.

¹⁰ Brock, *Action and Conduct*, 110.

¹¹ Brock, *Action and Conduct*, 115-116.

Form and power are necessary for explaining action; they are, however, not sufficient. To them must be added the cause that moves the agent to its agency; to them must be added inclination and goodness.¹²

Nature and goodness: Without some notion of inclination, action becomes inscrutable, an arbitrary phenomenon that exists beyond the realm of explanation. But inclination is inexorably linked to the notion of goodness.

The end is not only a principle of the act's specification, but also a principle of its exercise. The identification of the agent's end makes it possible to say not only that if the agent acts, it will act for this, but also that it is acting because it is acting for this. In other words, it means not only that the agent acts for a good, but also that which it acts for, it acts for because it is good. It acts because of an inclination towards that which it enacts, and "good" means "object of inclination". The principle means that goodness is an irreducible element in the account of action.¹³

Action cannot be explained without reference inclination; inclination is that which gives something the notion of goodness.¹⁴

Sometimes things act because some other agent presses them into service. But natural things have within themselves the principle of their own operation. In fact, Dewan describes nature as essence as ordered toward operation.¹⁵ As my goal is seeing how the natural law moves man *qua* male, it is what moves natural things to act that is of interest here. And it is in natural things that form and goodness are inexorably intertwined with agency:

The conclusion, then, is that in the case of natural agents, the role of form as a principle of action is not exhausted in its making the agent to be something definite (to which some definite action or effect corresponds) nor its constituting the agent's power, the wealth whose giving forth constitutes its action. The possession of the

¹² Fr. Brock notes that, even before asking the question of what moves an agent to its agency, the notions of form and goodness are, in fact already related: "The definite, the formed, is always, insofar as it is definite, something good. This is so because goodness is convertible with perfection, which is to say, fullness or wealth, as opposed to defect, privation or penury. The good is 'positive' and not 'negative.' But the definite is always something positive. Negation merely removes something definite from the subject." *Action and Conduct*, 115.

¹³ Brock, *Action and Conduct*, 117.

¹⁴ See, for example, ST.I.5.4: "Since goodness is that which all things desire, and since this has the aspect of an end, it is clear that goodness implies the aspect of an end." As indicated in Note 12 above, the notion of goodness is also linked to perfection: "'Goodness is what all desire.'" Now it is clear that a thing is desirable only in so far as it is perfect; for all desire their own perfection." (ST.I.5.1).

¹⁵ Dewan, *Form and Being*, 218.

form according to which they act is itself a source of their inclination to act. The inclination is intrinsic to them. It does not consist merely in their subjection to some other agent. In these cases, not only does the agent act because of some inclination, but also it is inclined to act because of the very object of its inclination, insofar as that object is somehow present to it. The more perfectly it is present, the more intensely is the agent inclined to act in favor of it. In a purely natural agent, the object of its inclination is identical with the form making it what it is.¹⁶

The form of a natural thing is the source of its operation. A natural thing acts in virtue of its form; its action is a sharing of its form, as is possible. The form of the agent gives definition to the form in the effect. The form in the agent also gives the agent the power to act. And, yet further, the form is *the object* of inclination. This follows from what has been said. Direct agency is the sharing of form. The object of the action is the form realized in another, in the effect – as it is possible for a given form to be received in an effect. It is therefore recognition of the goodness of the agent's own form that leads to action. As Brock puts it: "In a purely natural agent, *the object of its inclination is identical with the form making it what it is.*" Or, put otherwise, "a thing acts to promote the good proper to it."¹⁷

Caused cause: Fr. Brock offers for consideration a rich text from St. Thomas regarding the nature of the good and its relation to formal and agent causality.

Since goodness is that which all things desire, and since this has the aspect of an end, it is clear that goodness implies the aspect of an end. Nevertheless, the idea of goodness presupposes the idea of an efficient cause, and also of a formal cause. For we see that what is first in causing, is last in the thing caused. Fire, e.g. heats first of all before it reproduces the form of fire; though the heat in the fire follows from its substantial form. Now in causing, goodness and the end come first, both of which move the agent to act; secondly, the action of the agent moving to the form; thirdly, comes the form. Hence in that which is caused the converse ought to take place, so that there should be first, the form whereby it is a being; secondly, we consider in it its effective power, whereby it is perfect in being, for a thing is perfect when it can reproduce its like, as the Philosopher says (*Meteor. iv*); thirdly, there follows the formality of goodness (*ratio boni*) which is the basic principle of its perfection.¹⁸

¹⁶ Brock, *Action and Conduct*, 117.

¹⁷ Brock, *Action and Conduct*, 112.

¹⁸ "Respondeo dicendum quod, cum bonum sit quod omnia appetunt, hoc autem habet rationem finis; manifestum est quod bonum rationem finis importat. Sed tamen ratio boni praesupponit rationem causae efficientis, et rationem causae formalis. Videmus enim quod id quod est primum in causando, ultimum est in causato, ignis enim primo calefacit quam formam ignis inducat, cum tamen calor in igne consequatur formam substantialem. In causando autem, primum invenitur bonum et finis, qui movet efficientem; secundo, actio

In the previous chapter, I attended primarily to maleness as an effect of its efficient cause, which is proximately the essence of the substance in which it inheres but ultimately is God. Thus I began by attempting to understand its form, then its powers and operations, then, finally, the goodness which explains its existence. My emphasis was on maleness as caused, its being as received. However, in looking to the powers and operations proper to and associated with maleness, a shift is made from maleness as an effect, to maleness as a cause. Such a shift is to note the developmental movement from receiving form to having the power to act in virtue of that form. In commenting on the causal roles of the caused substance, Brock writes:

The first of these roles is its causality in relation to itself, its having in itself a principle of its own being and subsistence, which is its form. Then comes its causality of something else, its communicating a share in its form through power; power is a principle of change in something *qua* other. Finally, the substance's actual exercise of its power is explained by its having the relation to its form and power that is expressed by saying that its form and its power are its good. This relation is that of appetite or inclination.¹⁹

The end of one order is the beginning of the other. The giving of form to another leads to that other's agency and thus to considering that agent as cause – and so the order must shift to considering first the final cause, then the agency, and finally the form as it exists in the effect. It is precisely this shift that I wish to now make in considering how natural law guides the human person to his end and thus serves as a principle of human action.²⁰

III. DIRECTEDNESS AND INCLINATION

The human person is a free agent. He is able to determine his end and then act for it. Yet his acts are not wholly undetermined. As the previous section made clear, man's acts are determined by his form and thus limited in a their efficacy according to the limits of his form. I also noted that by his nature man is inclined

efficientis, movens ad formam; tertio advenit forma. Unde e converso esse oportet in causato, quod primum sit ipsa forma, per quam est ens; secundo consideratur in ea virtus effectiva, secundum quod est perfectum in esse (quia unumquodque tunc perfectum est, quando potest sibi simile facere, ut dicit philosophus in IV Meteor.); tertio consequitur ratio boni, per quam in ente perfectio fundatur. (ST.I.5.4).”

¹⁹ Brock, *Action and Conduct*, 121.

²⁰ In speaking of fatherhood, I will return to the above text of St. Thomas when considering how man is directed to fatherhood.

towards his form; he naturally recognizes his own form as good. The cause of this inclination is his nature. But man's nature cannot account for itself. Horizontal causality can only go so far. A particular instance of a nature might be accounted for by reference to the form of the parent. This process of appeal to the parent, however, cannot go on *ad infinitum*.²¹ Hence some higher level of cause must be offered to account for man's inclination towards the good. Thomas provides the font of man's inclination to the good in his understanding of the natural law.

[L]aw being a rule and measure, can be in a person in two ways: in one way, as in him that rules and measures; in another way, as in that which is ruled and measured, since a thing is ruled and measured, in so far as it partakes of the rule or measure. Wherefore, since all things subject to Divine providence are ruled and measured by the eternal law, as was stated above; it is evident that all things partake somewhat of the eternal law, in so far as, namely, from its being imprinted on them, they derive their respective inclinations to their proper acts and ends. Now among all others, the rational creature is subject to Divine providence in the most excellent way, in so far as it partakes of a share of providence, by being provident both for itself and for others. Wherefore it has a share of the Eternal Reason, whereby it has a natural inclination to its proper act and end: and this participation of the eternal law in the rational creature is called the natural law.²²

In speaking of intention, Thomas notes that a thing can tend toward an end in two ways. As that which is moved and as that which moves. In the first sense, even the arrow intends the target at which it is directed. In the first sense, the archer intends the target. "The other way of intending an end belongs to the mover; according as he ordains the movement of something, either his own or another's, to an end. This

²¹ In man the existence of a subsistent form cannot be accounted for by reference to the parents. Thus, every instance of generation requires the direct creation of the soul by God. See Dewan, *Form and Being*, 196-197, for a brief discussion of horizontal causality.

²² "Respondeo dicendum quod, sicut supra dictum est, lex, cum sit regula et mensura, dupliciter potest esse in aliquo, uno modo, sicut in regulante et mensurante; alio modo, sicut in regulato et mensurato, quia in quantum participat aliquid de regula vel mensura, sic regulatur vel mensuratur. Unde cum omnia quae divinae providentiae subduntur, a lege aeterna reguntur et mensurentur, ut ex dictis patet; manifestum est quod omnia participant aequaliter legem aeternam, in quantum scilicet ex impressione eius habent inclinationes in proprios actus et fines. Inter cetera autem rationalis creatura excellentiori quodam modo divinae providentiae subiacet, in quantum et ipsa fit providentiae particeps, sibi ipsi et aliis providens. Unde et in ipsa participatur ratio aeterna, per quam habet naturalem inclinationem ad debitum actum et finem. Et talis participatio legis aeternae in rationali creatura lex naturalis dicitur (ST.I-II.91.2)."

belongs to reason alone.”²³ Man is in the somewhat unique position of being, as it were, both arrow and archer. He is, as Thomas says, subject to Divine Providence but in such a way as he able to provide for himself and others.

Man is directed to his good through his inclinations, according to which inclinations the precepts of the natural law unfold.²⁴ What however is the nature of these inclinations? As I noted in the introduction to this chapter, there are many inclinations associated with maleness. Some of them appear to be good inclinations – such as a father’s inclination to provide for and protect his family – while others appear to be decidedly negative – countless examples could be offered here. Generally, of what sort of inclinations is Thomas speaking when he divides natural law according to them?

All inclinations are not created equal: It goes without saying that there are many interpretations as to the exact character of the inclinations that divide natural law in ST.I-II.94.2.²⁵ It is likewise needless to say that not all these positions can be entertained here. Before, stating my own allegiance, however, I would like to bring attention to one interpretation, as it is especially relevant to dialogue with evolutionary biology and psychology.

Larry Arnhart, in an article entitled “thomistic natural law as Darwinian natural right,” offers the interpretation that the inclinations of 94.2 are the inclinations that result from the process of natural selection. Thus, man recognizes as good those actions that eventually lead to his biological success as evidenced by his genetic success.²⁶ Here is not the place for a lengthy refutation.²⁷ Let it suffice to that Arnhart, in characterizing the inclinations that direct man to his good as the results of evolution, misses their fundamental character as principles of the practical reason. This is not to say that the inclinations that may result in man as result of a kind of natural selection are irrelevant to the natural law – in fact, any cogent ethical account must consider such inclinations – it is simply to say that “naturally selected” inclinations are not that according to which the natural is divided.

²³ “Alio modo intendere finem est moventis, prout scilicet ordinat motum alicuius, vel sui vel alterius, in finem. Quod est rationis tantum (ST.I-II.12.5).” See also ST.I-II.12.1.

²⁴ See ST.I-II.94.2.

²⁵ For a brief review of the major interpretations see Stephen L. Brock, “Natural inclination and the intelligibility of the good in Thomistic natural law,” *New Series*, Volume 6 (2005): 57-61.

²⁶ Larry Arnhart, “Thomistic natural law as Darwinian natural right,” *Social Philosophy and Policy* 18 (Winter, 2001): 1-33.

²⁷ For a critique of Arnhart’s position, see Craig A. Boyd, “Was Thomas Aquinas a Sociobiologist? Thomistic Natural Law, Rational Goods, and Sociobiology,” *Zygon* Volume 39 Issue 3 (September 2004): 659-680.

To state my own allegiance, I subscribe to the position held by Lawrence Dewan and Stephen Brock.²⁸ The basic tenant of their position is that the inclinations of which Thomas is speaking in 94.2 are rational inclinations, i.e. they are inclinations of the will that follow intellectual apprehension. Thus, through these inclinations, the human person is lead to his proper end through his proper faculties, *viz.* reason and will. Natural law is the special province of man. He is directed to his end, therefore, as man, as a rational being. The inclinations that lead man to his end are rational inclinations.²⁹

Other inclinations: To say that the inclinations through which man is directed to his good via the natural law are rational inclinations is neither to say that other modes of inclination in the human being are not important nor that they can *also* be directing him to his true good. Regarding their relevance, it must first be said that human nature both gives rise to and is the object of the rational inclinations associated with the natural law. Human nature is the object of the inclinations associated with the natural law because the natural law directs the human person towards the goods of his nature, i.e. towards *human* goods.³⁰ Human nature is the source of the inclinations associated with the natural law because human nature gives rise to the powers of the intellect and will in which the inclinations reside. However, *all* of man's natural inclinations, obviously, pertain to his nature and his good, and are therefore *the concern* of natural law. The various levels of inclination - those associated with all of man's powers - are part of the ethical equation. In apprehending the human form and that which is the good of this form, the mind must consider the *per se* accidents that follow from man's essence; an aspect of these powers are the appetites associated with them. Further, the appetites associated with all of man's *per se* powers *ideally should be* ordered towards man's ultimate end, his ultimate good, and therefore should in fact direct him to this good. Experience shows, however, that such appetites do not necessarily always lead to the true good. The other appetites - those other than that of the reason - must be judged by the reason. They are not in and of themselves normative.

It is important to note that the ideal situation is indeed one in which the appetites of the various powers all lead to the same end. As I noted in the previous chapter, such a position follows from understanding the human person as fundamentally one. The powers flow from one another according to an order and

²⁸ See Brock, "Natural inclination," 61-78.

²⁹ "Reason's natural understanding of human goods does not follow the natural inclination to them. The inclinations follow the understanding." Brock, "Natural inclination," 61.

³⁰ I am grateful to Fr. Stephen Brock who helped me to clarify some of these points in personal correspondence. That being said, I do not wish to imply that I have necessarily fully understood his position.

are ordered to each other, the lower being ordered to the higher. The intellect and its fundamental apprehension of the good must guide the lower powers. These lower powers and the appetites are nevertheless part of the human nature, which the intellect must comprehend. Though they must always be judged by reason, the inclinations of the lower powers can indeed be revelatory of man's true good as they flow from the power reason and are ordered to it.³¹ Thus, the inclination of the lower powers are not irrelevant both as being aspects of human nature and as being themselves ordered to the good of reason.³²

As, in Part III, I will be responding to the positions of Freud and Jung, I should say a word about what might be called psychological inclinations. First, it must be said that attempting to characterize such inclinations is, in of itself, a colossal work. That which is typically referred to as psychological inclination is usually the result of unconscious thoughts, emotions, desires, reactions that, though unconscious, nevertheless influence conscious life and profoundly impact the life of reason. As Jung implies, such inclinations appear to dwell in the brackish waters where soul and body meet. Suffice it to say that whether such inclinations are finally reducible to sensory reactions or whether they have an intellectual character, they are not the inclinations of 94.2. Once again, this does not thereby relegate them to irrelevance. I should add that the fact that such psychological dynamics or inclinations are usually associated with conflict underlines the reality that, while harmony of inclination is the ideal situation and even, I would argue, a sign of the true goodness of the object of such "harmonized" inclination, such harmony is difficult to achieve. Nevertheless, the difficulty of its accomplishment implies neither that there is no principle of such a harmony nor that such a harmony is, *a priori* impossible.

IV. DIVIDING THE NATURAL LAW

Levels of law: Having established that the inclinations associated with the division of the natural law are rational inclinations, subsequent to apprehension, I can now proceed to explore Thomas's vision of the unfolding of the levels of the natural law; for it is according to these levels that I will assess the impact of maleness upon man's directedness to his end.

The first principle places us within the realm of practical reason. Like the first principle of the speculative reason, which marks a fundamental division between that which is and that which is not, the first principle of practical reason

³¹ See ST.I.77.6.

³² Certainly much more could be said of the impact of the sense appetites in their role as either helping or hindering virtue. They are thus a principal concern of the ethical life on many levels.

establishes that there is a fundamental division between that which is to be done that which is not to be done. As being and non-being are distinct, so is action which leads to being distinct from that which leads to non-being.

In Section II of this chapter, I argued that all direct agency is sharing of form and that, further, the substantial form is both the source and the object of action. This relationship of form to action is something that is true of all natural things, not just rational agents. Action is the sharing of form insofar as it possible. Perhaps it is not surprising then that Thomas says the first level of natural refers to that which he has in common with all substances.

Because in man there is first of all an inclination to good in accordance with the nature which he has in common with all substances: inasmuch as every substance seeks the preservation of its own being, according to its nature: and by reason of this inclination, whatever is a means of preserving human life, and of warding off its obstacles, belongs to the natural law.³³

All substances act for the good that is their substance.³⁴ The form is the source of action as that which defines action and as the principle of the power to act. The goodness of the form is that which moves the agent to act. Thus, the first level of natural law regards the apprehension of the goodness of one's form. Dewan writes:

I have long maintained that the first level of inclination spoken of by Thomas should rather be considered in terms of the great universality it has. It pertains to all substances as such. Thus, it has not to do merely with the individual as an individual. It rather has to do with the being and well-being of being as such. It is the inclination of the creature as a creature. This is the inclination that is present in each thing, but present in that thing according to the proper mode of being of the thing.... This should not be read, for example, as though it did not include the tendency to reproduction, by which the species is preserved.³⁵

All things seek the goodness of their own form, which is first to seek their own being. This desire is expansive. It seeks not only the good in one's own being. "It

³³ "Inest enim primo inclinatio homini ad bonum secundum naturam in qua communicat cum omnibus substantiis, prout scilicet quaelibet substantia appetit conservationem sui esse secundum suam naturam (ST.I-II.94.2)."

³⁴ "Indeed, if the end for which an agent acts is precisely a share in its own form, then every agent acts for its own good; and its first inclination towards this good is not expressed in its outward action at all, but in its own remaining what it is, its persisting." Brock, *Action and Conduct*, 118.

³⁵ Lawrence Dewan, "Natural Law and the First Act of Freedom: Maritain Revisited," in *Wisdom, Law, and Virtue* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2007), 238.

rather has to do with the being and well-being of being as such.” The recognition of the goodness of being includes reproduction. All substances share their forms according to their nature and according to the mode proper to their nature. In living things, the most complete mode of this sharing is reproduction. The inclination towards reproduction, however, is part of the same movement in virtue of which all substances share being according to their own mode. The recognition of the goodness of form, therefore, has an outward trajectory.

Fr. Dewan notes that, in addition to an outward trajectory, it also has an upward trajectory. The fundamental inclination towards goodness embraces more than one’s own being but extends outwards in the sharing of one’s being and upwards in desire for the founts of one’s being.

We see that the inclination common to all substances is a natural love for itself as an individual, and even more for its species, and still more again for the author of being, God Himself. In this respect, one should notice that in ST.II.94.2, the third inclination does not speak of love of God, but of knowledge concerning God... Love of God, on the other hand, is presented everywhere in Thomas’s writings as present in every substance as such, and indeed such that every being loves God naturally more than it loves itself. It is this domain of what might be called “transcendental inclination” that is being referred to in the first place in ST.II.94.2. The other two sorts of inclination are clearly relative to the genus and the species.³⁶

The ordering achieved by the first level of inclination leads all substances to a love of self, but also to a love of that which is higher than self. This is an ordering towards the common good, the good of the species. It is an ordering towards the foundation of one’s being. As I noted earlier, the horizontal chain of causality accounting for one’s form cannot continue *ad infinitum*. In recognizing the goodness of one’s being, one recognizes that it flows finally from a fount of which good is said simply.

As the first level of natural law concerns that which man has in common with all substances, the second is an ordering of man according to that which he shares in common with other animals. The movement is from the general to the more specific. The general ordering to reproduction is included the first level. The second level orders man to a specific mode of reproduction and care for offspring – one that he shares, *generally*, with other animals. The second level is a continuance of man’s desire for being, but further specified according to what he shares not with all substances, but according to that which he can be seen to share with those like him in genus. This, of course, does not mean that he is directed to these goods in the same way as other members of his genus. There is a commonness to their

³⁶ Dewan, *Wisdom, Law, and Virtue*, 238.

directedness - the commonness, for instance of sexual reproduction - but each is nevertheless is directed according to the mode of its substantial form. Thus, there is something similar in the manner in which a male chimp is directed towards a female chimp for the purpose of reproduction and the manner in which a man is ordered towards a woman. There is, however, also distinction in the manner in which a man and chimp are directed, which distinction follows from the difference of substantial form. Not the least of which distinction is that man and woman are directed towards each other primarily in virtue of rational inclination.³⁷

Finally, the third level directs the human person to goods *proper* to his substantial form. The human person is naturally inclined towards those things that lead to the fullness of his being *qua* human. Thus, he naturally embraces the knowledge of God, which is the highest perfection of his highest faculty, but also that which leads to the fullness of his being, such as communal life, which is in and of itself good and further permits individual perfection and realization of the common good.

Obviously, more can - and perhaps should - be said about the division of the natural law. My purpose here, however, is only to give a general understanding of how it is that the human being is generally moved towards his end, for he stands in the unique position of being directed yet free at the same time. His directedness is according to his proper mode as a rational being. His tendency towards the good is both that of arrow and archer. I must now proceed, however, to discuss briefly the modalities of male and female and how these impact the ordering of the human person to his end according to the natural law.

V. SEXUAL DIFFERENCE AND NATURAL LAW

I have attempted to make clear generally how the human being is moved towards his end. It remains to be seen if and how maleness or femaleness modulates this ordering. My goal is not to give an exhaustive treatment of how maleness modifies human apprehension of the good; rather I attempt to understand the principles at work in such modification. My method in doing this is first to make some general observations regarding the principles of the natural law followed by general observations regarding the application of these principles to the human being *qua* male and female. I next consider each of the three levels in turn. The second level - that according to the nature which man shares in common with other

³⁷ I will have more to say of this in the following section in which I treat of the effects of the male and female modalities on the manner in which the natural law directs the human person to his end.

animals – is of particular interest. Thus I will treat it briefly and generally in this chapter and focus more precisely upon it in the following chapter.

General points: For the most part in speaking of how sexual difference modifies the directedness of man according the natural law, I will be speaking of application of the principles of natural law to particular situations. It must be kept in mind, then, that in so doing I am taking the discussion away from the principles themselves into the realm of their prudent application. In contrasting the speculative intellect, which considers primarily necessary truths, with the practical intellect, Thomas notes the nature of the impact of the practical intellect's involvement with contingent matters:

The speculative reason, however, is differently situated in this matter, from the practical reason. For, since the speculative reason is busied chiefly with the necessary things, which cannot be otherwise than they are, its proper conclusions, like the universal principles, contain the truth without fail. The practical reason, on the other hand, is busied with contingent matters, about which human actions are concerned: and consequently, although there is necessity in the general principles, the more we descend to matters of detail, the more frequently we encounter defects.³⁸

Thus it will be important to keep in mind when the principles themselves are at issue and when the issue is rather a question of applying a principle to a particular situation.

Secondly, there is a general consideration which applies across all instances of the ordering of the human person to his end: Man and woman are equal possessors of human nature; each equally bears the definition “human” and, in virtue of this nature, each is equally ordered to the end of their nature. This consideration provokes the question as to whether it is proper to speak of sexual difference at all in connection with the natural law: if man and woman equally possess human nature then each is directed equally thereby. Thus, the very question of applying sex difference to natural law may seem mistaken.

It must be said that this question warrants a lengthy treatment, which time does not permit. The question, however, cannot go wholly unaddressed; I will offer, therefore, a few general thoughts. First, to repeat, man and woman are indeed

³⁸ “Aliter tamen circa hoc se habet ratio speculativa, et aliter ratio practica. Quia enim ratio speculativa praecipue negotiatur circa necessaria, quae impossibile est aliter se habere, absque aliquo defectu invenitur veritas in conclusionibus propriis, sicut et in principiis communibus. Sed ratio practica negotiatur circa contingentia, in quibus sunt operationes humanae, et ideo, etsi in communibus sit aliqua necessitas, quanto magis ad propria descenditur, tanto magis invenitur defectus (ST.I-II.94.4).”

ordered equally towards the end of human nature. However, maleness and femaleness are aspects of human nature; as I have said many times, they are determinations of the substance “human” according to certain purposes of nature. Though God is the ultimate source of human inclinations to the good, so too is his nature. Human nature is also the object of inclination. In understanding what is good for human nature, the individual man or woman must consider that nature, part of which is the accidental form “male” or “female,” which, though not a substantial form, nevertheless determine the being of the human person. Action follows being; it follows form. When the intellect considers human nature and is inclined towards the good thereof, part of the consideration must be the *per se* accidents of the form. How the modifications of the form that are maleness and femaleness impact *the mode* of a man or woman’s directedness to his or her good will become more apparent with some examples; thus I will briefly discuss each level of the natural law considering sexual difference.

One further general observation, however, is in order; it regards the division of the levels of the natural law. Thomas divides these levels according to ascending specificity. The first level regards those inclinations man shares with all substance. The second level regards those inclinations he has in common with beings more similar to him. These are inclinations common to man and other animals. Finally he considers inclinations that are proper to man as human. In so dividing the natural law, Thomas is not saying that, according to the first level, natural law directs man *qua* substance such that man is directed to his end in the same way that any substance is. Natural law directs man according to his mode, i.e. through his reason. Thus, at the first level, the ordering to the end is common – all things seek the good of being. The mode of ordering to that end is particular to the substance. Man is not ordered to the good of being by the natural law in the same manner as is a rock, even if both are ordered to the good being. To repeat, man is ordered to his end through his reason. Further, the ends to which a rock and a man are ordered are in a way the same and in way distinct. Each is ordered finally to God. Thus their end is, in a way, the same. However, each is ordered to their final end through their substance and the perfection of their substance. As I noted in the previous chapter, all of man’s proper accidents are ordered to the highest, which is reason. Thus, while man’s goods can be divided beginning with those goods which are more fundamental – as being part of a common movement of all things towards God and so shared with all substances – and ascending towards man’s proper goods, finally all the levels of inclinations are mutually referential. The goods of all levels are goods of reason and are ordered finally to man’s highest good.

1. *The first principle and the first level*

The first principle: Thomas states that the first principle is that “good is to be done and pursued, and evil is to be avoided.” I will not take too much time in saying that sexual difference does not bear upon this principle of the practical reason; man and woman are equally bound thereby. The reason for this is that the difference between man and woman simply does not touch upon whether one is to do good or evil and the intellect readily understands that the sex difference has no bearing upon whether or not one is ordered to the good.

The first level of the natural law: As I noted in the previous section, this level of the natural law regards the goodness of being and thus includes ordering to the common good of the species and to the *love* of God as the author of being. In light of the goodness of the human form, it also includes the general inclination to reproduction. In all of these things, man and woman are equally ordered; for, once again, the difference of male and female does not pertain to whether one is inclined to love God, or seek the common good, or even to reproduce. Thus, it is interesting to note, that man and woman are ordered equally regarding reproduction itself; they are each ordered equally to share their form. As will be seen, the distinction is in the mode. The *distinction*, however, is proper to the second level. As regards ordering towards the goodness of their being, man and woman stand equal.

Regarding the first level, Thomas adds: “and by reason of this inclination, whatever is a means of preserving human life, and of warding off its obstacles, belongs to the natural law.”³⁹ Regarding that which pertains to the preserving or warding off of obstacles to human life, it is interesting to consider the impact of sex difference. When one considers situations in which there is a threat to life, it appears some modal distinctions in that which is good for male and female arise.

Consider two examples: one’s country is being invaded. Soldiers are needed who must risk their lives for the sake of the common good. Are men and women equally obliged regarding this challenge to the preservation of life? Second, an armed thief is at the door of a family’s home. Inside the home there are the husband, wife, and small children. Assuming that someone must go to confront the thief, who should go?

For most, the response to the questions arising from these situations would require little reflection: absent some extraordinary circumstance, the man would be asked to risk his life in place of the woman. The question then becomes: why does this response come so readily? There are several facets of the response to this question. First, perhaps the most important aspect of the response comes from the first level principle of the natural law itself: Recall Fr. Dewan’s words: “We see that the inclination common to all substances is a natural love for itself as an individual,

³⁹ ST.II.94.2.

and even more for its species, and still more again for the author of being, God Himself.” The first principle of the natural law directs one to a proper love of self. However, even more than this love of self, the same general principle that directs the human person towards being, orders man and woman towards the common good of the species and, finally, towards the love of God. Now, the good in question in both scenarios I have presented involves both the good of the individual, who must preserve or risk his or her life, and a common good, be it of the family or the community at large, for whose sake this life must be put at risk. With this good in mind, one must consider the nature of the male and the female – once again, human nature is both the source and object of the inclination towards the good – and ask if, for the sake of common good, one or the other is more suited to the task at hand. Here, considerations of various aspects of the differences between male and female discussed throughout the pages of this work come to the fore. A male’s typical composition in terms of greater size, strength, and speed, distinct nervous-system reactions in the face of physical threat, and distinct aggression-related hormones all become part of the equation. So too does the question of who would be better able to care for the children should one or the other die become relevant.

In both scenarios, the typical natural differences between men and women do indeed bear upon the ordering of each to the common good. Both man and woman are ordered toward the goodness of their substance. The goodness of their individual substance, however, has above it a yet greater good, the common good. In virtue of the common good and the ordering of man *and* woman to that good, absent extraordinary circumstances, it is the man who, in virtue of distinctions in his mode of being, must put his life at risk. Thus the virtue of courage may place distinct demands upon a man and a woman in certain circumstances.

I must add that the qualification “absent extraordinary circumstances” is not insignificant. Prudence must be brought to bear on the situation. Perhaps the husband is paralyzed or blind, or the assailant at the door is the wife’s brother who wants to kill her husband and thus would be provoked by the presence of the husband but could be calmed by the presence of his sister. Thus, as Thomas noted, as one descends into the particulars of the situation, there is room for circumstances that might alter a general rule. This, however, does not negate the general sex-based difference regarding the manner in which male and female are obliged to risk their lives in view of the common good.

Another example will further clarify the situation; for neither is it always the case that a man is required more so than woman to put his life at risk. Consider the case of martyrdom. Thomas asks the question of whether fortitude principally regards death in battle. If this were so, then the courage of a martyr would be inferior to that of a soldier. Thus, the first objection claims that fortitude cannot

apply most properly to matters of battle. Thomas's reply is not to deny that fortitude applies most properly to battle, but rather to say that martyrdom is a kind of battle.

Martyrs face the fight that is waged against their own person, and this for the sake of the sovereign good which is God; wherefore their fortitude is praised above all. Nor is it outside the genus of fortitude that regards warlike actions, for which reason they are said to have been valiant in battle.⁴⁰

I will take it as evident that, in the case of martyrdom, man and woman bear an equal responsibility to place their lives at risk.⁴¹ This is because there is no distinction in the manner in which male and female are directed their highest good, which is God, in virtue of the first level of the natural law. Sexual difference does not impact one's obligations regarding God; thus a woman is under the same obligation to bear witness to God as is a man. Thus, while there are some modal differences in the application as regards the virtue of fortitude for man and woman regarding physical conflict and battle, as regards battle's ultimate expression in martyrdom, each is equally obliged.

In the same article, Thomas speaks of a judge who is threatened with bodily harm in order to coerce unjust judgment. He refers to this as a kind of private battle. A man or woman in such a position would be equally obliged to confront the threat to his or her life and render a just judgment, regardless of possible consequences.

So, the reply to the question of who is asked to risk his or her life and under what circumstances is one of sameness and difference. Man and woman are equally ordered to the good of being. Sometimes that very good, however, demands that the man place his life at risk where the woman does not. At times, the opposite may be the case – childbirth comes to mind as an example where women consistently face even death for the sake of the common good. The principles at work appear to be the common good at stake and the particular strengths and vulnerabilities that a given sex possesses vis-à-vis that common good. In those cases where the good in question regards the personal integrity of the soul – as when one is faced with the threat of death as the cost of being just or witnessing to God – man and woman are equally obliged by the good in question. However, it appears that as regards certain demands of the common good where the good of the community is immediately at stake, man and woman may be inclined in distinct ways.

⁴⁰ “[M]artyres sustinent personales impugnationes propter summum bonum, quod est Deus. Ideo eorum fortitudo praecipue commendatur. Nec est extra genus fortitudinis quae est circa bellica. Unde dicuntur fortes facti in bello (ST.II-II.123.5 ad 1).”

⁴¹ This is to say that each has an equal duty to bear witness to God.

Harmony of inclinations: I wish to briefly emphasize a point that I made earlier, and to which I will return again. The inclinations of which I am speaking are rational inclinations. There are other inclinations that, because they pertain to human nature, are relevant to the judgment of what is good in a particular situation but that do not, *per se*, constitute the ordering of the natural law. Thus, for instance, in Part I, I discussed differences in how the male nervous system reacts to periods of extreme stress – such as when an individual is faced with bodily damage – versus how the female typically responds. Among other differences, males exhibit what is referred to as a fight-or-flight response while females tend to exhibit a tend-or-befriend reaction.⁴² While it is true that such nervous system reactions, along with testosterone, a history of rough-and-tumble play etc. more incline a male towards risking his life in battle, this is not the proper inclination of the natural law. However practical reason must nevertheless take these inclinations into consideration, as they are aspects of human nature. Thus, the male's greater inclination towards aggression on the part of his non-rational faculties is not the normative inclination that grounds his greater responsibility to risk his life in battle; it is however, part of the equation in judging that responsibility.

2. *The second level of the natural law*

In attempting to understand the relationship of masculinity to fatherhood and how man is ordered to fatherhood, clearly the second level of the natural law is of great importance. As such, I will somewhat set it aside for now and discuss it separately as regards fatherhood in the following chapter. There is nevertheless much to say generally about the second level.

In moving from the first to the second level, the consideration shifts to that which is *more* proper to the human being. The first level considers man as inclined to his good in a way that is shared with all substances. In the second level, Thomas considers man as directed to his good in a manner shared with other animals. Fr. Dewan made the point that the inclination to reproduction is part of the first level of natural law. The second level concerns a particular manner in which man is inclined to reproduction. It is here, in this realm, that sex differences are most clearly seen, as sex differences themselves pertain primarily to reproduction. Regarding the second level, Thomas says:

⁴² See: Shelley E. Taylor, Laura Cousino Klein, Brian P. Lewis, Tara L. Gruenewald, Regan A. R. Gurung, and John A. Updegraf, "Biobehavioral Responses to Stress in Females: Tend-and-Befriend, not Fight-or-Flight," *Psychology Review* Vol. 107, No. 3 (2000): 411-429.

Secondly, there is in man an inclination to things that pertain to him more specially, according to that nature which he has in common with other animals: and in virtue of this inclination, those things are said to belong to the natural law, "which nature has taught to all animals" [*Pandect. Just. I, tit. i*], such as sexual intercourse, education of offspring and so forth.⁴³

This level offers a clear example of sexually differentiated ordering according to natural law. In virtue of the goodness of the form - shared equally by male and female - man and woman are equally ordered towards reproduction. However, to achieve that end, they are ordered in distinct ways. In the natural order, reproduction is only possible with the conjunction of man and woman. Thus, man is ordered to the woman and woman to the man. This is precisely a sexually differentiated ordering according to the natural law.

It bears repeating once again that I am here speaking of man's ordering according to his proper mode, that is according to his intellect and will. Thus, I am not speaking most properly of the sense appetites or what might be called the libido, though, once again, these are certainly relevant to ethical arguments, though not normative; as I have stated before, non-rational appetites can direct man to his true good. I am here referring to recognition of the goodness of the sexual union of man and woman. The sense appetites should be at the service of this more profound level of inclination, though they not always are.⁴⁴

⁴³ "Et secundum hanc inclinationem, pertinent ad legem naturalem ea per quae vita hominis conservatur, et contrarium impeditur. Secundo inest homini inclinatio ad aliqua magis specialia, secundum naturam in qua communicat cum ceteris animalibus. Et secundum hoc, dicuntur ea esse de lege naturali quae natura omnia animalia docuit, ut est coniunctio maris et feminae, et educatio liberorum, et similia (ST.I-II.94.2)."

⁴⁴ It would no doubt be of interest to consider the question the question of homosexuality in connection with the second level of natural law. Such a discussion is outside the scope of the current discussion. It is worth noting, however, that Pamela Hall echoes a sentiment of Daniel Nelson in stating that St. Thomas at times falls prey to "a crude physical naturalism." See Hall, *Narrative and Natural Law*, p. 32, note 41, and Daniel Mark Nelson, *The Priority of Prudence: Virtue and Natural Law in Thomas Aquinas and the Implications for Modern Ethics* (University Park, Pennsylvania: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1992), 122-123. On that point, I must disagree with Nelson and Hall. Nelson appears to make the error of thinking that Thomas is saying that, somehow, man is being directed qua animal, which is in a way true, and in a way not. As I have said before, man is always directed according to his proper mode, which is reason. There is however a commonness in the directing of male towards female that is shared among animals - though each in their own mode - in virtue of which Thomas refers to homosexuality as unnatural in a stronger sense. (See ST.I-II.94.3.) It strikes me that much confusion regarding the question of homosexuality centers on failing to make distinction between various kinds of inclination, primarily rational and non-rational. It

Other than sexual intercourse, Thomas also mentions the inclination to the education of offspring as an inclination shared with other animals. I will discuss this tendency in greater detail in the next chapter, as it pertains directly to the nature of human fatherhood. I will here, however, offer the basic thrust of my thinking. As I argued in the previous chapter, while the term of generation is the substantial change that results in a new member of the species, reproduction is ordered not only to the existence but to the perfection of the offspring. This, in fact, follows from the inclination to the good proper to the first level of inclination which seeks to share the fullness of being. Like the offspring of other animals, human offspring are neither conceived nor born perfect, and they will perish without sufficient parental care; it is therefore evident that parents are ordered to the care and education of their offspring. Animal species, however, vary greatly as to the quantity and quality of care given to offspring. Typically, paternal investment is minimal across species. The question then becomes are male and female ordered differently to the care and education of children?

I will not develop the reply here, but the heart of the response lies in the same mode of reasoning I employed above when considering distinctions in the manner in which men and women are obliged to place their lives at risk. Thus, one must consider the common good and characteristics of human nature proper to each sex all within the context of time and place and the particulars that accompany them. I leave the argument here for now to be resumed in the next chapter.

A difference within a difference: As regards the act of generation itself, there is distinct ordering of male and female: male to female and female to male. Is there any difference in the way in which each is ordered to the other? It is interesting to consider here the points made by the evolutionists regarding investment and competition: the female's greater investment in human reproduction is incontestable. These facts of difference in "investment" give man and woman distinct data upon which to base practical reasoning. By the very fact that once pregnant a woman cannot produce more children for at the very least nine-months, and, in more traditional societies where post-partum suckling is necessary, likely

can happen that humans have same-sex inclinations at a sensory or even at what might be called a psychological level. Such inclinations are not normative regarding the human person in light of the unity of the human person in virtue of his highest faculty of reason. Usually, there is at least a general harmony of levels of inclination regarding sex attraction. At times, there is the painful instance of dissonance of the sensory and intellectual appetite. Part of man's ability to see the goodness of the ordering of the male to the female is that the ordering of male to female is shared with other species. Appeal to this common purpose of nature is no more "crude biologism" than appeal to the inclination that all substances have towards their being would be considered "crude substanceism."

significantly longer, the female necessarily becomes the limiting factor in reproduction, and thus, in a manner of speaking, more valuable. As such, as the evolutionists note, in most species, males compete and females choose. The pattern is similar to that seen with the spermatozoon and the ovum, and the act of sexual intercourse. The male must go out to the female, and the female chooses whether or not to receive the male. Thus, though the male is ordered towards female and female towards male, there is a distinction in the typical mode of this ordering that is based upon distinct levels of investment in bearing and rearing children.

3. *The third level of the natural law*

Continuing the order of greater specificity, the third level of the natural law refers to the human inclination towards those goods proper to him as human.

Thirdly, there is in man an inclination to good, according to the nature of his reason, which nature is proper to him: thus man has a natural inclination to know the truth about God, and to live in society: and in this respect, whatever pertains to this inclination belongs to the natural law; for instance, to shun ignorance, to avoid offending those among whom one has to live, and other such things regarding the above inclination.⁴⁵

At this level, the human person recognizes the goodness of the exercise of his power of reason. Related to the operation of this faculty is the unique character of human society, without which the flourishing of reason is impossible.

Once again, the same principles I have applied throughout this chapter apply here: man and woman are ordered equally to the proper goods of the human person; each is ordered equally to the good of the life of the mind and good of life in communal life. Does, however, the modality of the substance that is sexual difference in any way modify the inclination towards the perfection of intellect or the good of living in society?

Regarding a male or female mode of inclination towards the operation of reason, I defer to the work of others; it is outside the immediate scope of my inquiry.⁴⁶ As regards life in society, I return to the same principle enunciated before:

⁴⁵ "Tertio modo inest homini inclinatio ad bonum secundum naturam rationis, quae est sibi propria, sicut homo habet naturalem inclinationem ad hoc quod veritatem cognoscat de Deo, et ad hoc quod in societate vivat. Et secundum hoc, ad legem naturalem pertinent ea quae ad huiusmodi inclinationem spectant, utpote quod homo ignorantiam vitet, quod alios non offendat cum quibus debet conversari, et cetera huiusmodi quae ad hoc spectant (ST.I-II.94.2)."

⁴⁶ See Pia Francesca DeSolenni, *A Hermeneutic of Aquinas's Mens Through a Sexually Differentiated Epistemology*.

one must consider the particular strengths and vulnerabilities and of each sex and determine how these relate to the common good. As I noted in the example of fortitude - an example which also has direct relevance for communal life - it will be the case that men and women are ordered in a distinct manner towards the common good of community. In fact, as I noted earlier, Aristotle - and Thomas as well - make the argument that the complementary differences of man and woman serve the good of human society. Aristotle observes that man and woman are naturally inclined towards friendship. This inclination is more fundamental than inclination to form cities and thus, in of itself, perhaps belongs to the second level, but, as Aristotle noted, the bond of friendship between man and woman goes beyond the affiliative bonds of other animals and serves the common good of not only of the family, but of the society at large. Thus, as I argued in the previous chapter, through the distinction between male and female both are ordered to proper human good in virtue the fact that the natural bond that unites male and female is itself ordered to the common good in a properly human manner.

CONCLUSION

The human person is directed to his good through the natural law. The good of the human person is the fullness of the human form, the perfection of his being. The human ordering to fullness of being directs the individual man and woman to his or her individual good, to the common good, and finally the highest good, God, who is more one with the human person than he is with himself. As the human person is ordered to the principle of his own being (finally, God), so the accidental forms that flow from man's essence are ordered, first the lower powers to the higher, but all to the essence of the human person, which in turn is ordered to God. The being of maleness is therefore ordered to the perfection of the individual in whom it inheres, but, even more so to the common good. Understanding the directedness of maleness is therefore a matter of understanding the common good to which it is ordered and how the operations proper to the male mode of being realize that good. That inclination, therefore, is truly proper to maleness which fructifies in a good achieved by an operation which flows from a form proper to the male.

Chapter 11

Man and Father

INTRODUCTION

What is it that inclines a man towards fatherhood? I have attempted to discern the causes of the human male, the form that defines him, the agency that brings him to be, and the goodness that moves the agent cause to its action. I have sought to examine masculinity as a nature, as a principle of motion. How does fatherhood relate to the perfection of man *qua* male? This is the question of the work as a whole, and it is the question of this chapter.

To address the question, in Section I, I will first consider two alternate accounts of fatherhood. The first is an expansion of the evolutionary understanding of maleness to the specific question of fatherhood. Second, by way of contrast, I briefly consider some reflections of Gabriel Marcel on fatherhood. Marcel's criticism of the general method followed by the evolutionists - which, in some ways, is an apparent criticism of my own method - provides a useful opportunity to contrast my position with that of the evolutionists. In Section II, in seeming contradiction to Marcel, I then expand my causal analysis of masculinity by considering fatherhood as a kind causality - a procedure that Marcel deems absurd. Considerations of final cause lead inexorably to the natural law and the expansion of the discussion from the previous chapter. It will become clear that much of the argumentation I offer regarding causality and the power of generation refers equally to fatherhood and motherhood. Therefore, in Section III, I define fatherhood and distinguish between modes of fatherhood. In so doing, I first consider the form, powers, and operations associated with fatherhood, and then consider its final cause. I next consider how fatherhood differs from motherhood. In Section IV, I consider the relationship of

fatherhood to masculine identity. Finally, in Section V, I respond to the evolutionary account and to Marcel's account of fatherhood.

I. OBJECTIONS: TWO ALTERNATE NARRATIVES

1. *The evolutionary account*

To give an account of something is to give its causes. I have chosen to discuss the evolutionary account briefly, for the evolutionists claim to offer a relatively complete explanation of the phenomenon of fatherhood – one that accounts not only for its existence, but also for the habits and variations that accompany it.¹ I have already discussed in sufficient detail the most fundamental questions regarding fatherhood from the evolutionary perspective.² A father is that member of the species which contributed the simpler gamete in the act of reproduction. The fundamental distinction between fatherhood and motherhood is explained in terms of the need for genetic variation in offspring in combination with the avoidance of the intracellular warfare of cytoplasmic DNA in offspring. That the male of a species would become a father is evident according to evolutionary logic. If a male were not inclined to reproduce himself, the genes that provoked the lack of this inclination would quickly become extinct. Thus, the reason why males and, in the case under current consideration, more particularly, men become biological fathers is an eminently clear instance of evolutionary logic.³ The question, then, is not so much what accounts for men being fathers simply, but rather why human fathers contribute beyond the minimum. Geary states the question well:

For the two species most closely related humans – chimpanzees (*Pan troglodytes*) and bonobos (*Pan paniscus*) – males typically provide no parental investment and, in fact, only rarely affiliate with juveniles. On the basis of these patterns, the question then becomes, *Why do men contribute to the care of their children at all?*

¹ I have noted before that, as regards the physical explanations of phenomena such as fatherhood, the other schools of thought tend to depend the evolutionary and build thereupon. In Part III, I will discuss each school individually. Here, I consider only the evolutionary account as I think it to be the most complete.

² See Chapter 2, Section V.3.

³ It is good to keep in mind that the motivation for fatherhood of which I am currently speaking is on the order of what Pinker referred to as its ultimate cause. The proximate cause – that which motivates an individual man to sire a child in a given situation – is relevant only insofar as it consistently produces an effect that promotes the existence of its genes and their projection into the future. Thus, whether a man reproduce for motives of pure lust or desire for progeny, or even by means of rape is not significant as regards ultimate causes. That which is operational is whether or not his offspring survive and go on to reproduce.

as contrasted with the question Why don't men women contribute equally to the care of their children?⁴

The contemporary question regarding fatherhood and motherhood stems from a perception of injustice: why do mothers and fathers not contribute equally to the rearing of children? Instead, women appear to bear a disproportionate share of the burden of raising children. Geary observes that, from an evolutionary perspective, the question is almost the opposite of the modern question: why do men contribute anything at all beyond the act of copulation?

The response, as always for evolutionary logic, lies in a kind of calculus in terms of which benefits and liabilities are counterbalanced, with the result being an effect which optimizes a man's ability to produce progeny that survive to carry on his genes. I have already discussed much of this calculus in Chapter 2; here I offer a summary and expand some points.

Because, in all primates, internal gestation and post-partum suckling necessarily lead to significantly greater investment in reproduction on the part of the female, this inequality generally leads to males seeking to maximize mating opportunities rather than focusing on care for already existing offspring. The female, by necessity is bound to care for the young. If maternal care is sufficient for the offspring's survival and, as it were, automatic, paternal support would be superfluous and so, more or less, a wasted resources on the male's part. The male is thus better served by using his energy and resources to mate with other females. Given the nature of mammalian maternal investment, there must be something that moves the male to invest more in his offspring than spermatozoa.

Geary summarizes three factors that account for variation in levels of paternal investment.⁵ 1) Offspring survival: To what extent does paternal investment contribute to offspring survival. If paternal investment is irrelevant, then there will be no paternal investment. If it is absolutely necessary, then there will be paternal investment; if the offspring is certain to die without assistance from the father, then paternal investment is to be expected. 2) Opportunity cost: To what extent does paternal investment limit other mating opportunities. The more paternal investment limits such opportunities, the higher its opportunity cost and therefore the greater the burden of proof in justifying it. 3) Certainty of paternity: Investment in offspring only makes sense to the extent to which there is certainty of paternity. Expending one's resources and paying the opportunity cost of paternal investment for the offspring of another man is an evolutionary disaster.

⁴ Geary, "Evolution and Proximate Expression of Human Paternal Investment," 55.

⁵ Geary, "Paternal Investment," 60.

Discerning the particular character of human fatherhood is a matter of calculating the net effect of the interaction of the above-mentioned variables insofar as they result in the greatest number of surviving offspring. There is no one recipe that always and everywhere results in an optimal level of paternal investment. Rather, the nature of fatherhood appears to be influenced by yet more variables. Geary claims that three further factors - genetic, contextual, and societal - further influence the calculus of paternal investment. I will offer a brief summary of each of these factors.

Genetics: Regarding the genetic factor, Geary claims that experimentation has shown that about 18-25% of a man's probability to invest in his children can be explained in terms of a genetic inclination towards paternal investment.⁶ To a certain extent, inherited genes incline a man to involved fathering.

Contextual: Perhaps not surprisingly, the nature of the spousal relationship is an important factor in determining the likelihood of paternal investment. Geary summarizes this fact:

In all, the quality of the marital dyad, whether reported by the husband or wife, is the one most consistently powerful predictor of paternal involvement (with his infant) and satisfaction (with the parenting role).⁷

A healthy spousal relationship appears to lead to greater paternal investment. Marital conflict, by contrast, leads to a father's emotional and physical withdrawal from his children, which can be more pronounced as regards a man's daughters. This effect does not hold for mothers. Their concern for their children appears to be independent of the quality of the spousal bond.⁸

The other major contextual factor is a man's work and personal ambition. The more focused a man is on professional advancement, the less he tends to be focused on direct involvement with his children. Such professional concern, however, can lead to greater provisioning for offspring, even if at the cost of direct interaction. Thus, direct and indirect paternal investment can have an inverse relationship.⁹

Societal: The likelihood of paternal investment also varies with the structure of the society and the ecology in which the society itself exists.

⁶ Geary, *Male, Female*, 107.

⁷ Geary, *Male, Female*, 107.

⁸ Geary, *Male, Female*, 107.

⁹ Geary, *Male, Female*, 107-108.

Father absent societies are characterized by aloof husband-wife relationships, a polygynous marriage system, local raiding and warfare, male social displays – verbal and with ornamentation – and little or inconsistent direct paternal investment in children.¹⁰

Such societal structures tend to occur at what are referred to as “middle-range” societies, where agriculture is practiced at low levels and resources are plentiful. Given the richness of resources, mothers are able to provide well for their offspring. Thus, men are free to seek other mating opportunities without serious impact upon the survival of offspring. By contrast, societies that favor paternal investment tend to exist in harsher ecologies, where a man *must* assist the woman in rearing children and likely does not have the resources to support more than one wife. Such an ecology is apt to demand paternal investment.¹¹

Interestingly, Geary notes that modern industrial societies tend to impose monogamy, which leads to a socially imposed emphasis on paternal investment over mating effort.

Although the factors that have led to the cultural evolution of socially imposed monogamy are not fully understood, the net result is a relative shift in men’s reproductive efforts, from mating effort to parental effort. Whether monogamy is ecologically or socially imposed, these father-present societies are generally characterized by high levels of spousal affiliation and intimacy, low levels of warfare or professional military, which results in fewer men being socialized for intergroup aggression, and relatively high levels of men’s provisioning of their spouse and children.¹²

Interestingly, as noted earlier, healthy spousal relations lead to higher paternal investment. Monogamy leads to higher levels of “spousal affiliation and intimacy.”¹³ Therefore, monogamy leads to more paternal investment in at least two ways: First,

¹⁰ Geary, *Male, Female*, 108.

¹¹ Geary, *Male, Female*, 108-109.

¹² Geary, *Male, Female*, 109.

¹³ It is interesting to note that almost of factors that Geary considers as contributing to paternal investment were considered by St. Thomas (see SCG.3.122-124). I will discuss Thomas’s thoughts on that which leads to the character of human fatherhood later in this chapter. The similarity of Thomas’s reasoning with that of the evolutionists is at the very least interesting. What is of greater importance is how they differ. Generally the difference can be seen in that which has the ultimate explanatory power. For the evolutionists, explanation is finally reduced to genetic projection. For Thomas, the same phenomena are seen as ordered to man’s good, which is the perfection of being – a chain of final causality that finally leads to the source of man’s being.

as shifting the male from seeking mating opportunities to parental investment; second, as leading to greater intimacy with his spouse which, in turn disposes the man to paternal investment. The fact that monogamy inclines men towards less violence is an added benefit.

In summary, the evolutionary account – as always– is a matter of calculating that which leads to the greatest ability to project one’s genes into the future. Those traits in fathers are selected which result in the maximum number of surviving offspring. The formula will change from ecology to ecology; there is no one clear constellation of traits that leads to the optimal balance of parental investment and mating opportunities. Hence, fatherhood is a complex phenomenon having many societal variants and significant variants even within societies. What is certain is the measure. That which results to effective reproduction is selected. That which does not, over time, is eliminated. The plot is driven by the calculation of variables. The storyteller cares little for how the result is achieved but rather simply awards the victors with prolonged existence.

2. Gabriel Marcel: a narrative of hope and mystery

It is difficult to find a voice more consistently opposed to the account just rendered than that of French philosopher, Gabriel Marcel. I do not intend to give anything approaching a full treatment of Marcel’s thought on the question of fatherhood. I will, rather, simply underline a few insights offered by Marcel, mostly because these insights, at first glance, appear to be opposed to the method I have employed and will continue to employ. By explaining fatherhood and masculinity in causal terms, I appear to invoke the explicit criticism of Marcel.

[F]atherhood cannot be considered as a mere given fact, or even as an objectively determinable relationship between beings united to each other by laws which can be compared to those governing natural phenomena. Thus, to take only one example, it would be obviously absurd to conceive of fatherhood as a mode of causality or, for the matter of that, of finality. My child cannot be considered as an effect of which I am the cause, nor, though it is a little less absurd, can I say that he is the end in relation to which I must appear myself as the means. The truth is much rather that fatherhood, like all the realities underlying the natural order, starting with incarnation, that is to say the fact of being united to a body, contains within it innumerable aspects which analysis can bring out only at the risk of unduly isolating and thus distorting what is organically united, thereby appearing to misunderstand the concrete unity with which it is concerned. If we try to define fatherhood in strictly biological terms, we are really not talking of it at all, but of procreation.¹⁴

¹⁴ Gabriel Marcel, “The Creative Vow as Essence of Fatherhood,” in *Homo Viator: Introduction to a Metaphysics of Hope*, trans. Emma Craufurd (Gloucester, MA: Peter Smith, 1978), 99.

To clarify what he means by procreation, Marcel later adds:

[T]o procreate is not the least to create. In the last analysis what is required of the male is not really an act, it is a gesture, which can be performed in almost total unconsciousness and which, at least in extreme cases, is nothing but a letting go, an emptying of something which is over-full.¹⁵

To speak of fatherhood in causal terms is necessarily to reduce it to a functional analysis that might be similar to calculating the trajectories of two colliding billiard balls.

For Marcel, fatherhood must be considered on the level of vocation, which has an immediacy that transcends rationalistic means-ends modes of explanation – a vocation, most profoundly cannot be explained to someone from the outside who seeks such an account. To the one whose vocation it is, no explanation is necessary. As such, vocation transcends normal modes of explanation: “We might say that this transcendence of the vocation is always bound up with the presence of a generosity which cannot be confined by any possible self-interest.”¹⁶ He makes an initial summary of his insights on fatherhood by marking the necessary relationship of fatherhood and what he refers to as the “creative vow.”

Fatherhood... cannot by any means be restricted to procreation which, humanly speaking, can hardly be considered an act. It only exists as the carrying out of a responsibility, shouldered and sustained. But on the other hand we see that it degenerates as soon as it is subordinated to definitely specified purposes, such as the satisfaction of ambition through the medium of the child treated as a mere means to an end. It utterly denies its own nature when it is the mere blind generation of a being not only incapable of providing for his progeny and guiding their spiritual development, but of realizing and acknowledging the obligations he has undertaken towards them. It is probably in contrast with such inertia and blindness that we can best understand what the pure act of fatherhood should be. By that I mean a self-spending which can be compared to a gift, because it prepares and requires an engagement and because without this it is nullified. This pure act is inconceivable without what I propose to call the creative vow [*vœu créateur*].¹⁷

True fatherhood presumes gratitude for a gift given first to the father. It also requires a stance of hope regarding the goodness of being and humility as regards the source of this goodness. The fruit of this hope is a kind of vow or allegiance to the goodness

¹⁵ Marcel, *Home Viator*, 102.

¹⁶ Marcel, *Home Viator*, 106.

¹⁷ Marcel, *Home Viator*, 116-117.

of being, the fruit of which, in turn, is creativity. Fatherhood can only find its meaning in the embrace of creative allegiance to the goodness of being.¹⁸ But causal analyses hopelessly remove man from such considerations and imprison him rather in calculations of cost and benefit.

Notwithstanding Marcel's admonitions, I will proceed to explain fatherhood in terms of causality. After so doing, I believe it will become clear that Marcel's critique, more or less, comes as a result of Humean understanding of causality.¹⁹

II. EXPANDING THE CAUSAL CONTEXT

In the previous chapter, I explained what I referred to as the causal context of understanding the operations associated with masculinity. To that end, I briefly reviewed the theory of action proposed by Fr. Stephen Brock in *Action and Conduct*. In order to understand generally how man is directed to fatherhood, I must first add some reflections regarding action as it is related to parenthood in general. I will then proceed to consider fatherhood more specifically.

1. Need and generosity

All direct action is a communication of form. This is most true of parenthood.

The action does not consist in the agent's letting go of something and leaving it in the patient, but in its bringing the patient into conformity with itself. Despite possible first appearances, this is true even in the case of reproduction; indeed it is most true in this case. Obviously in reproduction, something literally "comes from" the parent plant or parent animals; what comes from them is a whole new subject, the offspring. But the principal action in reproduction is not the mere sending forth of the seed or the parturition.... The principal action in reproduction consists in forming something into the offspring. This formation takes place within the parent body or bodies.²⁰

In the act of procreation, the parent shares its form in the most perfect manner in that it shares its substantial being – as opposed to some aspect of its accidental being. It shares that which it most profoundly is.

¹⁸ See Marcel, *Home Viator*, 117-124. See also: Gabriel Marcel, "On the Ontological Mystery", *The Philosophy of Existentialism*, Citadel, New York, 1966, pp. 946 and Gabriel Marcel, *Creative Fidelity*, trans. Robert Rosthal, (New York: Fordham University Press, 2002).

¹⁹ See Brock, *Action and Conduct*, 103-106.

²⁰ Brock, *Action and Conduct*, 109.

Any action must be explained in terms of the good that moves the agent to its agency. In the last chapter, I discussed how the good that moves an agent is the agent's form both as the object of inclination and as the source of inclination. To understand parenthood generally - and fatherhood more specifically - however, a further distinction is needed, for there are two modes of good that evoke action: There is action to fulfill needs and there is action from fullness. The general theory that an agent always acts in virtue of the form it has and produces that form in the effect means that action always begins from some mode of being already possessed. In living things, though, frequently the being that one has is employed for the sake of acquiring the being that one lacks. "Acting to satisfy a need is always applying the perfection that one already enjoys to the acquisition of some further perfection. It is acting in order to be acted upon, giving in order to get."²¹ Living things - and preeminently man - are not born perfect. Much of life, therefore, is spent "giving in order to get."

Almost without exception, living things are not complete or fully formed, are not mature, from the first moment of their existence. Much of their vital activity consists in bringing themselves to completion or maintaining their integrity.²²

The chronic imperfection of man dictates that his most urgent actions be in the service of need.

The human being, however, is able to achieve a certain level of perfection such that he no longer acts in order to get something in return, but rather acts simply from the fullness of his own being. His action is not to fulfill a need; it is rather subsequent to the recognition of the goodness of his own form, which form is good for its own sake and so to be shared.

Moreover, the chief criterion for the maturity or completion of a living thing is precisely its capacity to generate another of the same kind. Were it not for such a capacity, the self-movement of living things would not be an unambiguous sign of superiority over inanimate things, since it would be entirely a function of their neediness. But in fact the satisfaction of their needs is itself ordered toward their giving of themselves, and doing so in a more perfect way than do inanimate things - "reproducing" themselves.²³

Acts of generosity are acts that flow from a fullness of being already possessed. They are not acts of giving in order to get; they are acts of giving in order to give. The

²¹ Brock, *Action and Conduct*, 100.

²² Brock, *Action and Conduct*, 119.

²³ Brock, *Action and Conduct*, 119.

trajectory of the form at the time of its generation is towards this fullness. The perfect agent does not act in order to receive but acts to share its fullness.

Power is wealth, not penury. If an agent only acts, only gives or provides, in order to receive, then it is an imperfect, not fully formed agent. It is once the agent receives what it needs and is made perfect, is fully formed, that it is able to act to the highest degree, to give of itself most unrestrictedly.²⁴

As noted in the previous chapter, the fundamental ordering of the human person towards the sharing of his form is the realm of the first level of the natural law. This level regards the inclination towards the goodness of being. Thus the first manifestation of the goodness of the human form is seen in the human person's inclination to preserve his own being. This being, having been preserved and perfected to a certain point, can then be shared. The same fundamental recognition of the goodness of being that leads to the preservation of being in turn leads to the inclination to reproduction. The human person is generally drawn to the goodness of his being. Man is inclined towards fatherhood and woman towards motherhood because human being is good.

2. *A duty of the multitude*

It is worth making one further point about the general inclination to parenthood before proceeding to define fatherhood and distinguish fatherhood from motherhood. It is clear that all are inclined to reproduction in virtue of the goodness of human being, the goodness of the form "human." As I noted in the prior chapter, love for the common good is greater than for the individual good, and love for the source of all being, God, is most profound of all. However, while all are bound to the preservation of their own being, not all are bound to the act of physical reproduction. Rather, the duty to share the human form through reproduction is held commonly among all humans taken together. In addressing the question as to whether virginity is contrary to the natural law, Thomas responds to an objector who claims that, if refraining from nourishing oneself is sinful, then so refraining from reproduction is sinful.

A precept implies a duty, as stated above. Now there are two kinds of duty. There is the duty that has to be fulfilled by one person; and a duty of this kind cannot be set aside without sin. The other duty has to be fulfilled by the multitude, and the fulfillment of this kind of duty is not binding on each one of the multitude. For the multitude has many obligations which cannot be discharged by the individual; but are fulfilled by one person doing this, and another doing that. Accordingly the

²⁴ Brock, *Action and Conduct*, 118.

precept of natural law which binds man to eat must needs be fulfilled by each individual, otherwise the individual cannot be sustained. On the other hand, the precept of procreation regards the whole multitude of men, which needs not only to multiply in body, but also to advance spiritually. Wherefore sufficient provision is made for the human multitude, if some betake themselves to carnal procreation, while others abstaining from this betake themselves to the contemplation of Divine things, for the beauty and welfare of the whole human race.²⁵

Some individuals in the human community can set aside the good of reproduction, which is for the sake of the common good of the species, for the sake of contemplation. Thomas makes the point of adding that such contemplation and the perfection of the individual that ensues is for the health and beauty of the whole human race (*"ad totius humani generis pulchritudinem et salutem"*). Thus, both the parent and the consecrated virgin each play a distinct part in achieving the common good. Likewise, Thomas adds in the same article, as in an army, "some take sentry duty, others are standard-bearers, and others fight with the sword: yet all these things are necessary for the multitude, although they cannot be done by one person." Nature generally directs each individual towards his or her perfection. It also, however, directs humanity taken as a whole towards the common good of the species. In that economy, not all are bound to do all the same acts. In fact, it is rather necessary, as for an army, that some do some tasks while others do others.

III. FATHERHOOD AND GOODNESS

In this section, I will treat human fatherhood in itself. My first step is to define fatherhood. In doing this, I follow the same general pattern used in defining masculinity, *viz.* I begin with form, the power and operation, and then seek to understand the ends of fatherhood. Because, however, fatherhood is a human act -

²⁵ "Ad primum ergo dicendum quod praeceptum habet rationem debiti, ut supra dictum est. Dupliciter autem est aliquid debitum. Uno modo ut impleatur ab uno, et hoc debitum sine peccato praeteriri non potest. Aliud autem est debitum implendum a multitudine. Et ad tale debitum implendum non tenetur quilibet de multitudine, multa enim sunt multitudini necessaria ad quae implenda unus non sufficit, sed implentur a multitudine dum unus hoc, alius illud facit. Praeceptum igitur legis naturae homini datum de comestione, necesse est quod ab unoquoque impleatur, aliter enim individuum conservari non posset. Sed praeceptum datum de generatione respicit totam multitudinem hominum, cui necessarium est non solum quod multiplicetur corporaliter, sed etiam quod spiritualiter proficiat. Et ideo sufficienter providetur humanae multitudini si quidam carnali generationi operam dent, quidam vero, ab hac abstinentes, contemplationi divinorum vacent, ad totius humani generis pulchritudinem et salutem (ST.II-II.152.2 ad 1)."

or the result of a human act – I place more emphasis on understanding the acts and operations in terms of the ends. Having defined fatherhood, its relationship to motherhood becomes apparent. Thus, next I discuss how fatherhood and motherhood differ and how they are alike.

1. Defining fatherhood

i. *Form*: In the course of discerning whether the person of the Father in the Holy Trinity is properly named “Father,” Thomas addresses an objector who states that the Father would be better named “Begetter” as begetting is a more common term, and more common terms apply more properly to God. His reply is helpful in defining fatherhood:

According to the Philosopher (*De Anima* ii, text 49), a thing is denominated chiefly by its perfection, and by its end. Now generation signifies something in process of being made, whereas paternity signifies the complement of generation [*complementum generationis*]; and therefore the name “Father” is more expressive as regards the divine person than genitor or begetter.²⁶

Fatherhood refers to the completion of the act of generation. In the reply to the fourth objection, he clarifies what the term of generation is:

It is manifest that generation receives its species from the term which is the form of the thing generated; and the nearer it is to the form of the generator, the truer and more perfect is the generation;²⁷ as univocal generation is more perfect than non-

²⁶ “Ad secundum dicendum quod, secundum philosophum, in II de anima, denominatio rei maxime debet fieri a perfectione et fine. Generatio autem significat ut in fieri, sed paternitas significat complementum generationis. Et ideo potius est nomen divinae personae pater, quam generans vel genitor (ST.I.33.2 ad. 2).”

²⁷ It might be objected that what Thomas says in ST.I.33.2 regarding the perfection of fatherhood as related to the perfection of the likeness of the father in the offspring is in direct contradiction to what I argued in Chapter 9.II.4.iv and III.5. In Chapter 9, I argued that the otherness of the male and female is important factor in countering the human person’s natural narcissism. I further argued that the evolutionary paradigm is predicated upon a gene’s “desire” for it’s own perfect reproduction. Thus, one could argue that the same reality that leads Thomas to attribute the most perfect instance of fatherhood to God would, by my logic of Chapter 9, force me to attribute the greatest narcissism to God. To respond to this objection, I must note that, in Chapter 9, I was speaking of the tendency of the human person to become entrapped in the admiration of his own finite, individual image, which by necessity precludes a vision of a good greater than himself. Such a fixation of vision is consistent with both the evolutionary paradigm of the megalomaniacal gene and deconstructionist foundation of the will to power. The source of the difficulty is not human

univocal, for it belongs to the essence of a generator to generate what is like itself in form.²⁸

The completion of generation is the form in the thing generated. Generation is more perfect the more the form of the generated is conformed to that of the generator. Fatherhood refers to the completion of the form in the thing generated. The perfection of fatherhood, therefore, would refer to the completion of a more perfect generation, i.e. a generation in which the generated is perfectly conformed to the father. Fatherhood signifies the relationship of the generator to the generated.

It is clear from Chapter 8 that, in human generation, Thomas thought that the formative power was possessed by the male alone. Thus, in generation the father is the one who exercises the active power of generation to the point of completion, i.e. to the point of disposing the proper matter such that, in the case of all animals except man, the form can be educed from the matter, or, in the case of man, the matter is disposed to receive the infusion of the rational soul by God. I have already spoken of how the active power of generation is, in fact, split between the male and female, with each contributing equally to forming the gametes which will become a

self-love, but rather an inordinate love of self that prevents the self from seeing higher goods. (See Luke Joseph Mata, *A Thomistic Response to the Paradox of Self-Love* (Rome: Edizioni Università della Santa Croce, 2007)), God is the highest good. God's love for Himself cannot be inordinate for there is nothing in order above Him. Thus, the disorder implied in narcissism does not apply in the case of God. Further, it must be noted that, in Christian theology, God's "reflection" upon Himself results in another Person – the Son. Thus, though there is oneness of substance, there is at the same time, true difference; The Father is not the Son. Yet further, Thomas speaks of likeness of form between father and offspring. For the human father, the human form is already a common good. In attempting to make his fatherhood more perfect, a human father does not attempt to make his offspring like him in the particulars of his material individuality. Rather, the human father must first attempt to perfect his own form and then, as is possible, aid in bringing the human form to perfection in his offspring. The reproduction of form is not at the level of genetic replication, which is precisely at the level of material individuality, but rather at the level of the perfection of the human form in the offspring. Thus, the vision of fatherhood that Thomas presents and that I will employ in this chapter neither attributes neither to God nor man the narcissism of which I spoke in Chapter 9.

²⁸ "Manifestum est enim quod generatio accipit speciem a termino, qui est forma generati. Et quanto haec fuerit propinquior formae generantis, tanto verior et perfectior est generatio; sicut generatio univoca est perfectior quam non univoca, nam de ratione generantis est, quod generet sibi simile secundum formam (ST.I.33.2 ad. 4)."

new human person.²⁹ Therefore, in adapting Thomas's definition of fatherhood, emphasis must be placed on the male *mode* of participating in generation rather than the having or lacking of the active power.

In human terms, fatherhood regards the completion of the role in the divided power of generation marked by the accidental form "maleness." In its fundamental meaning it refers to a male who has realized his part in the act of generation. For the human male, in the natural course of things, this implies the production of spermatozoa by the testes, and their implantation within the mother resulting in successful fertilization of the ovum, which in turn results in the proper disposing of the matter such that it is able to receive the new substantial form, the rational soul. Thus, minimally, a father is the one whose spermatozoon fertilized an ovum, initiating the substantial change that ushers in a new member of the species. At this level, fatherhood can be tested by means of DNA. The father is he who provided half of the offspring's DNA and did so precisely by means of a single spermatozoon that, under natural circumstances, traversed significant portions of the woman's internal genitalia, sought out the ovum, penetrated its outer shell, and found its way the ovum's nucleus where two divided strands of DNA combined to form one. It is in virtue of this that, at root, a man is called a father. For, it is in virtue of this process that a man is an agent, most properly. It is in virtue of this agency that man is most able to communicate his form and produce one who is like him in form.

I must note that when saying that the father produces one who is like him in form, clearly this is referring to his substantial form. Males do not only produce other males, nor are they only fathers to their sons and not their daughters.³⁰

The notion of fatherhood must be expanded. Before proceeding, however, one further qualification is needed. Both parents, father and mother, are causes of the child's coming to be rather than the cause of its being.³¹ Dewan, following Thomas, observes that corporeal agents cause a substantial form by changing matter so as to educe the substantial form from the matter. Now, in the case of human generation, the work of the parents is not adequate to educe the form of man from the matter as the human soul is immaterial in its intellectual powers. In the case of human parenthood, then, their agency forms the matter to prepare it for the action

²⁹ In discussing the difference between motherhood and fatherhood, I will return to the question of the active power and propose an aspect in which the male modality can be called more active.

³⁰ It is interesting to ask whether there is any distinction in the mode of fatherhood regarding sons and daughters. I will return to that question later.

³¹ See, Dewan, *Form and Being*, 200, note 49.

of God in infusing the form.³² It is in this way generally that father and mother are causes of the coming to be the form in their children. God is the cause of the soul and the cause of the being of the child.³³

ii. *The perfection of fatherhood:* Common speech recognizes that the understanding of fatherhood must extend beyond the biological minimum. Were I to ask the question who is the better father, a man who impregnated a woman and then abandoned her, or a man who impregnated a woman in the context of a commensurately committed relationship and proceeded to support his child throughout the child's entire developmental period, there would be no hesitation in responding to this question. Many might even respond that the first man, in fact, is "no father at all."

The clarity of response to such a query centers on the nature of the perfection of the human form. Human beings are not born perfect - their perfection is wrapped in questions of space and time. Human fullness is a matter of significant time and development. Fatherhood extends to the perfections of the human form. The human male is to reproduce himself not only by participating in the generation of another instance of the substantial form; in order not to frustrate the trajectory of his initial fatherhood, he must, as is possible, impart the *fullness* of being.

Not surprisingly, Thomas recognizes this expanded aspect of fatherhood. In both the *Summa Contra Gentiles* and the *Summa Theologiae*, Thomas asks if "simple fornication" is a serious sin. In a text to which I have already referred, he makes it clear that the act of intercourse has a trajectory that extends well beyond the act of conception:

But man's generative process would be frustrated [*Frustra autem esset hominis generatio*] unless it were followed by proper nutrition, because the offspring would not survive if proper nutrition were withheld. Therefore, the emission of semen ought to be so ordered that it will result in both the production of the proper offspring and in the upbringing of this offspring.³⁴

If fatherhood ended simply with the act of intercourse, depending upon the circumstances, the clear purpose of the act of generation would be nullified either

³² ST.I.118.2.

³³ See Dewan, *Form and Being*, 111-113, and 199-202.

³⁴ "Frustra autem esset hominis generatio nisi et debita nutritio sequeretur: quia generatum non permaneret, debita nutritione subtracta. Sic igitur ordinata esse seminis debet emissio ut sequi possit et generatio conveniens, et geniti educatio (SCG.3.122)."

completely - if the offspring does not survive - or partially if the child does not thrive.³⁵

Thomas expands upon his reasoning for why the presence of the father is necessary beyond the act of intercourse. Interestingly, in this text one finds some of the reasoning employed by Geary.

Likewise it must be against the good of man for the semen to be emitted under conditions which, allowing generation to ensue, nevertheless bar the due education of the offspring. We observe that in those animals, dogs for instance, in which the female by herself suffices for the rearing of the offspring, the male and female stay no time together after the performance of the sexual act. But with all animals in which the female by herself does not suffice for the rearing of the offspring, male and female dwell together after the sexual act so long as is necessary for the rearing and training of the offspring. This appears in birds, whose young are incapable of finding their own food immediately after they are hatched: for since the bird does not suckle her young with milk, according to the provision made by nature in quadrupeds, but has to seek food abroad for her young, and therefore keep them warm in the period of feeding, the female could not do this duty all alone by herself: hence divine providence has put in the male a natural instinct of standing by the female for the rearing of the brood. Now in the human species the female is clearly insufficient of herself for the rearing of the offspring, since the need of human life makes many demands, which cannot be met by one parent alone. Hence the fitness of human life [*Est igitur conveniens secundum naturam humanam*] requires man to stand by woman after the sexual act is done, and not to go off at once and form connections with any one he meets, as is the way with fornicators. Nor is this reasoning traversed by the fact of some particular woman having wealth and power enough to nourish her offspring all by herself: for in human acts the line of natural rectitude is not drawn to suit the accidental variety of the individual, but the properties common to the whole species.³⁶

³⁵ One must recall as well that the second level of natural law as presented in ST.I-II.94.2 pertains not only to sexual intercourse but also to the education of offspring. See Chapter 10.V.2 for a general discussion of the second level of the natural law.

³⁶ "Similiter etiam oportet contra bonum hominis esse si semen taliter emittatur quod generatio sequi possit, sed conveniens educatio impediatur. Est enim considerandum quod in animalibus in quibus sola femina sufficit ad prolis educationem, mas et femina post coitum nullo tempore commanent, sicut patet in canibus. Quaecumque vero animalia sunt in quibus femina non sufficit ad educationem prolis, mas et femina simul post coitum commanent quousque necessarium est ad prolis educationem et instructionem: sicut patet in quibusdam avibus, quarum pulli non statim postquam nati sunt possunt sibi cibum quaerere. Cum enim avis non nutriat lacte pullos, quod in promptu est, velut a natura praeparatum, sicut in quadrupedibus accidit, sed oportet quod cibum aliunde pullis quaerat, et praeter hoc, incubando eos foveat: non sufficeret ad hoc sola femella. Unde ex divina

As with some other species, the work of generation for the human male is not complete with the appearance of the substantial form in the offspring; rather a significant part of the task of generation includes the education of and provisioning for the offspring.

Thomas clarifies certain aspects of what is required of the father: "Now it is evident that the upbringing of a human child requires not only the mother's care for his nourishment, but much more the care of his father as *guide and guardian*, under whom he progresses in *goods both internal and external*."³⁷ And again:

But above all in the human species, the male is required for the education of the offspring, which are attended to not only regarding bodily nourishment, but to a greater degree regarding the nourishment of the soul, as it says in Hebrews (12:9): "We have had earthly fathers to discipline us and we respected them." And consequently, natural reason dictates that in the human species coition is not random and uncertain, but is by a definite man to a definite female, who in fact made the arrangement through the law of matrimony.³⁸

These texts from Thomas make several points clear: Generally, the presence of the father is required well beyond his participation in the conception of the child. His

providentia est naturaliter inditum mari in talibus animalibus, ut commaneat femellae ad educationem fetus. Manifestum est autem quod in specie humana femina minime sufficeret sola ad prolis educationem: cum necessitas humanae vitae multa requirat quae per unum solum parari non possunt. Est igitur conveniens secundum naturam humanam ut homo post coitum mulieri commaneat, et non statim abscedat, indifferenter ad quamcumque accedens, sicut apud fornicantes accidit. Non autem huic rationi obstat quod aliqua mulier suis divitiis potens est ut sola nutriat fetum. Quia rectitudo naturalis in humanis actibus non est secundum ea quae per accidens contingunt in uno individuo, sed secundum ea quae totam speciem consequuntur (SCG.3.122)." See also ST.II-II.154.2 and *Super 1 ad Corinthios*.7-1.

³⁷ "Manifestum est autem quod ad educationem hominis non solum requiritur cura matris, a qua nutritur, sed multo magis cura patris, a quo est instruendus et defendendus, et in bonis tam interioribus quam exterioribus promovendus (ST.II-II.154.2)." Emphasis added.

³⁸ "Maxime autem in specie humana masculus requiritur ad prolis educationem, quae non solum attenditur secundum corporis nutrimentum, sed magis secundum nutrimentum animae, secundum illud Hebr. XII, 9: patres quidem carnis nostrae habuimus eruditores et reverebamur eos; et ideo ratio naturalis dictat quod in specie humana non sint vagi et incerti concubitus, quales sunt concubitus fornicarii, sed sint determinati viri ad determinatam foeminam, quae quidem determinatio fit per legem matrimonii." (*Super 1 ad Corinthios*.7-1) English translation: Thomas Aquinas, *Commentary on the First Epistle to the Corinthians*, trans. Fabian Larcher., O.P. <http://www.diafrica.org/kenny/CDtexts/SS1Cor.htm>. (Accessed June 25, 2008.)

involvement is necessary for the preservation of the life of his children. Thus he is to provide protection and the external good necessary for his children to thrive. Finally, he must teach his children. He is to be a guide and teacher and provide his children with “nourishment of the soul” even more so than that of the body – “*non solum attenditur secundum corporis nutrimentum, sed magis secundum nutrimentum animae.*”

In summary, fatherhood is not only the completion of the male role in generation (where generation is understood as pertaining only to the substantial form simply) but also encompasses a broader role of generativity in which the male plays a significant role not only in their existence of his offspring, but also in their perfection.

The ordering and extension of fatherhood beyond simple generation makes sense in terms of the nature of agent causality in living things. The powers and operations of the offspring have a trajectory towards their perfection.³⁹ After the agency of the father in conjunction with that of the mother (and the creative influx of God) work to bring about the existence of the child simply, the child’s own nature then becomes the primary agent of his perfection. The child’s form is ordered to its own perfection. This natural trajectory of the child towards its own perfection, however, cannot be realized on its own. Nor can it be best realized with the mother’s help alone. The agency of the father must continue, though, obviously, in a different mode than that through which the child was first generated. Thus, the father’s generative action shifts from that of playing his role in the advent of the form simply to that of guiding and caring for the growth that emanates from the nature itself.

iii. *Modes of agency*: Fatherhood does not end with the act of procreation. I propose that, in addition to the act of begetting a child, fatherhood can be understood in terms of three levels of secondary agency. Man’s primary agency as father regards the extent to which he is able to share his substantial form. The first level of secondary agency regards the extent to which he is able to share those accidental forms that pertain to human perfection: father as *guide and teacher*. The next level regards the agency of providing that which is necessary for his children to thrive: father as *provider*. The final level pertains to removing obstacles to flourishing: father as *defender*.

Father as guide and teacher: The perfection of the human person consists in the enriching of his being.⁴⁰ In continuance of the act of generating of his offspring, a father must advance the developmental trajectory of the child’s essence by teaching and guiding. He does this primarily in virtue of his own being. The father’s own

³⁹ “The action which the natural thing engages in, once it has its form, is in the very same “direction”, so to speak, as that of the action by which it was formed.” Brock, *Action and Conduct*, 116.

⁴⁰ See ST.I.5.1.

virtue, intellectual and moral, must be a guide for his offspring. Through his own being and comportment, he must teach⁴¹ his children how they must relate to themselves and to others. In his role as guide and teacher, he continues to form his children according to being that he possesses. His first act was to share his substantial form; as is possible, he must share the accidental forms that constitute his perfection. To do this, he must first possess such perfections.

Father as provider: Within human nature is the dynamism that fuels the development of every human person. However, all living things need the proper conditions if they are to grow and flourish. Part of a father's secondary agency, therefore, is to provide those conditions that permit his children to flourish. At a minimum, this includes providing absolute necessities such as food and shelter. The human person, however, is a far too complex so as to need simply that which maintains his survival. For instance, peace within the home facilitates the psychological freedom of the child⁴² as peace within the community permits his physical freedom. As such, the father's care extends quickly to the family considered in each of its individual members and *as a whole*. Psychologists E. Mark Cummings and Patrick Davies review the importance of domestic tranquility for a child's well-being:

It can be said that a "first generation" of research has successfully demonstrated the increased probability for children's disorders associated with marital discord, including effects on cognitive, social, academic, and even psychobiological functioning. Moreover, marital conflict negatively affects family functioning, including parenting and sibling relationships. Furthermore interparental conflict has been implicated in the impact on children of divorce and physical and sexual abuse.⁴³

An implication of the profound negative effects of marital discord and lack of domestic tranquility upon children is that a father *as father* has a duty to provide his

⁴¹ I use the word "teaching", and certainly what is generally called formal teaching is part of what the father must do. More important, however, is his presence and example, which being, as it were, radiates to his children. Thus, fatherhood requires of man the fullness of his own being if his fatherhood is to be complete.

⁴² For instance, see E. Mark Cummings and Patrick T. Davies, "Effects of Marital Conflict on Children: Recent advances and emerging themes in process-oriented research," *Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry* 43:1 (2002): 31-63.

⁴³ Cummings and Davies, "Effects of Marital Conflict on Children," 31.

children a tranquil home. This means that he is obliged to attend to the quality of his marital relationship also for the sake of his children.⁴⁴

A father must work to provide not only for his children's physical needs but even more so for their spiritual needs. But, these higher perfections of the human being are impossible without the *polis*. The realization of human potential without a community is impossible. Thus, man, in addition to providing individual goods and the good of a tranquil family, must also, in a sense, provide the polis for his children.⁴⁵ Without a healthy city, his children's development will be significantly frustrated.

Father as defender: The human infant is born helpless; there are many threats to its developing life. As is the case with provision, the clearest case of protecting his offspring regards that which threatens survival itself. Thus, a father must defend his children from physical threats such as invading armies or thieves. He must, however, also defend his children from all things that threaten their flourishing; this is to defend his children from that which would disintegrate the soul – that which would plunder and destroy the being that his guidance and provision have helped to secure.

Each of the three levels of secondary agency is ordered to the perfection of the child. As such, they regard the development of the child in the sustaining of its substantial being and in its development towards its fullness. The first level of fatherhood is somewhat like the sun to plant life; the father as guide and teacher seeks to share what he has in a manner more perfectly than the child. The primary mode of this level of fatherhood is a kind of "radiation." The second level is like providing the proper soil, water, and general environment that permits the proper amount of sun at proper times and gives proper nutrients at proper times. It nourishes growth. The final level seeks to preserve the growth – the being already won – by warding off that which would destroy it. All are ordered to the child's reaching its proper fullness.

iv. The proper context for fatherhood: The nature of the development of human children is such that, depending on the ecology, the father is either necessary for the very survival of the child or necessary for his or her thriving. But, in order for a man to make the commitment of fatherhood, both Thomas and Geary observe that a

⁴⁴ Nurturing his marital bond is, of course, an obligation he has even in the absence of children, simply in virtue of the goodness of the union itself and its ordering to the common good. This duty is, however, intensified by the presence of children who benefit from being reared in the context of a loving marriage and are harmed by its absence.

⁴⁵ I do not intend to imply here that the common good of the city is to be subordinated to an individual good or even to the common good of family, but rather that fatherhood implies an ordering to the common good.

man must have certainty of paternity. Again, returning to Thomas's consideration of the question of the sinfulness of fornication, he offers interesting insights on the relationship between the rapport between man and woman and necessity of extended paternal involvement.

Now simple fornication implies an inordinateness that tends to injure the life of the offspring to be born of this union. For we find in all animals where the upbringing of the offspring needs care of both male and female, that these come together not indeterminately, but the male with a certain female, whether one or several; such is the case with all birds: while, on the other hand, among those animals, where the female alone suffices for the offspring's upbringing, the union is indeterminate, as in the case of dogs and like animals. Now it is evident that the upbringing of a human child requires not only the mother's care for his nourishment, but much more the care of his father as guide and guardian, and under whom he progresses in goods both internal and external. Hence human nature rebels against an indeterminate union of the sexes and demands that a man should be united to a determinate woman and should abide with her a long time or even for a whole lifetime. Hence it is that in the human race the male has a natural solicitude for the certainty of offspring, because on him devolves [*imminet*] the upbringing of the child: and this certainly would cease if the union of sexes were indeterminate. This union with a certain definite woman is called matrimony; which for the above reason is said to belong to the natural law. Since, however, the union of the sexes is directed to the common good of the whole human race, and common goods depend on the law for their determination, as stated above (I-II.90.2), it follows that this union of man and woman, which is called matrimony, is determined by some law.⁴⁶

⁴⁶ "Fornicatio autem simplex importat inordinationem quae vergit in nocumentum vitae eius qui est ex tali concubitu nasciturus. Videmus enim in omnibus animalibus in quibus ad educationem prolis requiritur cura maris et feminae, quod in eis non est vagus concubitus, sed maris ad certam feminam, unam vel plures, sicut patet in omnibus avibus. Secus autem est in animalibus in quibus sola femina sufficit ad educationem fetus in quibus est vagus concubitus, ut patet in canibus et aliis huiusmodi animalibus. Manifestum est autem quod ad educationem hominis non solum requiritur cura matris, a qua nutritur, sed multo magis cura patris, a quo est instruendus et defendendus, et in bonis tam interioribus quam exterioribus promovendus. Et ideo contra naturam hominis est quod utatur vago concubitu, sed oportet quod sit maris ad determinatam feminam, cum qua permaneat, non per modicum tempus, sed diu, vel etiam per totam vitam. Et inde est quod naturaliter est maribus in specie humana sollicitudo de certitudine prolis, quia eis imminet educatio prolis. Haec autem certitudo tolleretur si esset vagus concubitus. Haec autem determinatio certae feminae matrimonium vocatur. Et ideo dicitur esse de iure naturali. Sed quia concubitus ordinatur ad bonum commune totius humani generis; bona autem communia cadunt sub determinatione legis, ut supra habitum est, consequens est quod ista coniunctio maris ad feminam, quae

The involvement of the father is necessary for the flourishing of the children. Such involvement, however, is precluded by paternal uncertainty, the remedy to which is matrimony. Thus, the necessity of paternal involvement demands a certain character of relationship between man and woman; it cannot be indeterminate.

The certainty of paternity, however, only applies to the male; a mother is always quite certain of maternity. It would seem then, that a polygamous arrangement would address the question of certainty of paternity and so be a legitimate solution. Thomas responds to this question in terms of justice and friendship.

Besides, friendship consists in an equality. So, if it is not lawful for the wife to have several husbands, since this is contrary to certainty as to offspring, it would not be lawful, on the other hand, for a man to have several wives, for the friendship of wife for husband would not be free, but somewhat servile. And this argument is corroborated by experience, for among husbands having plural wives the wives have a status like that of servants.

Furthermore, strong friendship is not possible in regard to many people, as is evident from the Philosopher in *Ethics VIII* [5]. Therefore, if a wife has but one husband, but the husband has several wives, the friendship will not be equal on both sides. So, the friendship will not be free, but servile in some way.

Moreover, as we said, matrimony among humans should be ordered so as to be in keeping with good moral customs. Now, it is contrary to good behavior for one man to have several wives, for the result of this is discord in domestic society, as is evident from experience. So, it is not fitting for one man to have several wives.⁴⁷

matrimonium dicitur, lege aliqua determinetur (ST.II-II.154.2).” See also SCG.3.124, and *Super 1 ad Corinthios.7-1*.

⁴⁷ “Adhuc. Amicitia in quadam aequalitate consistit. Si igitur mulieri non licet habere plures viros, quia hoc est contra certitudinem prolis; liceret autem viro habere plures uxores: non esset liberalis amicitia uxoris ad virum, sed quasi servilis. Et haec etiam ratio experimento comprobatur: quia apud viros habentes plures uxores, uxores quasi ancillariter habentur. Praeterea. Amicitia intensa non habetur ad multos: ut patet per philosophum in VIII *Ethicorum*. Si igitur uxor habet unum virum tantum, vir autem habet plures uxores, non erit aequalis amicitia ex utraque parte. Non igitur erit amicitia liberalis, sed quodammodo servilis.

Amplius. Sicut dictum est, matrimonium in hominibus oportet ordinari secundum quod competit ad bonos mores. Est autem contra bonos mores quod unus habeat plures uxores: quia ex hoc sequitur discordia in domestica familia, ut experimento patet. Non est igitur conveniens quod unus homo habeat plures uxores (SCG.3.124).”

Having several wives undermines the friendship between husband and wife; it tends to reduce the wife to servitude as clearly she is not, under those circumstances, on equal standing with her husband. Further the man must divide himself among many, inhibiting the friendship, while at the same time, demanding total dedication from the woman. Once again, a situation of fundamental injustice exists that severely hampers, if not negates, the possibility of friendship. Finally, in light of the fundamental inequalities, having several wives undermines the peace of the home, which peace, I have noted, is an essential element of man's providing for his children. To which must be added that the injustice of reducing his wife to servile status violates his role as guide and teacher as it models injustice precisely where there should be love and friendship. Such a "lesson" will neither be lost on his male children, for whom it provides a mistaken paradigm of how to relate to women, nor on his female children to whom a paradigm is provided of how they ought to be treated by men. So, beginning with the natural necessity of paternal involvement, one arrives at the necessity of monogamy and the friendship of equality and virtue between husband and wife.⁴⁸ Further, as noted in Section I, the relationship between spousal interpersonal intimacy and paternal investment is reciprocal: the need for paternal investment leads to the need for paternal certainty, which leads to monogamous marriage, which demands a friendship of equality and virtue among the spouses, which leads to love and interpersonal intimacy, which, in turn, leads to greater paternal investment.

v. *Summary: Form, power, and operation:* Fatherhood most properly regards the communication of form. Human fatherhood begins with the realization of the male mode of participating in generation; it is not limited, however, to the generation of the substantial form - the term of the act of generation - but extends to the perfection of the human form. Man's agency vis-à-vis the human form in his offspring changes modes when moving from his initial paternal action in the act of generation to those actions which regard the perfection of the substantial form in the offspring. The second category, which refers to a father's agency regarding the perfection of his children, can be divided according to three modes of agency: 1) The communication of perfection - as is possible. 2) The provision of that which is necessary for flourishing. 3) The defense against that which threatens perfection already possessed. Fatherhood names the relation subsequent to having shared one's form in the manner just summarized. Generally, fatherhood regards the sharing of a perfection already possessed. It is not giving in order to get. It is, as it were, the overflowing of a good already had that flows precisely from the recognition of the goodness of being.

⁴⁸ See also Aristotle, *Ethics*, Bk. 8, Ch. 12, and Thomas Aquinas, *Sententia libri Ethicorum*, Liber 8, Lectio 12.

2. The final cause of fatherhood

i. *The goodness of the human form*: What is the good that explains fatherhood? From what I have argued up to this point, it should be clear enough that the general answer to this question is the goodness of being; the goodness of the human form is that which moves the agent to action. This reply, as I have discussed, applies at the first level of the natural law; it is an aspect of the love that all substances have for their own being and, finally, for God. However, the question I am now asking does not regard reproduction in general, but human fatherhood in particular; thus, the response must become more specific. This means that a shift must be made to the second level of the natural law and the question asked regarding the specific mode of reproduction that is human fatherhood. The principal directive impetus come from the first level of natural law – from the recognition of the goodness of being that is first manifest in the preservation of one’s own being and then emanates to the sharing of that being. As an aspect of this general movement, the goodness of fatherhood is finally ordered to the common good of man and so finally to God. Human reproduction, however, happens in a certain way – a way that is *similar* to the reproduction of similar animals; it is the goodness of that modality that I seek to understand. Thus, at this juncture, I take for granted the general recognition of the goodness of reproduction, of participating in the making of another human being. My concern now is with the goodness of the fullness of fatherhood in the mode proper to humans, i.e. fatherhood not only as it concerns the substantial form, but also as it regards the perfection of the human form. Put otherwise, what is the good that moves man not only to beget children, but to remain as an *agent* in the development of his children?

Thomas is clear that man is inclined by nature to fatherhood, though, as I discussed earlier, men bear the duty collectively.⁴⁹ God orders men to fatherhood through the apprehension of its goodness. I wish first to consider the good of fatherhood regarding individual children. Next, I will consider the good of fatherhood as regards the common good of the species. In order to expand upon the goods of fatherhood expressed by Thomas, I will briefly consider some of the findings of the social sciences on the benefits of paternal investment.

ii. *Individual goods*: It is clear from Section III that Thomas considered it evident that paternal involvement is necessary for the well-being of children. The father provides essential aspects of that which is necessary for children to become, in a manner speaking, fully human, i.e. to attain the perfection of the form received at conception. Typically, the studies employed by social scientists have scopes focused on very particular aspects of a phenomenon that can be reduced to a measurable manifestation that is isolated as a function of one variable. Thus, considerations of

⁴⁹ ST.II-II.152.2.

the fullness of the human form tend to escape the consideration of the social sciences. Nevertheless, the evidence appears to be clear regarding the positive effects of paternal involvement. In fact, psychologist Paul Vitz states: "The great importance of the father in the development and education of his children - his sons and his daughters - is one of the best-documented findings within the social sciences in the last twenty years."⁵⁰ Professor of social work, Kim Jones, notes that the empirical research on the father's role in a child's development centers on the positive effects of a father's presence for a child's moral and social development, peer relations, self-concept, and self-esteem. Father absence (particularly as regards male children), by contrast, is associated with greater delinquency, drug and alcohol abuse, and increased psychiatric and behavioral problems.⁵¹ A detailed review the literature on this point would require much time and space.⁵² I will, however, offer a brief review of some of the most salient findings.

Perhaps obviously, the effects of father absence are most apparent in harsh ecologies. In a pre-industrial society studied in Paraguay it was found that the absence of a father due to death or divorce increased a child's chance of dying from illness by three times and the chance of death at the hands of another by two times. Further, children of skilled hunters and higher status males had a lower mortality rate than the children of less skilled hunters.⁵³ While most dramatic in pre-industrial societies, the effect appears to transfer to industrial societies. In early 20th century England it was found that

the children of professional fathers had a 54% lower mortality rate during infancy. The children of unemployed fathers, in contrast, had a 38% higher mortality rate than did children whose fathers were unskilled laborers. Even when SES [socio-economic status], environment... maternal age, and other factors were controlled, children (less than 3 years of age) of working mothers had a 34% higher mortality rate than did children whose mothers did not work.⁵⁴

Lack of paternal investment, or lower quality paternal investment leads to higher mortality rates in children.

⁵⁰ Paul C. Vitz and Stephen M. Krason eds., *Defending the Family: A Sourcebook*, The Catholic Social Science Press, 1995. p. 13.

⁵¹ Kim Jones, "Assessing Psychological Separation and Academic Performance in Nonresident-Father and Resident-Father Adolescent Boys," *Child and Adolescent Social Work Journal*, Vol. 21, No. 4 (August 2004): 337.

⁵² Geary provides a review of studies on the effects of paternal investment; see "Paternal Investment," 61-65, and *Male, Female*, 110-115.

⁵³ Geary, "Paternal Investment," 61. *Male, Female*, 111.

⁵⁴ Geary, "Paternal Investment," 62.

A study on father-present and father-absent households in the West Indies found interesting hormonal effects that appear to affect sons, but not daughters. Boys with absent fathers or boys living with a stepfather displayed either low or highly variable cortisol levels. Further, they weighed less than father-present boys. As adults, the father-absent and stepfather boys displayed higher cortisol levels and lower testosterone levels, an endocrine profile that suggests chronically high levels of stress; this hormonal profile places these boys at greater risk for subsequent physical disorders. The researchers concluded that “early family environment has significant effects on endocrine response throughout male life histories.”⁵⁵

The above findings point to the importance of the stability and relative tranquility of the nuclear family including the active presence of the father, a stability that obviously is seriously compromised by divorce. Geary notes studies that found that the mortality rate for children of divorced parents is one-third greater. “For instance, men whose parents had divorced were three times more likely to die by age 40 years than men whose parents had not divorced.”⁵⁶ He adds the interesting observation that the same phenomenon did not hold if the parent had been lost by death rather than divorce, leading to the conclusion that factors linked with the divorce lead to greater mortality risks. He summarizes by saying that “children living in stable social and home environments and with both biological parents appear to be in better health and apparently enjoy a longer life span, on average, than children living in other situations.”⁵⁷ These observations regarding domestic tranquility point to the expanded notion of paternal provision I mentioned earlier: a father must not only provide basic necessities. He must also act to provide the social and domestic conditions that lead to thriving.

Geary also notes the social advantages that follow from paternal investment. Generally the presence of the father in the family leads to social competitive advantages in children, such as improved academic and social skills.⁵⁸ These advantages in turn lead to higher socio-economic status of the child when he or she reaches adulthood. Interestingly, it appears that paternal investment has a greater impact upon educational outcomes than does maternal investment. Geary notes several studies that found that educational outcome is strongly related to paternal

⁵⁵ M. V. Flinn, R. J. Quinlin, S. A. Decker, M. T. Turner, and B. G. England, “Male-female Differences in Effects of Parental Absence on Glucocorticoid Stress Response, *Human Nature*, 7 (1996): 125. Quoted in Geary, *Male, Female*, 113.

⁵⁶ Geary, *Male, Female*, 113.

⁵⁷ Geary, *Male, Female*, 113-114.

⁵⁸ Geary, “Paternal Investment,” 63.

investment.⁵⁹ One study found that “paternal investment explained 4 times more variance in educational outcomes than did maternal investment.”⁶⁰ Further, it appears that children whose fathers engage them in positive play have greater emotional control and social skills. Thus, such children tend to be more socially popular.⁶¹

Divorce frequently leads to reduced paternal investment, lower socio-economic status, and, of course, is associated with marital conflict. It is likely that the family situation leading up to a divorce is far from perfect and itself leads to a series of social and psychological problems for children. However, even accounting the difficulties that arise from factors that precede the divorce itself, Geary notes that divorce is still associated with higher male aggression and non-compliance, earlier onset of sexual activity, and lower academic achievement.⁶²

Further it must be noted that a father who is present but abusive or suffering from some significant manner of psychopathology leads to negative consequences in his children, such as aggression, non-compliance, depression, and anxiety.⁶³ Thus, mere presence of the father is not sufficient to have a positive effect on children. An abusive father, obviously, harms his children.

It is clear, then, that, as St. Thomas thought the presence of the father leads to significant positive consequences for children that extend well beyond the satisfaction of bodily needs such as nutrition and shelter. Fatherhood is integral to a child’s flourishing. It is likewise clear that the proper context of this paternal relationship is a committed relationship with the child’s mother.

Fatherhood is ordered to and efficacious regarding the individual good of a child. I have already noted several times that nature principally regards that which is permanent.⁶⁴ In virtue of his intellectual soul, each individual human being is a

⁵⁹ See H. S. Kaplan, J. B. Lancaster, and K. G. Anderson, “Human Paternal Investment and Fertility: The life Histories of Men in Albuquerque,” in *Men in families: When do they get involved? What difference does it make?* ed. A. Booth and A. C. Crouter (Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum, 1998), 55-109. And H. S. Kaplan, J. B. Lancaster, J. A. Bock, and S. E. Johnson, “Does Observed Fertility Maximize Fitness among New Mexican Men? A Test of an Optimality Theory of Parental Investment in the Embodied Capital of Offspring,” *Human Nature* 6 (1995): 325-360. Quoted in Geary, “Paternal Investment,” 64.

⁶⁰ See P. R. Amato, “More than Money: Men’s Contributions to their Children’s Lives,” in *Men in families: When do they get involved? What difference does it make?* eds. A. Booth and A. C. Crouter (Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum, 1998), 241-278. Quoted in Geary, “Paternal Investment,” 64.

⁶¹ See Geary, *Male, Female*, 115.

⁶² Geary, *Male, Female*, 114.

⁶³ Geary, *Male, Female*, 115.

⁶⁴ See. ST.I.98.1.

permanent being. Thus nature regards each individual principally. Fatherhood – in conjunction with motherhood – acts both to generate incorruptible beings and works towards their perfection.

iii. *The common good*: Because human beings are incorruptible being as regards their intellectual faculties, nature regards them with direct purpose. Nature's direct purpose, however also regards the good of the species, which is a common good. Fatherhood is the completion of the act of generation according to the male mode. Generation preserves the species, which obviously is a good of the species. Fatherhood is, therefore, ordered to the common good by way of preserving the species.

There are some evolutionary theories that hold that paternal investment, in fact, might be responsible in part for the higher functioning of the human being. Paternal investment provides a security to offspring that permits a slower developmental process, which, in turn permits more sophisticated development.

Male investment... not only increased the chances of offspring survival but probably also provided these offspring with a competitive advantage – through increase in the sophistication of the competitive skills acquired during a longer and longer developmental period. Stated somewhat differently, male investment likely enabled evolutionary emergence of a period of protracted development, which, in turn, enabled slow-developing offspring to acquire skills that provided them with an advantage, in adulthood, over their faster maturing conspecifics.”⁶⁵

Paternal investment, taken generally, allows the species to develop as it does, which development, however, is necessary for the human being to acquire its proper powers and operations. Fatherhood thus serves the good of the species as providing those conditions that render possible the development that leads to the perfections of the species.

A father's contributions to the individual good of his children have obvious impact upon the good of the community as a whole as well. Healthy individual members lead to a healthy whole. Thus, the individual goods achieved through fatherhood impact the common good. However, all levels of what I have called a father's secondary agency contribute to the common good and necessarily connected

⁶⁵ Geary, *Male, Female*, 118. See also Geary, “Paternal Investment,” 71: “Although increased brain size is almost certainly associated with advantages in social competition, it entails the costs of increased vulnerability in infancy and prolonged dependency, which, in turn, increase the costs of male abandonment to pursue additional mates. In other words, in order to ensure that large-brained and socially competitive offspring reached adulthood, some shift from mating effort to parental effort (e.g. provisioning and social protection) was likely to have been necessary for hominid males.”

to the common good. I will begin with the clearer instances – provider, and defender – and then consider father as guide and teacher.

Provider: What can a lone man provide for his children versus that which a man who is part of community provides? The health of the city secures the health of his family. The father, then, as father, has a particular concern for the well being of the whole. A man alone can wander and preserve his own being with little concern for the civilization around him and the good of man as whole. A father cannot be heedless of the greater community. His care for his children and his family inclines him further towards care of the city. His fatherhood, in a manner of speaking, is thereby expanded to include a generative stance regarding the city. As he must help his children to flourish, so he must help his city to flourish. The two are mutually dependant.⁶⁶

Defender: An attack on the *polis*, is an attack on his family, as his family cannot flourish without the *polis*. Therefore, as the man must defend his children from those threats that might negate the being it already enjoys, so a man must be concerned with those incursions and influences that threaten the city. Thus, in defending the city the man furthers his mode of fatherhood thereof.

Teacher and guide: Once again, as the health of the city, as it were, descends to promote the health of a man's own children. The father has a particular interest in the virtue of the city. This is the place where his children will live. Its character will shape their lives even as he tries to do so. Therefore, as he attempts to promote the good that he possesses by teaching and providing example for his children, according to another mode, he must do so for his city.

Before leaving the discussion of the common good, I should return to an earlier point: how the need for fatherhood leads to the stable relationship of matrimony; both the evolutionists and Thomas observe that, if there were no need for the male to care for his offspring, he would simply seeks to maximize his mating opportunities. The need for a fuller expression of fatherhood leads *naturally* to matrimony and even monogamy. Humans are inclined to this union, as Aristotle observed, in a manner even stronger than their inclination to the city. As I have observed before, the union of man and woman constitutes a primary instance of individuals forming a community ordered to a common good. Aristotle noted that commitment to the common good witnessed in man and woman extends beyond generation to “various purposes of life.” This observation is based upon the realization that “the functions are divided, and those of man and woman are

⁶⁶ I do not intend to imply that the man without children is not obliged vis-à-vis the common good of the city – quite the contrary is the case. The point is rather that the fatherhood first demands the immediate community of the family, which, in turn, quickly demands a greater community for its flourishing.

different; so they help each other by throwing their peculiar gifts into the common stock.”⁶⁷ It would seem, however, that the initial basis for this vision of “throwing one’s *peculiar gifts* into the common stock” is the distinct gifts of the male and female modes of participating in generation, the completion of which are fatherhood and motherhood. Thus, it can be argued that the complementarity of fatherhood and motherhood are related to the common good first as producing children, which are testaments to the goodness of human being, and secondly by establishing the human person in a primary community in which it is clear that the good to be achieved cannot be done alone, nor even by two doing the same thing. Two must unite and each must “throw their peculiar gifts into the common stock;” only then can the common good be achieved.

Summary: Man is directed to fatherhood in virtue of the goodness of human being, the fullness of which being is either not possible or greatly hindered if a father does not continue his generative action beyond the act of begetting a child. Fatherhood is of great importance regarding both the individual good of children, the common good of the family, and the common good of the larger community. Further, in virtue of the father’s role in the achieving of individual and common goods, there is what could be called a “developmental push” upon the father: the act of begetting a child requires a certain fullness of his substantial being; a human male must reach sexual maturity before he is able to beget a child. However, once the child has arrived, the man is then responsible to act to facilitate the fullness of that child’s being. This role regarding his children requires that he himself possess a certain fullness - which fullness in man comes about through the virtues, intellectual and moral. A father cannot give what he does not have. As both provider and defender, his virtue is tested and perfected in practice. It can, therefore, be added that fatherhood has a further end of precipitating development in the adult man.⁶⁸

3. *Fatherhood and motherhood: sameness and difference*

In a text quoted earlier, Brock suggests that a direct agent could be said to have a kind of paternity of the motion it causes.⁶⁹ A few examples will be helpful in exploring the idea of the paternity of motion. With a nod to Hume, if one considers two billiard balls, one stationary the other moving, when the moving ball strikes the stationary ball, the original moving ball could be said to be father of the motion in the second ball. Similarly, to use a favorite example of Thomas, when a flame ignites another, the first flame might be called father of the subsequent flame. Yet, in both

⁶⁷ Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, Book 8, Chapter 12.

⁶⁸ I will discuss this thesis in more detail below in Section III.4.

⁶⁹ Brock, *Action and Conduct*, 106.

of these cases, it would seem odd to say that the first is mother of the second. Does a billiard ball that strikes another enjoy the maternity of the motion of second? There is a dissonance in this statement that does not exist in saying that the first ball enjoys the paternity of the motion of the second. What gives rise to this dissonance?

The difficulty of this question is augmented by what has already been said of the nature of fatherhood and motherhood: if the understanding of Aristotle and Thomas were correct and fatherhood regarded the active power of generation and motherhood the passive power of generation, then the reason for distinct reactions to the above statements regarding paternity of motion and maternity of motion would be apparent. However, it is clear that father and mother, as regards forming that which is human, equally possess the active power of generation. Thus, the active power cannot be attributed to fatherhood while, to motherhood, the passive power. Where then is the distinction?

In order to address this question, I will first review some ancient and modern observations regarding the difference between fatherhood and motherhood. Next, I will present some of the possible explanations for differences noted. I, then, will attempt to generalize the distinctions noted and synthesize what has been analyzed. Finally, I will offer a few thoughts regarding the differences between fatherhood and motherhood as they pertain to natural law.

i. Observations: It will be helpful to take a quick survey of the research regarding the difference between fathers and mothers. As usual, Geary provides a good review of existing research.⁷⁰ I will, therefore, follow Geary in his review. I will begin, however, with a more ancient observation. Aristotle observed that mothers seem to love their children more so than fathers. He attributed this phenomenon to two factors: the intimacy of their connection, and the time that they spend together.

Now parents know their offspring better than their children know that they are their children, and the originator feels his offspring to be his own more than the offspring do their begetter; for the product belongs to the producer (e.g. a tooth or hair or anything else to him whose it is), but the producer does not belong to the product, or belongs in a less degree. And the length of time produces the same result; parents love their children as soon as these are born, but children love their parents only after time has elapsed and they have acquired understanding or the power of discrimination by the senses. From these considerations it is also plain why mothers love more than fathers do.⁷¹

Internal gestation and post-partum suckling lead to greater intimacy between mother and child. They also demand that mother and child spend more time together.

⁷⁰ See Geary, *Male, Female*, 97-119.

⁷¹ *Nicomachean Ethics*, Bk. 8, Ch. 12.

During pregnancy, the time spent together is complete. While nursing, time spent together must remain great. Thus, Aristotle concludes that a mother will be more attached to her children or, as he puts it, will love her children more both due to feeling more united to her children as a result of the nature of pregnancy, and because the mother spends more time with her children.

Time and tasks: Surveying modern research, Geary more or less confirms Aristotle's observations from more 2,300 years earlier. "In keeping with the general pattern found with mammals, greater maternal than paternal availability for an engagement with children is found across human cultures."⁷² In cross-cultural studies children are consistently found to spend much more time with their mothers rather than their fathers. While this is most true in the case of infants and toddlers, the general pattern held through childhood and adolescence.⁷³ Across cultures, women were also found to provide the majority of the immediate care of small children, such as feeding and bathing.⁷⁴ Interestingly, this pattern held even among families who considered themselves more egalitarian in the distribution of childcare tasks:

[O]n a self-report measure, nontraditional fathers rated parenthood more highly than nontraditional mothers did; the opposite pattern was found for traditional families. Despite differences in expressed attitudes towards child care, the mother was the primary caretaker in all of the traditional *and nontraditional* families. In fact, traditional fathers differed little in the ways in which they interacted with their infants, the primary difference being that the *traditional fathers were more likely to play with their infants* than the nontraditional fathers.⁷⁵

In the !Kung San tribe (a nomadic society in southern Africa known to stress equality among group members) it was found that men provided less than 7 percent of early childcare.⁷⁶

Differences in time spent and the kind of care given can be attributed neither to inability nor absence on men's part. Men are generally found to be competent at early childcare, though at times are less attentive.⁷⁷ Nevertheless, even when both parents are present, mothers engage their infants more than men and provide routine care three to four times more than fathers.⁷⁸

⁷² Geary, *Male, Female*, 99.

⁷³ Geary, *Male, Female*, 99-100.

⁷⁴ Geary, *Male, Female*, 99-101.

⁷⁵ Geary, "Paternal Investment," 67. Emphasis added.

⁷⁶ Geary, *Male, Female*, 101.

⁷⁷ Geary, *Male, Female*, 100-101.

⁷⁸ Geary, *Male, Female*, 101.

Modes of interaction: Neither is difference between maternal and paternal care for children simply a question of the *quantity* of time spend together. Psychologist Ruth Feldman has performed intriguing research regarding differences in paternal and maternal interaction with infants.⁷⁹ The research centers on the concept of synchrony.⁸⁰ Her general conclusion is that mothers and fathers tend interact differently with their infant children and that the diversity of this interaction is likely helpful for the development of the child. Regarding maternal interaction, Feldman writes:

Infants' arousal during mother-infant interaction was mostly organized in cyclic oscillations between states of low and medium states of arousal, with or without a single positive peak. Such rhythms are thought to provide continuity from the rhythms of intrauterine and early neonatal movements to the interaction rhythms of the first social dialogue.⁸¹

She further notes that mother-infant synchrony seems to be related to social cues centering on face-to-face interaction. Thus synchrony between mother and child was related to "patterns of mutual gaze, sharing of facial expressions, and covocalization."⁸²

Father-infant interaction is not characterized by the same rhythmic patterns of gradual emotional ascent and decline.

As distinct from mother-infant cyclicity and social focus, the mode of arousal regulation during father-infant play was directed toward the building and organizing of high emotional intensity. Although the level of positive arousal infants reached during play with mother and father was similar, differences emerged in the organization of positive arousal across time in the two sessions. Positive arousal during father-child interaction was often organized in several peaks of high positive intensity. These peaks *were not embedded within a social episode*, were sudden rather than gradual, and tended to appear more frequently as play progressed. In contrast to the global observation that father-infant interactions are unpredictable, the

⁷⁹ Ruth Feldman, "Infant-Mother and Infant-Father Synchrony: The Coregulation of Positive Arousal," *Infant Mental Health Journal* Vol. 24(1) (2003): 1-23.

⁸⁰ "Synchrony has been described as the mechanism mothers use for building and maintaining infants' positive affect during face-to-face interactions. Synchrony refers to the process through which mother and infant match each other's affective states within lags of seconds, jointly moderating the level of positive arousal." Feldman, "Infant-mother and infant-father synchrony," 3. While the concept was initially defined in terms of maternal interaction with an infant, it can be extended to note the mutual responsiveness of any dyad.

⁸¹ Feldman, "Infant-Mother and Infant-Father Synchrony," 16.

⁸² Feldman, "Infant-Mother and Infant-Father Synchrony," 16.

current microanalysis reveals that father-child play abides by complex temporal rules. These rules may be less regulated than those underlying the mother-child exchange, but the interaction is not a random display of positive emotionality. Furthermore, the degree of synchrony was found to increase when play included several quick peaks, possibly to protect against infant disorganization during father-child sessions when positive emotionality is high and sudden.⁸³

Feldman had noted earlier in her work that “[f]ather-child interactions often focus on physical, ‘rough-and-tumble’ play rather than on a face-to-face ‘social’ exchange that centers on mutual gaze or covocalization.”⁸⁴ Father and mother tend to engage their children in distinct modes of social interaction.

Further, same-sex dyads (mother-daughter and father-son) displayed greater synchrony. Interestingly, the greatest synchrony was found between father and son:

[F]ather-son pairs showed the highest degree of synchrony as compared to all other groups, but such synchrony had a nonsocial interactive orientation and play containing quick, starlike episodes of high positive arousal. Thus, the higher degree of affective mismatching the infant son may encounter during interactions with his mother may be balanced by the experience of a natural coordination with the father. Such findings underscore the importance of attuned fathering during the first months of life to the male infant’s social development and self-regulation. It is possible that the closer synchrony observed between same-gender dyads may be related to children’s preference to play with same-age [same-gender] peers from the toddler years through preadolescence. Perhaps at the early stages of socialization, same-gender friendships may facilitate the integration of the child’s biologic modes of arousal regulation into the coregulated process of children’s play, thereby assisting the development of imagination and creativity. The findings may also be related to the literature tracing the effects of father absence on the development of dysregulation in boys but not in girls. The coregulation formed between father and son during the first months of life may be essential environmental inputs that facilitate the formation of self-regulatory capacities.⁸⁵

Earlier research had focused on mother-infant synchrony and had found less synchrony between mother and son than between mother and daughter. This was attributed to greater emotional dysregulation in boys. While not denying that there may be less emotional regulation in boys, Feldman underlines the importance of distinct modes of male and female interaction.⁸⁶ Infant boys appear to more easily

⁸³ Feldman, “Infant-Mother and Infant-Father Synchrony,” 16-17.

⁸⁴ Feldman, “Infant-Mother and Infant-Father Synchrony,” 5.

⁸⁵ Feldman, “Infant-Mother and Infant-Father Synchrony,” 17.

⁸⁶ Feldman, “Infant-Mother and Infant-Father Synchrony,” 17.

resonate the affective states of their father while infant girls respond more readily to their mothers. Even more importantly, Feldman speculates that lack of father-son synchrony may be related to later emotional problems in boys.

Feldman concludes her work by emphasizing the importance of the interaction of both parents.

Under optimal conditions, infants should have the opportunity to experience affective coordination with a gender matching as well as mismatching parent. In these two types of early interactions, infants can engage in coregulatory processes that provide a good fit to their natural tendencies as well as in those that introduce different forms of affective sharing and arousal regulation.⁸⁷

The presence of both parents provides the developing child the opportunity to engage in different modes of regulating their emotional states. The mode of the father is distinct from that of the mother. The child needs both.⁸⁸

Bonding: Aristotle observed that women feel more attached to their children because of the nature of pregnancy. Pinker comments that “the embryo does most of its growing inside the mother where the father can’t get at it to help directly.”⁸⁹ Confirmation that the mother experiences a greater sense of bonding to her children is found in the rates at which mothers and father abandon their children. A father’s commitment to his children appears to be more dependent upon variables beyond the simple fact of fatherhood – such as the quality of the spousal relationship.⁹⁰ Research shows that, following a divorce, fathers are much more likely to abandon their children in favor of seeking of new mating opportunities. Mothers do not display the same contingency regarding care for their children. Care remains constant regardless of the variables that lead to its diminution in men. Once a father removes himself from proximity to his children, it appears that he tends to also remove his investment in his children.⁹¹

Feldman notes that while quality of the father-child relationship is most based upon the quality of the marital dyad, the quality of the mother-child

⁸⁷ Feldman, “Infant-Mother and Infant-Father Synchrony,” 17.

⁸⁸ Some of Feldman’s more recent research found a link between mother-infant synchrony and moral development. Ruth Feldman, “Mother-Infant Synchrony and the Development of Moral Orientation in Childhood and Adolescence: Direct and Indirect Mechanisms of Developmental Continuity,” *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry* Vol. 77, No. 4 (2007): 582-597.

⁸⁹ Pinker, HMW, 466.

⁹⁰ Recall that the quality of the spousal bond is the single greatest predictor of paternal investment. See Geary, “Paternal Investment,” 68.

⁹¹ See Geary, “Paternal Investment,” 67-69.

relationship tends to vary with aspects of the mother's personality, such as whether she suffers from anxiety or depression. Interestingly, she found that levels of paternal synchrony were positively related to the security of the father's attachment to his child; this relationship, did not hold for mother-child synchrony. Feldman speculates that discrepancy could be due differences the quality of the marital bond affects the quality of the parent-child relationship:

Possibly, the measure of attachment used here, which defines attachment security on the basis of the parent's current intimate ties, is related to the marital quality as the two measures consider the spousal relationship. The special effect of paternal attachment security on father-daughter synchrony may be viewed from the crossgeneration perspective in attachment theory and the internalized link between the father's mother, wife, and daughter. The father's attachment to his mother is thought to shape his romantic relationship with his wife (Hazan & Shaver, 1987), and this line of positive attachments to women may facilitate an attuned relationship between the father and his infant daughter.⁹²

Paternal attachment functions differently than maternal attachment. It is more bound to the quality of the relationship between him and the child's mother. This is consistent with what both Thomas and Geary said of the uncertainty of paternity and with what Pinker noted about fetal development taking place outside of the father and his immediate experience. The foundation of the relationship with his children is built upon trust in his wife.

Psychodynamic theory has long noted the depth of attachment between mother and child. The father, therefore, has the role of entering into this dyad and helping the child achieve a certain level of separation from the mother - a task that is even more important for helping young boys separate from their mother. According to this theory, a child must pass through two stages of separation: first the child must separate him- or herself from a state of relative fusion with the mother. Second, the child must achieve a state of relative psychological maturity and autonomy - individuation.⁹³ The father is thought to play a crucial role in the process of separation and individuation:

[I]t is during separation-individuation that the father becomes aligned with reality "as a buttress for playful and adaptive mastery," and that separation-individuation

⁹² "Infant-Mother and Infant-Father Synchrony," 18.

⁹³ For a review of this school of thought, which is seen most in the work of Margaret Mahler, see Jones, "Assessing Psychological Separation," 335-337.

“might be impossible for either [mother or child] to master without their having the father to turn to.”⁹⁴

The child begins with an understanding of reality that is limited to him- or herself and the mother. The father “becomes aligned with reality” *outside* the mother. He helps his children to move into outer reality. The necessity of this “triangulation,” with the father as the third point of the triangle, is even more pronounced for boys, who must look to the father not only to help break the dyad of the mother-infant relationship, but to help a boy achieve masculine identity. The general task of helping in separation-individuation and the more particular task of helping boys achieve masculine identity are both roles proper to fatherhood.

Effects of abandonment: I have noted the importance of the presence of the father in the life of a maturing child. A father’s absence is, therefore, detrimental to a child’s development in many facets of that process. A mother’s absence, however, is even more damaging. Earlier, I spoke of mortality rates associated with absent fathers. Mortality rates of children are higher if the mother is absent than if the father is absent. In the Ache tribe, mortality rates were 100 percent for children whose mother died while the child was under two-years-old.⁹⁵ Geary summarizes the research on mother versus father absence:

Flin et al. noted that “permanent absence of the mother during infancy is associated with abnormal cortisol profiles for male and female children,” whereas father absence was associated with abnormal cortisol profiles in boys but not in girls... Even with boys, the influence of mother absence is larger in comparison to father absence. Finally, the quality of the mother-child relationship appears to have a stronger influence on the social and psychological functioning of the children than the quality of the father-child relationship...⁹⁶

Thus, while the effect of father absence is significant and deleterious, the negative impact of mother absence is even greater.

Summary: In summarizing the differences between maternal and paternal care, Geary writes:

⁹⁴ Jones, “Assessing Psychological Separation,” 335. References within text are to E. Abelin, “Some Further Observations and Comments on the Earliest Role of the Father,” *International Journal of Psychoanalysis* 56 (1975): 248-249.

⁹⁵ Geary, *Male, Female*, 116.

⁹⁶ Geary, *Male, Female*, 116. See M. V. Flinn, R. J. Quinlan, S. A. Decker, M. T. Turner, and B. G. England, “Male-female Differences in Effects of Parental Absence on Glucocorticoid Stress Response,” *Human Nature* 7 (1996): 146.

[I]n all regions of the world, across subsistence activities, and across social ideologies (e.g., degree to which states social norms are egalitarian), *observational* studies have indicated that mother invest more time and energy in the direct care of their children than fathers do.... The cross-cultural pattern of sex differences in parental care is consistent with the view that human parental investment follows the general pattern found in most mammalian species; that is, mothers are relatively more invested, on average, in the well-being and development of their children than fathers are. The only deviation from this pattern is that human fathers show relatively more parental investment than that which is found in most other mammals.⁹⁷

Mothers typically provide more immediate care to children, spend more time with children, are much less likely to abandon their children, and more profoundly affect the development of their children as is manifest by the consequences of maternal absence.

ii. *Attribution*: To what are differences in maternal and paternal behavior to be attributed? Aristotle noted two factors: First, a mother experiences the child more as a part of her and so feels more connected with her child. As Pinker observed, all early development happens inside the mother and outside the father. The child's prenatal life is outside of the father's experience and outside of his ability to control. Gabriel Marcel expresses this somewhat poetically by saying that fatherhood begins from the "nothingness of experience."⁹⁸ Second, a mother spends much more time with her child, which leads to further closeness. Modern science seeks to further isolate the variables that contribute to distinguishing maternal and paternal care.

Because, as Geary noted, patterns of maternal versus paternal care are similar to those found in other mammals, Geary first notes factors that influence maternal care in other mammalian species. First among these factors are hormonal changes that occur during pregnancy. Other factors, however, that influence maternal behavior are previous experience with infants, such as play parenting frequently engaged in by young females, the characteristics of the infant, and a series of environmental factors, such as the degree of group conflict, and the availability of resources.⁹⁹

Regarding humans, Geary makes the following cautionary remark: "the hormonal, social, and contextual influences on parental behavior are very complex and are not completely understood at this point."¹⁰⁰ Notwithstanding this proper

⁹⁷ Geary, *Male, Female*, 103.

⁹⁸ Marcel, *Homo Viator*, 100.

⁹⁹ Geary, *Male, Female*, 103-104.

¹⁰⁰ Geary, *Male, Female*, 104.

call for caution, there do appear to certain hormonal changes that are associated with maternal behavior in women.

A mother's brain is prepared by the hormones of pregnancy to show the strong maternal feelings that ensure the newborn is cared for. These hormones induce a cascade of changes in the brain, reducing stress reactions, evoking maternal behavior and preparing the neuroendocrine circuits that drive the birth process and ensure that the suckling infant gets milk. The nerve cells that make oxytocin are involved in all these aspects of motherhood, and details are emerging of how their performance is adapted by pregnancy.¹⁰¹

The mother's system is flooded with estrogens from the corpus luteum and the placenta.¹⁰² The balance of these hormones appears to be related to a mother's attachment to her children: "The higher the estradiol levels relative to progesterone levels, the stronger the feelings of attachment."¹⁰³

Women can recognize the cry of their own infant within two days of birth; they react to that cry with greater physical arousal than to the cries of other infants. It is thought that a woman's reaction of her infant's cry might be related to elevated levels of cortisol that accompany childbirth.¹⁰⁴ Interestingly, "after the birth of a child, many fathers also show increased cortisol levels and increased arousal to the cry of their infants..."¹⁰⁵ Because cortisol suppresses testosterone production, there is some speculation that men's increased sensitivity to their infant may be related to a decline in testosterone caused by higher levels of cortisol.¹⁰⁶

Principal among the hormones surrounding mother-child bonding, however is oxytocin. Ruth Feldman's research found that:

Oxytocin levels averaged across pregnancy and the postpartum predicted not only the frequency of maternal behavior but the degree of its coordination with the newborn's alert state, pointing to the role of oxytocin in setting the stage for bonding in humans as well as in the development of coordinated interactions.¹⁰⁷

¹⁰¹ "The maternal brain," *Journal of Neuroendocrinology* Vol. 12, Issue 12 (Dec. 2000): 1143.

¹⁰² "The maternal brain," 1143.

¹⁰³ Geary, *Male, Female*, 104.

¹⁰⁴ Geary, *Male, Female*, 104.

¹⁰⁵ Geary, *Male, Female*, 104.

¹⁰⁶ Geary, *Male, Female*, 104. Interestingly, while women with no children have an elevated heart rate in reaction to an infant's cry while men who are not fathers have no such reaction.

¹⁰⁷ Ruth Feldman, "Parent-Infant Synchrony and the Construction of Shared Timing: Physiological Precursors, Developmental Outcomes, and Risk Conditions," *Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry* 48:3/4 (2007): 332.

Feldman notes that oxytocin is not only associated with maternal behavior, but that it helps coordinate that behavior with the infants "alert state." Regarding such coordination, she states:

[T]he degree of coordination between maternal behavior and the newborn's alert state was related to both infant-mother and infant-father synchrony at 3 months, suggesting that the mother's postpartum behavior plays a central role in sensitizing infants to the temporal dimension of social relationships.¹⁰⁸

Oxytocin is associated with maternal responsiveness during a child's alert states. Such interaction appears to have a positive effect in establishing a child's ability to establish interpersonal relationships.

I noted earlier that mothers and fathers have different modes of synchrony with their children and that the highest levels of synchrony are between same-sex dyads. Feldman notes that distinctions in maternal and paternal child interaction, and the proclivity for same-sex synchrony both likely find their root in biological gender differences:

Findings on gender differences in patterns of parent-infant interaction lend support to the hypothesis that the establishment of coregulation may be easier for same-gender dyads, as such processes capitalize on the partners' similar inborn modes of arousal regulation. Mothers tend to vocalize more than fathers, and girls respond better to maternal vocalizations than do boys. Mothers are also quicker to respond to the girl's facial expressions. These tendencies may shape the mother-daughter exchange as a socially oriented form of coregulation, expressed in mutual gaze, shared facial expressions, and covocalization. On the other hand, synchrony with the father's more arousing, quick-peak pattern may be easier for boys, as this pattern mirrors the boy's endogenous expression of arousal. The father's focus on physical rather than social play may similarly accord with the boy's lower inborn tendency for social contact.¹⁰⁹

Feldman observes that even as newborn infants females are more socially oriented and generally more rhythmic in their affect. Male infants are less socially interested

¹⁰⁸ Feldman, "Parent-infant synchrony," 332-333. "Interaction synchrony in the context of parent-infant relatedness... addresses the matching of behavior, affective states, and biological rhythms between parent and child that together form a single relational unit. Synchrony describes the intricate "dance" that occurs during short, intense, playful interactions; builds on familiarity with the partner's behavioral repertoire and interaction rhythms; and depicts the underlying temporal structure of highly aroused moments of interpersonal exchange that are clearly separated from the stream of daily life" p. 329.

¹⁰⁹ Feldman, "Infant-Mother and Infant-Father Synchrony," 5.

and more given to peaks of excitement and “labile state control.”¹¹⁰ As these characteristics exist near birth, they are likely biologically based. Maternal and paternal interactions tend to be a continuance of the interactive characteristics found in female and male infants.

Geary further notes that the prenatal hormone environment seems to have an impact upon a child’s play-style and later parental behavior. Exposure of female children to high levels of androgens (such as occurs in CAH) leads to decreased interest in dolls and play parenting in female children. Presumably, decreased play parenting leads to decreased interest in actual parenting in adult life.¹¹¹

Overall, in assessing the role of hormones in human parenting, Geary seeks to leave room for the complexities of human behavior:

[S]tudies suggest that prenatal exposure to male hormones and high levels of circulating male hormones might decrease sensitivity to and interest in children and that estradiol levels during pregnancy might influence later attachment to the child. Even if these hormonal influences prove to be the case, it is also clear that there are individual differences in both men and women in responsiveness to infants and children. Indeed, despite the general pattern of sex differences, it is clear that not all mothers relate to their infants and children in ways that facilitate nurturing mother-child relationships and that there are clearly many high-investment fathers.¹¹²

As with any human behavior, the sources of the differences between fatherhood and motherhood cannot be reduced to a chemical or brain function. However, it does appear that there is a biological component to the difference between the father and the mother.

iii. *Synthesis*: How does one, then, characterize the difference between fatherhood and motherhood? Following what I have said regarding the distinction between maleness and femaleness, the distinction between fatherhood and motherhood in the human being must be a distinction in modality. Man and woman each equally have the active power of generation in virtue of the production of a haploid cell, but they do not have the power of generation in exactly the same way. I suggest that fatherhood is more active, initiating, and outward in its modality and that motherhood is more receptive and inward in its modality.¹¹³ It is precisely

¹¹⁰ Feldman, “Infant-Mother and Infant-Father Synchrony,” 5.

¹¹¹ Geary, *Male, Female*, 104-105.

¹¹² Geary, *Male, Female*, 105.

¹¹³ It must be kept in mind that whatever is said of fatherhood has implications for Christian Trinitarian theology. God’s fatherhood is understood as primarily referring to the relation of persons in the Godhead. For an interesting article discussing some of the difficulties

this difference to which the mind is attending in assenting to the paternity of motion in the case of one billiard ball hitting another while hesitating to attribute maternity of motion in the same instance.

Up to this point in this section, I have attended primarily to what I have called the modes of secondary agency of fatherhood. I would like to return attention for a moment to the primary agency of fatherhood; for it is in the foundational agency that, perhaps, the distinction in the modalities of fatherhood and motherhood are most clearly seen.

The primary instance of distinction between father and mother regards the act that determines an individual most properly as a father or mother: the act of generation. To discern this difference, one must follow the activity of the gametes in the generation of a new human being. These operations have already been considered many times throughout this work and therefore are in need of little review. The smaller, more efficient, more mobile sperm must go out to the larger, richer, more precious ovum. Each is equally "human." Each without the other cannot achieve the purpose to which it is ordered. The sperm must penetrate the ovum, find its way to its center and there unite itself with the awaiting other "half of humanity." The ovum for its part must actively receive the male gamete; many spermatozoa are simultaneously trying to reach the ovum's nucleus. Once one has reached the core, the cell changes completely; it is no longer receptive of its spermatozoic suitors. Those completely outside are prevented from penetrating it. Those who have already penetrated the surface are locked in place and prevented from entering the nucleus. The act of generation is one act. It is achieved, though, through the distinct contributions of the man and woman; in virtue of the distinct modes of participation in the same act, a man is determined as father and a woman as a mother.

One further observation regarding the act of generation will be helpful: the act itself consists in the proper disposing of matter such that the matter is uniquely fitted to receive the form. In all non-human instances, generation consists in educating the form from the matter. In the case of man, it is a question of preparing the matter for the creative power of God to infuse a rational soul and thereby truly generate a new human. Now, it can be said that it is the part of the father, through his "representative," the spermatozoon, to be more active in the final disposition of the matter. A comparison employed by Dewan will be helpful in elucidating the point:

regarding understanding fatherhood as it applies humanly and within the life of the Trinity see David L. Schindler, "Catholic Theology, Gender, and the Future of Western Civilization," *Communio* Volume XX, Number 2 (Summer 1993): 200-239. I am grateful to Professor Schindler as well for insights into the distinction between the masculine and the feminine as a distinction between the outward and the inward.

in distinguishing form and *esse*, Dewan uses the formation of words as a comparison to help make the distinction.¹¹⁴ The form of the word, say, "act", in a sense, gives being to the word. The agent, however, who puts the letters together also gives being to the word. The form gives definition, the agent gives *esse*. The sperm functions in a way as to place the matter together. The majority of the formative work was accomplished by both male and female in the formation of the gamete. It is the part of the male, however, to bring about the final movements that, with the receptive help of the female, put the proper matter together and causes the coming to be of a new human. As putting the matter together, the male role can be seen as initiating.

If one looks backwards from the moment of conception to that which leads to fatherhood and motherhood, a similar outward-initiating versus inward-receptive distinction appears. The act of sexual intercourse mirrors the relationship of the male and female gametes. It is the male who must, as it were, go out or proceed to the female and the female who must receive the male.

Even courtship is similar. As noted earlier, differences in investment levels in reproduction lead to distinct vulnerabilities and different dynamics in men and women regarding mate selection. The general difference is that males compete among other males and females limit and select. Thus, once again, the general movement of the male is outward, towards the female as initiating contact and competing for access to the female, while the female chooses either to receive the male or not. This is true of all species in which the female investment in reproduction is greater than that of the male.

Looking forward from the moment of conception, the outward-initiating versus inward-receptive distinction appears to generally hold. Internal gestation is the obvious and first instance of the continuance of the inward-outward pattern. Once again, as Marcel observed, all happens within the mother. The initial development is outside the father and his ability to experience it. The intimacy of this interiority led psychologist such as Mahler to speak of an initial fusion of mother and child.¹¹⁵ This generally continues after birth. As noted earlier, mothers in all societies tend to be more intimately involved in the immediate care of their children than fathers and spend far more time with their children. This leaves the father to attend more to outward considerations. Kim Jones notes the observation of psychologist D. W. Winnicott: "Donald Winnicott... traced the father's role as beginning at conception, where he is there for the function of 'dealing with the environment for the mother.'"¹¹⁶ If the mother attends to the immediate needs of the child, the father

¹¹⁴ See Dewan, *Form and Being*, 196-199.

¹¹⁵ Jones, "Assessing Psychological Separation," 335-336.

¹¹⁶ Jones, "Assessing Psychological Separation," 334.

must attend to the outer environment, making sure that all is in place to allow the mother to nurture new life.

A father's contribution, though, is not only indirect. In a way similar to the action of the male gamete and male participation in sexual intercourse, the father must, in a manner speaking, penetrate the mother-child dyad and help the child with separation and individuation.

Successful negotiation of the separation-individuation sequence leads to psychological birth and differentiation (self from other), the development of adaptive capacities, individual autonomy, identity formation, and emotional and behavioral independence from the primary caretakers.¹¹⁷

The father, once again, assists in a kind of outward motion for the child. As Feldman noted, a mother's interaction tends to be more rhythmic and subdued. A father's interaction tends to be more intense and jarring. The one more soothing, the other, perhaps, preparing the child for new experience that awaits him or her in the world beyond the home. It is interesting that, as Geary noted, paternal interaction appears to be related more immediately with academic achievement than maternal interaction.¹¹⁸

In general, the agency of fatherhood appears to be more outward-initiating. Beginning with the primary agency of fatherhood - and that which leads up to it - and as regards the secondary agency of fatherhood, the "direction" appears to be generally outward. He goes out to the woman, as does his gamete. Regarding his secondary agency, he is more concerned with the outer world and appears to help more in leading his children into the outer world.

iv. Fatherhood, motherhood, and natural law: I have already mentioned that man and woman are equally directed towards parenthood by the first level of the natural law. Fatherhood and motherhood regard the second level which pertains to the manner in which the first level precept is accomplished. The division of fatherhood and motherhood is for the sake of the common good.¹¹⁹ One sees that

¹¹⁷ Jones, "Assessing Psychological Separation," 335.

¹¹⁸ Geary, *Male, Female*, 114-115. See also Jones, "Assessing Psychological Separation," 337-340.

¹¹⁹ "Since, however, the union of the sexes is directed to the common good of the whole human race, and common goods depend on the law for their determination, as stated above (I-II, 90, 2), it follows that this union of man and woman, which is called matrimony, is determined by some law." (ST.II-II.154.2) And "Then at 'Only to this extent,' he indicates the proper reason for conjugal friendship which belongs to man alone. He concludes from the premises that pairing of male and female among other animals exists exclusively for generation of offspring, as has been noted (1720). But union of male and female among men

men and women are suited for different tasks in the rearing of children. Thus men and women are inclined towards different tasks. These inclinations do take the form of pleasure taken in given tasks or feelings of bondedness. Such inclinations are not the inclinations of natural law, but rather part of the “evidence,” as it were, upon which inclinations proper to the natural law are based. Thus, the mother’s greater feeling of union with her children does not mean that she is directed to love her children more than is a father. It does mean however, that the mode in which such love is expressed will likely be distinct in mother and father. But even this, however, is precisely for the good of the child and the common good.¹²⁰

4. Conclusion

Fatherhood in its primary meaning refers to the completion of the male role in the generation of a new human person. I have argued, however, that fatherhood also extends to what can be called a generative agency regarding the perfection of his children. Human, fatherhood, then, is essentially generative of the human form, either as regards the substantial form simply, or as regards the accidental forms that constitute his children’s perfection. I further argued, that purpose of fatherhood extends beyond the individual good of his child and encompasses the common good of the family, of the city, and even of the species. I argue that a man can be considered to exercise a kind of fatherhood as regards the common good of the family and the city. Thus fatherhood can be considered as a kind of generative agency as regards the human good.

The agency associated with fatherhood is of three kinds: radiance, facilitation, and production. Radiance is the most proper mode of fatherhood. The agency of radiance is the sharing of a form had. Thus, reproduction is the primary instance of fatherhood; the father as teacher and guide is a secondary instance. The agency of facilitation regards the provision of the proper conditions for development, or the removal of obstacles to flourishing. Facilitation assists the

occurs not only for the procreation of children but also for the functions needed in human living. These functions—it is immediately apparent—are so divided between man and woman that some are proper to the husband, like external works; and others to the wife.... Thus mutual needs are provided for, when each contributes his own services for the common good.” Thomas Aquinas, *Commentary on the Nicomachean Ethics*, Book 8, Lecture 12.

¹²⁰ Finally, I should add that the inclinations of father and mother regarding care of children in their application in particular situations are the realm of prudence. Thus, a father, who, for a variety of prudential reasons, stays home with his children is not thereby violating natural law. What would be necessarily a violation of natural law would be to abandon the child or otherwise not give the child proper care. It is prudence to discern if the care of the children is best served by the father’s remaining at home and mother providing the external support.

primary agent of development, which is the human nature of the offspring. The final agency, that of production, is that by which a man makes something outside of himself. Primary fatherhood (that which regards *reproduction*) while being the principal instance of the fatherhood of agency, is also a kind of production in that the offspring, obviously is something outside the father. It also regards a man's agency vis-à-vis certain common goods. However, before understanding how the latter two "agencies" relate to fatherhood, some attention must be given to the notion of the human good.

The primary good of which I am speaking is the substantial form of the human person. The second level of good is the perfection of the human form. Finally, the third level of the human good regards the common good. Primary fatherhood regards the substantial form. The agency is that of action. The agency of facilitation regards both man's perfection and the common good. I have discussed the fatherhood of the provider and defender. This mode of agency can also be seen as efficacious regarding the common good.¹²¹ Regarding the agency of production, man can be said, in a way, to produce his offspring; he also exercises this agency regarding the common good. In acting to bring about the good of the family and the good of the city he can, in a way, produce that good. As he produces a kind of human good that has reference back to the first two modes of fatherhood, I have argued that man can be said to have a kind of fatherhood regarding the common good. I have attempted to summarize these relationships in Table 1.

Table 1

Modes of fatherhood	Radiance	Facilitation	Production
Primary (<i>substantial form</i>)	Biological		Reproduction
Secondary (<i>accidental form</i>)	Teacher/ guide	Provider/ protector	
Tertiary (<i>common good</i>)		Promotion	Direct agency

IV. FATHERHOOD AND THE PERFECTION OF MASCULINE IDENTITY

Having defined maleness (having given the ontological basis of masculine identity) and having defined fatherhood, it now remains to speak of the relationship

¹²¹ At least as regards removing obstacles to the flourishing of the common good, man exercises a facilitative agency.

of the two. How does fatherhood relate to masculine identity? I will address this relationship in two parts. First, I will consider fatherhood as the fulfillment of masculine identity. Next, I will consider fatherhood as a developmental catalyst for an adult man. In this subsection, I will briefly consider some of the existing empirical research on the developmental impact that fatherhood has upon the lives of adult men.

1. Masculinity and generativity

In Chapter 9, I argued that the accidental form “maleness” is unified by its generative ordering to the substantial form of the human being. The first and obvious instance of this ordering is the determination of the male according to the male role in the act of procreation. The generative role that explains maleness in the human male – that explains masculinity – however is broader than just the role that leads to procreation. The generative role that explains and unifies maleness centers on act of procreation but encompasses that which precedes it and follows from it – i.e. it encompasses that which is required to properly united the divided powers of generation and then that which is required to secure the flourishing of offspring. The generative role extends yet further to a mode of generativity regarding the common good: the good the family, the good of the city, and the good of the species.

Before connecting masculine identity with fatherhood, I must take a moment to formally introduce a word that has appeared throughout this work, but that takes on a more pronounced importance at this juncture: generativity. I must address the meaning of this term, for generativity plays a significant role in the developmental theory of Erik Erikson and hence carries with it significant theoretical baggage for those familiar with Erikson. In a much-quoted passage, Erikson states that generativity is “primarily the concern in establishing and guiding the next generation.”¹²² In the Aristotelian tradition, generation refers to the coming-to-be of a substance and is contrasted to modes of alteration where the substance persists and underlies changes in accidental form.¹²³ Erikson’s notion, insofar as it includes the “establishing” of the next generation, certainly includes the Aristotelian notion of generation. Generativity, however, also extends to “guiding” the next generation. By including “guiding,” generativity is expanded from generation to what could be called “generative” acts. Psychologists Van Hiel et al. explain the expanded notion of generativity:

¹²² E. H. Erikson, *Childhood and Society* (New York: Norton, 1950), 276. Quoted in Alain Van Hiel, Ivan Mervielde, and Filip De Fruyt, “Stagnation and Generativity: Structure, Validity, and Differential Relationships with Adaptive and Maladaptive Personality,” *Journal of Personality* 74:2 (April 2006): 544.

¹²³ For instance, see Aristotle, *On Generation and Corruption*, Book 1, Chapter 4.

Generativity is closely linked but not limited to parenting because it can also be expressed by teaching and mentoring or by taking productive roles in society through writing, invention, and social responsibility. These kinds of activities and involvements not only provide guidance and inspiration for our own children but also for all people around us and, in principle, for all people living in the near or distant future. The central strength fostered by generativity is care “in a sense that includes ‘to care to do’ something, ‘to care for’ somebody or something, ‘to take care of’ that what needs protection and attention, and ‘to take care not to do’ something destructive.”¹²⁴

While generativity is “closely linked” to parenting, it includes that which could be called “creative” in the personal and social milieu.

While I intend not to import any of the psychoanalytic baggage that generally accompanies the term due to Erikson’s Freudian pedigree, I nevertheless find the concept of generativity quite helpful. For the purposes of this dissertation, however, I must make its meaning more precise. I use generativity as referring to human agency that regards the coming-to-be of human goods, the primary of which goods is the human form itself. In a secondary sense generativity refers to those goods which are perfections of the individual and finally to the coming-to-be of common goods. Thus, when I state that masculinity is primarily generative, I am stating that the agency that follows from the accidental form maleness in the human being is ordered to the coming-to-be of the human good in the three above-mentioned modes: substantial form, perfection, and common good.

The step to fatherhood should be a short one. Fatherhood refers to the completion of the coming-to-be of the above-mentioned modes of good associated with masculine identity. Regarding what I have called primary fatherhood, it is clear that fatherhood is completion of the power to participate in the generation of a new human being. To generate is to share the human form. A father is one who has shared his form *according the male mode*. In the case of secondary fatherhood – that agency which regards the perfection of the form in the offspring – it is not proper, however, to speak in terms of the “completion” or perfection of human form as something that has come to pass. Primary fatherhood is marked by a substantial change: the coming-to-be of a new human person. Secondary fatherhood *carries on* the generative work of this “coming-to-be” according to three modes of agency that discussed earlier in this chapter (teacher, provider, and protector). Secondary fatherhood, however, is not marked by a momentary change; it regards the *process* of the coming-to-be of perfection in the child and encompasses a constellation of agency towards the end of child’s flourishing. As I noted when discussing the various

¹²⁴ Van Hiel et al., “Stagnation and Generativity,” 544-545. Quotation with text: R. L. Evans, *Dialogue with Erik Erikson* (New York: Preager, 1981), 53.

levels of secondary agency, fatherhood entails a rich harmony of teaching, guiding, provision, and defense, where provision refers not only to material necessities and defense refers not only to threats to the child's life.¹²⁵ In complementary conjunction with the mother, the father provides that which is needed for the child to flourish. This agency is generative as it promotes the coming-to-be of the child's perfection and is an extension of the original generative act.

Becoming a father is likely to awaken in a man a greater awareness of his own ordering to the common good. The thriving of his children demands that a father be concerned both the common good of his family and with common good of the city. This provides the opportunity for a third mode of fatherhood. Man employs his agency regarding the coming-to-be of common goods. As such, he can be said possess a kind of fatherhood regarding those common goods.¹²⁶

Masculine identity is ordered to these the three modes of generativity that corresponds to the three modes of fatherhood just mentioned. Thus fatherhood in its various modes can be seen as the fulfillment of masculine identity. The operations that follow from the determination of a human being as male find their fulfillment in the three modes of fatherhood. Fatherhood regards the achieving (either in completion or process) of the human goods to which the human male is inclined by nature.

2. Fatherhood and the perfection of masculine identity

There remains a question to be answered: I have spoken of fatherhood as the fulfillment of masculine identity. I have also spoken of fatherhood as an act of generosity, an overflowing of being. Fatherhood is not "giving in order to get;" it is giving in order to give. How, then, does one understand the relationship of fatherhood to the perfection of masculinity in man? Is fatherhood *a sign* of man's perfection, *constitutive* of man's perfection, or a kind of *catalyst* of man's perfection? I offer that the answer to this question is "yes," Or, to put it more precisely, fatherhood is, in a way, all three. To see how fatherhood relates to the perfection of the human, then, will require some distinctions.

i. *Sign of perfection*: The primary instance of fatherhood regards a man's sharing of his substantial form. This sharing becomes possible when a human male has reached sexual maturity. When his own form has reached a certain fullness, he is able "to give" it to another. The nature of this act in and of itself is one of

¹²⁵ It is because of the richness of the notion of fatherhood as regards the flourishing of a child that any teacher or coach who helps a child towards his or her perfection cannot by the simple fact of that assistance be called a "father" in a secondary sense.

¹²⁶ It is in virtue of such agency that certain men such as Mahatma Gandhi or George Washington receive the name "Father of the nation."

generosity; it is a kind of overflowing of being possessed to a measure such that it is able to overflow.¹²⁷ As such, fatherhood is a sign of a perfection already possessed. What is added to the father is the relation of being a father.

Similarly, I argued that a father's agency as guide and teacher is a kind of action - that by which the father shares a certain mode of being that he already possesses. As such, this mode of secondary fatherhood is also a sharing of being already had. It is, then, a kind of generosity that is a sign of a perfection already had.

ii. *Substance of perfection*: Thomas asks the question of whether a religious community directed toward the contemplative life is more excellent than one directed to the active life. His response is enlightening:

Accordingly we must say that the work of the active life is twofold. One proceeds from the fullness of contemplation, such as teaching and preaching. Wherefore Gregory says (Hom. v in Ezech.) that the words of Psalm 144:7, "they shall publish the memory of . . . Thy sweetness," refer "to perfect men returning from their contemplation." And this work is more excellent than simple contemplation. For even as it is better to enlighten than merely to shine, so is it better to give to others the fruits of one's contemplation than merely to contemplate.¹²⁸

It is *better* to enlighten than only to shine. What is the meaning of this "better?" Something that shines has nothing added to it by the fact that *something else* is enlightened by its radiance. Where, then, is the "better?"

While, perhaps, no being is added to the shining thing, being is certainly added to the enlightened thing. Depending on the nature of the "enlightening," there can also be a contribution to the common good in virtue of the enlightening. In the case at hand, a father shares his being, first as regards his substantial being. To the offspring, fatherhood gives the good of existence. Regarding the good of species, its existence is ensured and prolonged. For the richness of existence itself, a new, incorruptible entity has been formed. The child is also an objective good for the

¹²⁷ It must be added that I am referring to the nature of the act of generation itself and not to the intention of the agent. Unfortunately, sharing his being from the fullness of his being may in fact be the opposite of an individual agent's intention when he begets a child.

¹²⁸ "Sic ergo dicendum est quod opus vitae activae est duplex. Unum quidem quod ex plenitudine contemplationis derivatur, sicut doctrina et praedicatio. Unde et Gregorius dicit, in V Homil. super Ezech., quod de perfectis viris post contemplationem suam redeuntibus dicitur, memoriam suavitatis tuae eructabunt. Et hoc praefertur simplici contemplationi. Sicut enim maius est illuminare quam lucere solum, ita maius est contemplata aliis tradere quam solum contemplari (ST.II-II.188.6)."

family and for the city.¹²⁹ Thus the “better” of which Thomas is speaking in the above text can be understood as applying to the individual good of the one who has shared in being and as applying to the common good.

However, it is difficult to see that, in some way, the being of the “enlightener” is not also enriched. The human male is directed by natural law to the sharing of his being. By so doing, man fulfills his nature and, as it were, adds to himself both by fulfilling his nature, and by contributing to the common good, of which he partakes. I have already noted that not every man is ordered to biological fatherhood. But those who are not called to biological fatherhood are called to enrich the common good in other ways. Such sharing of being by contribution to the common good enlightens all, including the enlightener. Thus a father, as regards his agency of action, is not perfected precisely as regards the same aspect of being he has given, and he does not give *in order to* get; his being is nevertheless enriched in virtue of his contribution to the common good and his fulfilling of his nature.

A father’s adding to being can also be seen as pertaining to his roles as provider and protector. It is interesting to attend to what St. Thomas says of the works of the active life other than the sharing the fruits of one’s contemplation.

The other work of the active life consists entirely in outward occupation, for instance almsgiving, receiving guests, and the like, which are less excellent than the works of contemplation, *except in cases of necessity*, as stated above.¹³⁰

Active works other than sharing the fruits of contemplation are less excellent, *except in cases of necessity*. Thomas speaks of the balance that must always be maintained, giving pride of place to contemplation. But when action is undertaken for the right reasons, it need not be to the detriment of contemplation: “Hence it is clear that when a person is called from the contemplative life to the active life, this is not done by way not of subtraction but of addition.”¹³¹ And in the case of necessity – as is much of what a father does – his action cannot be considered less excellent than contemplation.

iii. Provocation of perfection: I have noted different modes of fatherhood. The assuming of one mode of fatherhood can, in a way, demand the perfections of the

¹²⁹ There are circumstances, however, in which the good of the family would demand the postponement of having a child.

¹³⁰ “Aliud autem est opus activae vitae quod totaliter consistit in occupatione exteriori, sicut eleemosynas dare, hospites recipere, et alia huiusmodi. Quae sunt minora operibus contemplationis, nisi forte in casu necessitatis, ut ex supra dictis patet (ST.II-II.188.6).” Emphasis added.

¹³¹ “Et sic patet quod, cum aliquis a contemplativa vita ad activam vocatur, non hoc fit per modum subtractionis, sed per modum additionis (ST.II-II.182.1 ad 3).”

subsequent modes of fatherhood. Thus, when a man becomes a father in the primary sense, he, at that moment, assumes the responsibilities of the secondary mode of fatherhood and aspects of the third. Thus, becoming a father demands that a man be guide, teacher, provider, and protector of his children. Included in these categories is that a man, in addition to loving his children, love his wife and create a nurturing environment for his children. In order to be teacher, guide, provider, and protector, he himself must possess virtue. As I have noted, as guide and teacher, he cannot give what he does not have. As provider and protector, he must live-up to the responsibilities he has assumed.

Now, all humans - male and female - are directed to their perfection by the natural law. It could certainly be objected, then, that to speak of fatherhood as “provoking” a man’s perfection is superfluous; for the man is already ordered to his perfection by the natural law. This objection has merit and is, in a way, true: a man is directed to his perfection - included in which is an ordering to the common good - by the natural law. Fatherhood, however, is not superfluous regarding man’s perfection in at least two ways: First, a man is ordered to some mode of fatherhood *by the natural law*. In biological fatherhood, man assumes responsibilities that he previously did not have. These new responsibilities provoke a response in the man; they are occasions for his growth. He can either fulfill them and enrich his being by enriching the being of those around him, or he can fail in or betray his responsibilities and impoverish his being and that of his family and community. By providing unique occasions for growth, fatherhood “pushes” a man to grow in aspects of his character that otherwise would have remained undeveloped. Such an assumption of responsibilities, and the growth that these responsibilities demand, is a part of the ordering of the natural law, not a superfluous addition.

Secondly, fatherhood enhances the consciousness of duties already possessed. Obviously, provoking consciousness is a more subjective function; it is nevertheless significant. In virtue of human nature, each individual man is required to grow in virtue and cast off the many shades of his egoism that beset him. However, being confronted with another, a child, for whom he is responsible, who depends upon him for the various goods I have mentioned throughout this chapter, can awaken him from a self-centered slumber - in which slumber he may otherwise have gone to his grave. It is true that, objectively, he is responsible to leave behind his vices in any case, whether he is a father or not. Nevertheless, becoming a father frequently awakens men not only to their responsibilities as fathers, but also to their responsibilities as human persons. No doubt, this is, in part, because they now have the responsibility to form other human persons. The recognition that one cannot give what one does not have is fundamental. Therefore, fatherhood, can and does cause a man to enrich his own being so that he has more to give his children. Signs

that fatherhood does indeed serve as a developmental “push” for men are found in empirical research.

3. *Fatherhood, perfection, and social science*

Some contemporary research is beginning to assess the developmental impact of what could be called “involved fathering” or “social¹³² fathering.”¹³³ In summarizing the findings of his work in examining existing research and performing his own research on the developmental impact of fatherhood for adult men, Rob Palkovitz writes:

In assuming responsibility for actively fathering a child, engagement in the roles of fathering exerts a developmental pull on a father that catalyzes his growth into maturity and new levels of adult development. By engaging in active fathering across time, men mature differently than they would if they were not fathers. Fathers’ involvement with their children provides a pervasive and rich context for developmental change and maturity that is distinct from and that provides different developmental outcomes from not being an actively involved father.¹³⁴

Palkovitz’s conclusions are clear: becoming a father leads to development in various realms of a man’s adult life. He examines a number of such realms: the general path of a man’s life, man’s emotional development, growth in religious faith and moral development, improved attention to physical health, relationships with his wife, extended family, and the community at large, and work and career development.¹³⁵

Palkovitz attempts to capture the phenomena of fatherhood in their complexity. It is impossible to present his findings in their detail. I will, therefore, present some of his conclusions as they are pertinent to the argument at hand regarding the relationship of fatherhood to the perfection of masculine identity.

i. *Life course*: In assessing the impact of becoming a father, men pointed most to five “themes” of impact. 1) “Settling down:” Becoming a father led men to leave behind their “wild ways” and become more consistent and focused in the direction

¹³² The words “involved” or “social” are used to distinguish “involved” fatherhood from mere biological fatherhood. Interestingly, the positive effects that I will outline that are associated with involved fathering do not apply to simple biological fatherhood.

¹³³ For a good review and metaanalysis of current literature see Rob Palkovitz, *Involved Fathering and Men’s Adult Development: Provisional Balances* (Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 2002). Also see David J. Eggebeen and Chris Knoester, “Does Fatherhood Matter for Men?” *Journal of Marriage and the Family* Vol. 63, No. 2 (May, 2001): 381-393.

¹³⁴ Palkovitz, *Involved Fathering*, 3.

¹³⁵ Palkovitz, *Involved Fathering*. 66-236.

of their lives in general.¹³⁶ 2) Less self-centeredness: As I noted earlier, men are forced “out of themselves,” Palkovitz summarizes this effect:

Another prevalent theme [of how being a father changed men] centered around men stating that fatherhood had motivated them to become more other oriented. Specifically, many fathers had come to recognize that they were selfish and self-centered prior to having children. Interestingly enough, marriage did not seem to bring this realization, it was engagement in fathering that caused men to become more family oriented, even when it “cost” them their own plans.¹³⁷

Fathers tend to love their children; the needs of their children are great and immediate. Having to fulfill their children’s needs at the cost of sacrificing their own desires leads men to confront their selfishness. 3) Assumption of responsibility: Related to themes 1 and 2, a man who has become a father must accept new responsibilities that cause him to focus his energies and leave behind more frivolous concerns.¹³⁸ 4) Increased generativity: Men begin to focus on the growth of others; they begin to work for the flourishing of their children. 5) “A jolt:” Men tend to experience the change from not being a father to becoming a father as largely significant – a “jolt,” as Palkovitz describes it. Men saw becoming a father as something that radically changed the direction of their lives.¹³⁹

ii. *Intrapersonal development*: Regarding emotional development, Palkovitz summarizes his findings with a positive conclusion: “involved fathers perceive that their relationship with their children were associated with emotional development. For these fathers, negotiating the emotional currents of involved fathering offered a rich context for men’s emotional development.”¹⁴⁰ The development spoken of included greater ability to express, control, and distinguish their own emotions.

iii. *Moral development*: Regarding moral development, Palkovitz offers the following summary:

Numerous balance issues were apparent in regard to fathering, faith, morals, and values. Perhaps the most pervasive was the need for father to avoid hypocrisy in faith, morals, values, and their behavior. In short, they needed to find consistency between their “talk” and their “walk.” Fathers talked about decisions they had made to bring their preaching and their practice into balance. Some fathers had chosen not to voice strong opinions or positions regarding faith, morals, or values because

¹³⁶ Palkovitz, *Involved Fathering*, 69-71.

¹³⁷ Palkovitz, *Involved Fathering*, 71.

¹³⁸ Palkovitz, *Involved Fathering*, 72-76.

¹³⁹ Palkovitz, *Involved Fathering*, 77-78.

¹⁴⁰ Palkovitz, *Involved Fathering*, 107.

they could not support them in behavior. Others had chosen to work towards bringing their behavior into line with what they viewed to be appropriate faith, morals, and values.¹⁴¹

Men seem to recognize that they have a responsibility to teach and guide their children. They also recognize that there is manifest hypocrisy in living one way and teaching others to live in another. Therefore, usually, one will give way to the other - either the man will cease teaching or he will try to live in a manner consistent with his teaching.

iv. Physical health: Interestingly, regarding various aspects of physical health, men expressed willingness to eliminate bad habits for the sake of their children where they had been unwilling to do when considering only their own health. Thus men consistently reported giving up smoking, excessive drinking, or illegal drug use either because, out of a sense of shame, they did not want their children to see them engaging in such behaviors, or for fear of providing a bad model for their children. While the demands of involved fathering limited available time for men to engage in team sports or other physical activities, such as going to a gym, overall, it increased their concern for their health.¹⁴²

v. Interpersonal development: In examining the interpersonal, I will look to only two aspects of a father's relating to others: his relationship to his wife and his relationship to the broader community. All human relationships tend towards levels of relative complexity. Obviously a spousal relationship that must adapt to accommodate the new reality of parenthood is a complex system. Certain general dynamics, however, were relatively clear from Palkovitz's research: In order for the marital bond to flourish, a father's focus could not be upon having his own emotional needs met by his wife. Couples who flourished *as couples* in parenthood were those who could be called mature in intimacy; they were meeting each other's emotional needs before having children. They were then able to adapt their relationship to a mutual focus on children. Palkovitz writes:

The interviews with fathers provided support for the Eriksonian concept that sufficient resolution of intimacy issues must be accomplished before generativity can develop. Men who were engaged in dysfunctional or negative relationships prior to having children saw their kids as competing with them for time and attention with their partners, and focused on the hassles and conflicts initiated by parenting... When parents engage in intimacy with their children before their partner's needs are met, the resulting experience is often one of distance, resentment, and rejection.

¹⁴¹ Palkovitz, *Involved Fathering*, 143.

¹⁴² Palkovitz, *Involved Fathering*, 144-158.

These patterns of emotion may indicate that the adult engaging with the child is not mature enough or ready to enter a mature intimate relationship.¹⁴³

By contrast, couples that flourish are those who focus their combined effort on the common good of their family and children. “For couple relationships to continue to grow and prosper, both partners must be content with the flow of love, attention, and conversation being directed towards the family instead of the couple.”¹⁴⁴

For the individual man, there appears to be an outward movement from self, to spouse, to family. In addition to concern for the family, Palkovitz found that fatherhood also provided a developmental push towards greater concern for the common good the community.

Father involvement and responsibility for children provides a developmental draw on men that causes them to tend to decrease their “party behavior,” to spend more time in family and community settings, to take active roles in nurturing the well-being of their communities, and to invest in the next generation. Men who were never so inclined in the past are recruited to active engagement through the development and interests of their children. Thus, the ways that men engage in their neighborhoods changes after making a commitment to involvement with children.¹⁴⁵

Caring for children seems to awaken in men a realization of the importance of the community around them. The realization of the importance of the community, in turn, leads to greater involvement in that community. It is interesting that, as I suggested earlier in this chapter, Palkovitz also uses a “generative” term for man’s relationship to the good of his community; he speaks of men “nurturing the well-being of their communities.” The implication is that the generative role of active fatherhood provides a developmental push towards generativity regarding the common good.

vi. Conclusion: The findings that I have just briefly summarized are consistent with what my observations regarding fatherhood and perfection of masculine identity. I would offer that the developmental push that Palkovitz is consistently referring to is principally the directing of the natural law that permits a man to see the goodness first of having children but then also inclines them towards the proper care of these children. A man’s inclination to lead his children towards their perfection naturally brings into relief those areas where the man himself must further grow. It is true that a man cannot give what he does not have. Man, however,

¹⁴³ Palkovitz, *Involved Fathering*, 174.

¹⁴⁴ Palkovitz, *Involved Fathering*, 181.

¹⁴⁵ Palkovitz, *Involved Fathering*, 214.

first becomes a father by having children. Becoming a father brings with it new responsibilities, which responsibilities demand the fulfilling of his own being as man. It must be noted, however, that it does not *necessarily* follow that a man will live up to the responsibility he has taken on – his first act, in fact, upon learning that he has become a father biologically may be to renounce all responsibility. Further, as Palkovitz noted, to well embrace fatherhood demands a certain level of maturity. If a man is not mature in his relationship with his wife, he will become jealous of his child for the attention the child demands of his wife. Thus, unless the man find a way to mature, becoming a father can be a breaking point for his marriage. To be a good father finally demands a mutual commitment of the father and mother to common good, first to that of the family and then to that of broader community. Fatherhood inclines man to this commitment.

V. REPLY TO THE OBJECTIONS

Detailed, point-by-point reply to either the evolutionists or Marcel would be a lengthy endeavor. I must, therefore, let it suffice to respond by providing distinctions in the principles of reasoning, which can then be applied to specific arguments. My responses will, therefore, be brief.

1. *The evolutionists*

If man, as Geary in fact claims, is a kind of ape,¹⁴⁶ perhaps what he asserts regarding the improbability of paternal investment might follow. That is, if the highest perfection of man regarded the continuance of his existence *solely* as regards his survival and subsequent reproduction, then, perhaps, calculations based upon survival of offspring until they reach reproductive maturity would be plausible. Nature would adapt to facilitate that which optimizes reproduction. However, if this is not man's highest end, the equation is radically changed. Generation for man is emphatically not simply a matter of producing another animal, it is a matter of producing another full, flourishing human person – a person perfect in virtue. On this point, even Geary concurs that human development is not possible without the active involvement of fathers – a point I noted earlier: biologists recognize that human's higher functions require a slower development which necessitates a longer period of helplessness and vulnerability, which vulnerability is compensated for by the presence of a father. However, even these considerations are given in terms of

¹⁴⁶ "Humans are unique even among monogamous primates, as most of these species are small arboreal monkeys or gibbons that live in relatively isolated family groups. Humans, in contrast, are large terrestrial apes that live in multimale, multifemale communities." Geary, "Paternal Investment," 71.

brain size as it leads to competitive advantage, which competitive advantage must finally be assessed only as it relates to survival and reproduction.

Such considerations of survival and successful reproduction are indeed necessary. As I noted, Thomas himself offers arguments for the necessity of paternal involvement that include the questions of the survival and proper development of his children. Thus, the human being is ordered to parenthood in a manner similar to that of other animals. Survival of offspring, however, is where the argument begins for Thomas; it is where it ends for the evolutionists. For Thomas (and for the position that I defend), in order to understand human fatherhood, one must understand the end to which it is ordered, which end includes survival but far exceeds it. Man's generative power flows from his essence, through the power of his reason, and is ordered to man's highest powers and finally the common good. Fatherhood must be understood in the context of man's final end or it will lose its true meaning and be reduced to a matter of self-interested calculation, just as Marcel observes and the evolutionists do.

2. *Gabriel Marcel*

Marcel states that explaining fatherhood in terms of causality is manifestly absurd. If one's conception of causality is that of Hume, I would agree. For Hume, causality is reduced to the psychological condition of expectation in an observer: I see one phenomenon and I expect that another will follow.¹⁴⁷ Thus, the relationship of father to child, in terms of causality, is little more than one of sequential anticipation. If, however, the causality of a direct agent is that of the sharing of one's being in light of the recognition of the goodness of that being and the goodness of being itself, then, I would offer, that Marcel and I would find little room for disagreement. In fact, I would take Marcel's argument one step further in stating not only that fatherhood implies what he calls "the creative vow," but that maleness itself, in its generative aspect, implies a recognition of the goodness of being that is ordered not only to the individual but to the common good.

Marcel heralds the importance of gratitude and humility.

"We feel gratitude for a gift we have received; but from the moment when we are no longer at all sure that we have literally received anything, when we wonder whether we have not rather been enticed into the trap of existence, and moreover that this does not result from the decision of some superhuman will, but from the play of blind forces with no possible consciousness, there can really no longer any question of gratitude. Gratitude? To whom? For what?"¹⁴⁸

¹⁴⁷ See Brock, *Action and Conduct*, 103-106.

¹⁴⁸ Marcel, *Homo Viator*, 115.

The proper attitude towards fatherhood demands the recognition that in one's own being one has received a gift, and that the gift is good – the work of a benevolent gift-giver.

In response to those who would adopt a utilitarian stance towards their children, Marcel offers the following reflection:

The situation is transformed from the moment when he really understands that what he has been allotted is in truth nothing but the reflection, the likeness of a creative gift which could not belong to him as such. I can no more give existence to someone else than I can to myself, and there is an obvious connection between these two impossibilities. But insofar as I refuse to allow myself to admit it, I am exposed to a double temptation. The first consists of organizing my life as if I myself were the author of it, as if I did not have to answer for my actions to any person or thing; the second, of treating my children as though I had produced them, as though, strictly speaking, they were there for me, as though I had the right to decide what they were to become.¹⁴⁹

As I stated earlier when discussing human parenthood, the human father and mother are responsible for the coming to be the child, they are not the cause of its being. They are certainly not the cause of their own being. Part of the recognition of the goodness of being that is responsible for fatherhood – that is its final cause – is a recognition not only of the goodness of human being, but a deeper recognition of the being who is the font of human being, a being that is more one with man than he is with himself. Thus, the general inclination to fatherhood falls under the first level of the natural law, which is the mind's spontaneous response to the goodness of being. The response of the human person to the goodness of being and its source is a response of love. Certainly, differences could be found between my position and Marcel's, but there is fundamental agreement in the two accounts.

¹⁴⁹ Marcel, *Homo Viator*, 120.

Chapter 12

Resolutions

Having explained my own position on the meaning of masculinity identity and its relationship to fatherhood, I will now revisit each of the thinkers discussed in Part I, and evaluate their understandings of masculinity in light of my own position. My goal is to note crucial points of agreement and disagreement. I hope in the process to show how my position can account for what is true in other accounts while, at the same time, correct shortcomings. Detailed, point-by-point analysis of each school of thought as they differ and are like my own proposal would require more space than is possible here. I will limit this chapter, therefore, to a brief treatment of each school of thought, concentrating on distinctions in underlying principles that lead to the principal differences between my account and those of the schools.

I will discuss each school of thought in the same order as treated in Part I. The order is, therefore, as follows: 1) Evolutionists. 2) Freud. 3) Neo-Freudians. 4) Jung. 5) Neo-Jungians. 6) Sociologists.

Following a general response to each school of thought, I will briefly describe how my account of fatherhood resolves some of the more vexing difficulties associated with accepting a fixed idea of fatherhood and masculinity.

I. REPLY TO THE SCHOOLS

1. *The evolutionists*

The evolutionists provide a relatively robust account of the human male and human fatherhood. Their analysis of traits based upon survival and reproductive efficacy provides cogent explanations for various aspects of human behavior and morphology. For instance, the relative size and strength of males and females appears to be consistent with patterns seen in other species in which males must compete for access to females. Male traits, such as aggression, dominance seeking, the tendency towards promiscuity, etc., can also be reasonably explained as “adaptive” behaviors in given environments – i.e. behaviors that lead to survival and the projections of one’s genes.

Theorists such as Pinker, posit that with relatively few principles they can explain the richness of human phenomena. All that is needed is random mutation, and natural selection to explain adaptation. To describe sex difference, there must be added the economic principle that the member of the species with less investment competes while that member of the species with greater investment chooses. With these principles, Pinker claims to account for differences between the human male and human female.

But, do the evolutionists truly explain the human male, or do they reduce him to something he is not? Hans Jonas pointed to the answer to this question when he lamented the shift in biology from accepting the living-thing as that which was most intelligible in biology rather than favoring the corpse as that which is most understandable. The simplest piece of matter is the most intelligible; therefore all must be explained in terms of it. All remaining form is accidental form. In commenting on physicist Stephen Weinberg’s desire to find the most “fundamental” constituents of reality, Fr. Dewan writes:

Of course, a true particle would not be merely a building block, but would have a nature of its own.... It is significant that Weinberg thinks what he should be after is “fundamental constituents.” This means that he looks to some elementary *kind of thing* as what is fundamental. That is, he has not the idea of primary matter in the Aristotelian sense, and so his ontology is really mechanistic, which is to say that he sees all forms as accidental.¹

As one ascends from the most fundamental particles to “higher” forms of being, the nature of such higher being is explained in terms of complexity. Thus, for instance, for Pinker there is no true unity of the human being. There are rather distinct parts

¹ Dewan, *Form and Being*, 103, Note 19.

each having their own explicative stories that are attached by natural selection. Action is decisively not for the good; genes do not *desire* to prolong their existence or that of their genetic replicas. Action is simply what happens. It is neither good nor bad. Things are as they are because, at some point in their evolutionary history, being as such led to survival. The human person is a certain set characteristics that reliably reoccur. The notion of causality is Humean. The circuitry of the brain imputes causes so as to make useful predictions. "And making correct predications in pursuit of a goal is a pretty good definition of intelligence."²

Questions of truth are questions of prediction and pragmatism primarily regarding that which leads to survival.

Given that the mind is a product of natural selection, it should not have a miraculous ability to commune with all truths; it should have a mere ability to solve problems that are sufficiently similar to the mundane survival challenges of our ancestors.... I will suggest that religion and philosophy are in part the application of mental tools to problems they were not designed to solve.

Natural selection designed the brain to solve problems dealing with survival. Religion and philosophy are what happens when the brain's tools are used to ends beyond their evolutionary purpose. Asking the human mind to solve problems such as the origins of ethics very well might be like asking a monkey a question about astrophysics; the problem is neither that the laws of physics do not exist nor that they are undiscoverable, but rather they are beyond the monkey's power of intelligence. Thus, if the monkey could communicate his theory about the origins of the universe, he very well might say it had something to do with bananas. The situation with the human mind trying to solve *all* the possible problems that the mind can conjure could be a sign of lack of awareness of human limitations. Pinker comments:

So why should there not be creatures with *more* cognitive faculties than we have, or with *different* ones? They might readily grasp how free will and consciousness emerge from a brain and how meaning and morality fit into the universe, and would be amused by the religious and philosophical headstands we do to make up for our blankness when facing these problems. They could try to explain the solutions to us, but would not understand the explanations.³

² Pinker, HMW, 33.

³ Pinker, HMW, 562.

Pinker utilizes a version the saying “when all you have is a hammer, everything is a nail.” The human mind is a “hammer” made to solve *some* problems, not *all* problems.⁴

I offer that Pinker is correct in invoking the venerable saying “when all you have is a hammer, everything is a nail,” but is somewhat mistaken in its application. In limiting his own enquiry to material and efficient causality, Pinker ends up hammering the human person into billions of pieces and then reconstructing those pieces according to something that can be made with a hammer and nails. But does he explain the human person? In discerning whether or not Pinker’s rendering of the human person truly accounts for reality in its fullness, it is helpful to briefly visit what he has to say about what are generally considered the “higher” functions of the human person. In a chapter entitled “the meaning of life,” Pinker attempts to explain art.⁵ The fine arts are something of an enigma to Pinker, for they serve no adaptive purpose.

Art, literature, music, wit, religion, and philosophy are thought to be not just pleasurable but noble. They are the mind’s best work, what makes life worth living. Why do we pursue the trivial and futile and experience them as sublime?⁶

Pinker’s response is to offer that in art the human being has found a way to activate the pleasure-creating centers of the brain without necessarily engaging in the adaptive behavior for which such pleasure centers evolved.

The mind is a neural computer, fitted by natural selection with combinatorial algorithms for causal and probabilistic reasoning about plants, animals, objects, and people. It is driven by goal states that served biological fitness in ancestral environments, such as food, sex, safety, parenthood, friendship, status and knowledge. That toolbox, however, can be used to assemble Sunday afternoon projects of dubious adaptive value.⁷

In art, man has found a way to stimulate pleasure centers typically associated with some adaptive behavior, but “without the inconvenience of wringing bona fide fitness increments from the harsh world.”⁸ Thus, for example, culinary art seeks to maximize the pleasure of food.

⁴ For an interesting and brief critique of Pinker’s theory of mind see Daniel N. Robinson, “How Steven Pinker’s Mind Works.” *National Review*, December 31, 1997, 52-54.

⁵ Pinker, HMW, 521-545.

⁶ Pinker, HMW, 521.

⁷ Pinker, HMW, 524.

⁸ Pinker, HMW, 524.

Cheesecake packs a sensual wallop unlike anything in the natural world because it is a brew of megadoses of agreeable stimuli which we concocted for the express purpose of pressing our pleasure buttons. Pornography is another pleasure technology. In this chapter I will suggest that the arts are a third.⁹

The masterpieces of human art and invention are of the same kind as that of the common pornographer. They are “futile” works made to stimulate the pleasure centers of the brain without having to suffer some adaptive action to receive the pleasure. Culinary art stimulates one class of pleasure centers, music others, pornography still others; but the fundamental process is the same – stimulate a pleasure center without the work of the adaptive behavior that led to the development of that pleasure center.

If one loses sight of what man is, of that which unifies his being, he is quickly reduced to his more elemental parts – he effectively becomes the corpse to which Jonas referred. Pinker is unable to understand art because he is unable to understand man.

Pinker on ethics is equally instructive. Man’s moral sense is a product of evolutionary processes that evidently favored the levels of cooperative action that ethical standards produce. According to Pinker, however, the contingent origins of ethics do not thereby cause it to lose its grounding. The world as it exists today was produced by the process of random mutation and natural selection culminating in human beings who are equipped with predictational circuitry that man calls “intelligence.” The “higher” aspects of which circuitry spend the majority of their time fabricating stories to dress-up the true motives for the organism’s actions.¹⁰ Nevertheless, in a curious shift, Pinker cautiously invokes Plato to explain the universality of ethics.

According to the Platonist conception of number favored by many mathematicians and philosophers, entities such as numbers and shapes have an existence independent of minds. The number three is not invented out of whole cloth; it has real properties that can be discovered and explored... If so, the number sense evolved to grasp truths in the world that exist independently of the minds that grasp them. Perhaps the same argument can be made for morality. According to the

⁹ Pinker, HMW, 525.

¹⁰ In Chapter 2.I I discussed Pinker’s interpretation of experiments in which the right and left brain hemispheres were isolated and the left hemisphere conjured answers as to why an action initiated by the right side of the brain was undertaken. This experiment was part of Pinker’s argument against the notion of a unified self.

theory of moral realism, right and wrong exist, and have an inherent logic that licenses some moral arguments and not others.¹¹

The need to ground ethics pushes Pinker towards an eclectic mix of Democritus, Plato, and Kant. Without such a move, Pinker's ethics is unintelligible. However, to make the move towards accepting some universal truth, sets him on the same path trod centuries ago by the Presocratic philosophers.¹² To accept that man is the kind of thing that can understand such eternal truths, is to take a step closer to understanding man. For Pinker, however, such a move is optional:

But even if the Platonic existence of moral logic is too rich for your blood, you can still see morality as something more than a social convention or religious dogma. Whatever its ontological status may be, a moral sense is part of the standard equipment of the human mind. *It's the only one we've got*, and we have no choice but to take its intuitions seriously. If we are so constituted that we cannot help but think in moral terms (at least some times and towards some people), then morality is as real *for us* as if were decreed by the Almighty or written into the cosmos. And so it is with other human values like love, truth, and beauty.¹³

In summary, for Pinker, man has evolved a moral sense; and so, since "it's the only one he's got," he may as well follow it.

In considering masculinity and fatherhood, the evolutionists, within their own methodology, have no means of determining the meaning of manhood and fatherhood beyond their functionality regarding survival. Were one to argue that the processes of natural selection and random mutation do not provide a causal account that is proportionate to the observed reality, the fundamental response of the evolutionists is to deny the observed reality by reducing it to something less than is (e.g. art is futile excitation of pleasure centers in the brain for sake of such excitation) or to say that questions, such as the meaning of art or ethics, are beyond the predicational powers of the neural computer that is our brain.

In contrast, the account that I have offered allows for the formation and deformation of inclinations and even morphological modifications over time as the human being interacts with his environment and his fellow human beings. Though a rational animal, man is nevertheless a species of animal.

¹¹ Pinker, TBS, 192.

¹² For an interesting discussion of the varying degrees of Presocratic thought in modern science, see Dewan, *Form and Being*, 96-109.

¹³ Pinker, TBS, 193.

Human identity is primarily, even if not only, bodily and therefore animal identity and it is by reference to that identity that the continuance of our relationships to others are partly defined.¹⁴

It is, therefore, both a theoretical possibility and historical reality that the human being is influenced and in part defined by his “animality.” Thus, my position need not deny, for instance, that certain traits persist in the human male – such as the tendency to seek no-strings-attached sexual encounters – in part because such traits were, to a certain extent, heritable and resulted in some measure of reproductive success.

How, though, is one to understand the relationship of man’s rationality to his animality? For Pinker, man’s rationality either is or is an epiphenomenon of brain activity; it is the power to make prediction in pursuit of a goal. Human rationality is a relatively late addition to his nature that evidently provides human nature with benefits for survival and reproduction. As for explaining ethics, Pinker cannot. He rather puts forward the speculation that such considerations are beyond the scope of what evolution “designed” the human brain to do. Thus, perhaps ethics really do exist in some Platonic realm, and perhaps their existence would be clearer to a being of more refined intelligence. But, alas, for the human being, the questions that are most important to the human mind are beyond his capacity to answer. Thus, the nature of human rationality leads the human person to questions he can never answer.

The vision that I have offered of human rationality is in marked contrast to Pinker’s. Human intelligence cannot be reduced “prediction in pursuit of goal.” Neither is it something added on to the human being, as one puts a sunroom on an existing house. Rationality is the difference that defines the human being. As such, as I discussed in Chapter 9, rationality unifies human being as that towards which its other powers and operations are ordered.¹⁵ Pinker is correct in noting the limits of human reason.¹⁶ He, however, limits the intellect to the point of negating its proper operation. As such he is left to puzzle at the universality of ethics and is tempted to grant the intellect its proper power – to know the universal – but in the end, only offers the “Platonic” solution as a matter of taste.

My position begins at the point where Pinker’s speculation leads him. I accept that intellect can know universal truth and that it is in fact the nature of the

¹⁴ Alasdair MacIntyre, *Dependent Rational Animals* (Chicago: Open Court, 1999), 8.

¹⁵ See ST.I.77.4&6.

¹⁶ “Intellectus autem humanus, qui est infimus in ordine intellectuum, et maxime remotus a perfectione divini intellectus, est in potentia respectu intelligibilium, et in principio est sicut tabula rasa in qua nihil est scriptum, ut philosophus dicit in III de anima (ST.I.79.2).”

intellect to know such. With Plato and Aristotle, I further hold that formal cause is necessary to explain reality. The human form is thus not an accidental unity, but a unified whole with a unified end. As such, a true understanding of fatherhood and manhood must consider these realities in terms of the end of the human person. Pinker limits his explanations only to that which leads to survival. In his position, ethical considerations must be added on as something extrinsic to human nature; human nature in and of itself is the product of random mutation and natural selection. The relation of the human being to ethical norms is, for Pinker, inscrutable. My position, however, allows for existence of the wayward inclinations that Pinker so well describes (such as the male's predilection for philandering and violence) but also shows how such inclinations are, in fact, not constitutive of human nature, but contrary to the *telos* of human nature. I thus provide a position that permits the explanatory power of the evolutionary position, but that, at the same time, maintains the integrity of the human person.

2. Freud

Freud begins with Darwin. As such, the same foundational criticisms that apply to the evolutionists, apply to Freud. Though Pinker certainly has his disagreements with Freud,¹⁷ in many ways, he is the heir to Freud's project.¹⁸ For Freud, the core that moves man is the id; it (id) is the source of all energy. As Daniel Robinson observed, the id functions based upon the pleasure principle, which, if given vent, would make life in human society impossible; for the id breathes murderous and incestuous intent. Id is kept in check primarily by the super-ego. The poor ego must manage each, appeasing the id, but not so much as to incur the wrath of the super ego.

Masculinity is a psychic structure built upon the interplay of these forces. It is, however, grounded firmly in biology. Biology is destiny. The male possesses the penis. Being endowed with this organ begins a precarious and hostile developmental process that typically ends with full genital expression in the act of reproduction; it must be so, for the fundamental forces driving all development are the blind instincts that result from evolution, which instincts survive only in virtue of their capacity to reproduce themselves. To attain to full genital expression in fatherhood, a boy must first pass through the Oedipal stage of lust for his mother and jealousy and ire towards his father. Humans are inherently bisexual. Thus, the Oedipus complex is, in fact, complex: a boy both desires to replace his father *and* to be his father's sexual object. In order to resolve the Oedipus complex, a boy typically

¹⁷ For instance, see HMW, 446.

¹⁸ For instance, see Freud, *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*, in, FR, 624. There, Freud speaks of limitless possibilities of biology. Pinker further explores these possibilities.

identifies with his father; there is the possibility, however, that he will identify with his mother. According to Freud, whether a boy identifies with father or mother is due to the “relative strength of the masculine and feminine sexual dispositions.” Following the usual developmental path, a boy identifies with his father, introjects societal values (which are cemented in his subconscious by the fear of castration), and waits for his turn at full genital expression. The basis of masculinity is biological – the possession of the penis. It is a position of privilege, which is above all else the privilege of pleasure. The male’s privileged place also, by contrast, establishes the female in a state of lacking, and therefore wanting.

Both male and female are seeking the father – they each want what he has. The boy has the male organ, but the father prevents him from using it. The girl wants the male organ, but can only receive it sexually, which she will finally do through having a baby. The super-ego internalizes the prohibitions put in place by the father. It is always the father, then, either actually or by proxy who establishes the ideal. “As a substitute for a longing for the father, it [the ego ideal or super-ego] contains the germ from which all religions have evolved.”¹⁹ The father, the possessor of the phallus, is the goal of male development.

It is difficult to find much to take from Freud. His reductionism outdoes even that of Pinker. Man at his core is a seething cauldron of desire ordered only to pleasure and survival. That which is highest in the human person results, in the male, from his fear of castration. Perhaps there are some cases of psychopathology which center on incestuous and murderous desires. At best, then, Freud has generalized tragic pathology and made it the norm of human development. In any case, like Pinker, in attempting to construct the human being from disparate inanimate pieces, Freud has turned man into a kind of monster. That which drives man is not, as for Thomas, and for the position I have defended, a fundamental recognition of the goodness of being, a reflection of God’s ordering and governance of all things, but rather the ravenous and corrupt energy of the id. Psychologically, man’s unity is precariously achieved by means of the ego; this unity appears to be little more than the temporary pacification of warring factions. As with Pinker, for Freud, there is no real unity of the human being as there is no principle of such a unity, there are, rather, temporary equilibriums that result from the precarious counterbalancing of perpetually opposed forces.

3. *Lacan and the Neo-Freudians*

My principal intention in treating Lacan through his interpreter Frosh, was to provide something of bridge between Freud and Connell. The fundamental move, as I noted in the title of the chapter on Lacan, is the killing of the body.

¹⁹ Freud, *The Ego and the Id*, in FR, 643.

Pinker, Lacan, and Frosh are all, in a way, heirs to Freud's project of applying positive science and evolutionary theory to the question of the human psyche. They represent, however, very distinct branches arising from the same source. Pinker maintains Freud's adherence to the biological determination imposed by the body. Lacan and Frosh precisely jettison this mode of biological determination and re-render Freud in symbolic language. I will reply to this position in more detail when responding to Connell and so will forego all but the briefest reply here.

For Lacan and Frosh, masculinity is not tied to the physical possession of the phallus; masculinity rather refers to the apparently privileged position of being the signifier, or the giver of names. To be father is to have the phallus, and to have the phallus is to have the power to signify. The father, however, is in the final analysis found to be impotent; his grasping for the power of being the signifier is thwarted by the subversive and precedent presence of the subconscious feminine. Lacan's language is recognizably influenced by Christian theology - the father is father insofar as he signifies; that which he signifies is the word. The father is the producer of the word. But, as just stated, this apparent act of power turns out to be itself an act of subjection to the pervasive feminine.

Like Pinker and Freud, the problem with Lacan - and Frosh following him - resides in the original source of motion. For all, the ultimate cause of a thing's (any thing's) being is blind and irrational. As such, the absurdity to which Lacan reduces the giver of meaning is inevitable. And masculinity and fatherhood have their own particular brand of ironic absurdity in that they play the role of the fool who thinks he is king.

4. Jung

Unlike the three prior renderings of masculinity and fatherhood, Jung appears to reintroduce, after a fashion, the notions of form and finality. The human male is directed on an interior path towards the achievement of his identity. Maleness and femaleness are biologically determined, but each sex has living within it the unexpressed character of the other. Sex is determined by a tipping of the scales due the relative quantity of male or female genes, leaving, however, significant quantities of the genes of the unexpressed sex present within the individual. The goal of life is integration - and primarily integration of the conscious and the unconscious. For the male, this is integration of the conscious masculine and unconscious feminine. The feminine - or anima - is the representative of the unconscious world that has the peculiar status of being, at the same time, a vestige of man's evolutionary past - of a time that precedes his particularly human mode of consciousness - and a realm that beckons him to a higher, god-like mode of existence, which is the realization of the self. In his journey, an individual man must confront and integrate various fixed categories of his unconscious - which, in fact,

are not proper to his unconscious but shared by all men and thus referred to as the collective unconscious. These archetypes, if he is deft enough to incorporate their energy without being seduced into a mode of false identification with them, lead him the realization of his self.

As for Kant the human person is always cut off from truly knowing noumenal reality, so for Jung, the individual can never know his true self. Lived knowledge of and conscious reconciliation with the archetypes that underpin and color his experience bring man as close as he can get to discovering his true self. The path that leads to self is distinct for men and women because male consciousness is distinct from female consciousness; and if the male and female differ in the character of their conscious mind so too they must differ in the unconscious. Though the achievement of self involves the resolution of opposites – such as wisdom and folly, light and dark, *and* masculine and feminine, the masculine self realized in man is nevertheless finally distinct from the feminine self realized in woman. Predominance of the feminine in the male, referred to by Jung as “living one’s background,” is tantamount to neurosis.

The influence of the Western intellectual tradition, including that of Christianity, is apparent throughout Jung’s writing.²⁰ Jung’s rendering of the journey of the conscious mind to the true self through the necessary interplay of *logos* and *eros* is reminiscent of what can be referred to as Plato’s erotic dialogues.²¹ Further, his account of the conscious self’s necessary humility in the face of the archetypes, and the desolation suffered by the self as it travels towards its true self brings to mind ascetic and mystical writers of both the western and eastern traditions. On these points, Jung appears to have valid insights.

Regarding the first – the interplay of *eros* and *logos* – Thomas’s account of the love that, not just humans, but all things have for God as the source of their movement is the *eros*²² at the heart of the relationship between creature and Creator. In the human being, this ordering through love is expressed preeminently in the natural law, through which the human person is directed to his final end, which is God, through a mode proper to him – that is through his intellect and the intellect’s natural appetite, the will. While this ordering to the source of being in man resides primarily in his intellect and will, it encompasses all his appetites, which indeed must be united in terms of that to which they are ordered, which is, proximately the good of the substance and, finally God. Having received his being from God and so

²⁰ As Lacan was the brother of a monk at Cluny, so Jung was the son of a Protestant minister.

²¹ I am thinking principally of *Phaedrus* and the *Symposium*.

²² As discussed above in Chapter 11.II.1, man’s recognition of the good and ordering towards the good is not always in terms of a good which he lacks – as is generally associated with *eros*, but sometimes associated with the overflowing of a good which he already possesses.

being directed to and by God, man must indeed be humble when confronting the reality of his source and his end; and man's mind will indeed strain and stumble in confronting a reality so great. Further, he must struggle to integrate his various levels of appetite, which are often at odds with his true end and with each other. Hence his path to wholeness, as indeed the saints attest, leads through the dark night. Thus, Jung's comments regarding the difficulty and, at times, desolation that accompany the path to God ring true.

Finally, perhaps even Jung's notion of the feminine inhering in the man contains *some measure* of truth. Human being is received. As Marcel observed when speaking of fatherhood, finally, a father can account for the being of a child no more than he can account for his own. God is finally the cause of being. Regarding the fundamental relationship to being, all that exists other than God can, in a sense, be said to have a feminine modality, insofar as its being is received. The human male, therefore, can be considered feminine as regards having received his own being. His substance, however, is at the same time determined according to the masculine mode of generativity. Thus, as having received his being, he can be considered, in a sense, feminine. As regards the determination of his being, he is masculine. There could be said, then, to be a mode of interplay of masculine and feminine within the human male.²³

Jung's fundamental difficulties regard his epistemology and ontology: he is trapped within his own head. For Jung, all is psychology. The movement of the conscious self to the true self is a psychological journey. The collectivity of the unconscious regards only a collective human psychological experience. The characters that inhabit the collective unconscious are the products of the interaction of nascent consciousness with its instinctual, preconscious history. Salvation is the self, which must come to terms with the archetypal vestiges of its past. *All is projection of the unconscious mind.* Masculinity, though grounded in biology, becomes the fruit of a curious psychological journey into the unconscious. Thus, while Jung may contain insight drawn from the Western tradition and his own clinical experience, such insights are hopelessly isolated from reality. It is precisely such psychologizing of reality that allows Jung to conflate opposites such as wisdom and folly, and good and evil.

5. The neo-Jungians

I chose to include a brief chapter on the neo-Jungians because of the prevalence of such ideas in what is sometimes referred to as "the men's movement" - as witnessed by the success of Robert Bly's book *Iron John* - and because certain neo-

²³ If I am not mistaken, this is a fundamental insight in the thought of David Schindler: see "Catholic theology, gender, and the future of Western civilization," 201-239.

Jungian ideas have become popular among catholic psychologists, primarily their invoking of the “archetypes” of king, warrior, magician and lover.

Insofar as neo-Jungians, such as Moore and Gillette remain faithful to Jung’s fundamental notion of the archetypes and the collective unconscious, they fall under the brief critique that I posed in the previous section – they psychologize reality. Vitz pointed out that Moore and Gillette thus have no intellectual foundation upon which to rest their favoring of the positive aspects of the above mentioned archetypes rather than the shadow sides of those archetypes. David Tacey further noted that the archetypes proposed by Moore and Gillette hardly function as Jungian archetypes. Moore and Gillette seem to pose the archetypes more as ideals of what a man should become rather than the instinctual organizer of experience that Jung conceives them to be. Tacey’s criticism is persuasive.

That being said, it does seem that the “archetypes” of king, warrior, magician, and lover can be seen to apply to masculine identity, but not as Jungian archetypes, i.e. not as psychological categories of collective unconscious. Rather, these are typical roles that a male must play in virtue of the mode of his ordering to the common good. The *polis* itself as a collective entity must be ordered to its own common good and to the highest common good, which is God. Hence, some must lead; there is place for a notion of the king. A man’s city and family must be defended; thus he must play the part of the warrior. Part of masculinity is man’s ordering towards his wife and children; thus he must be the lover. And again, all his skills must be utilized in the service of the common good of his family and his city. Technique and practical wisdom are called for; the wise man, problem-solver, or magician so finds his place. Thus, these ideas can be useful, but not insofar as they are seen precisely as *Jungian* archetype.

6. R. W. Connell and the sociologists

Due to the pervasiveness of his position, a detailed discussion of Connell’s position would be of great interest. Connell himself provides a cogent overview of the modern theories that precede his own. Some he praises; others he deconstructs. As I noted in Chapter 7, in the course of discussing the various explanations of masculinity that have preceded his own, Connell raised many difficulties regarding these theories; difficulties which he intends to resolve in his own account. A quick review of Connell’s criticism of other attempts to define masculinity will provide a good platform for responding to the challenges that his own position raises.

Regarding *essentialist* definitions of masculinity, Connell claims that they are arbitrary and tend towards oversimplification. They force men into the box of essence; and the essence of the box always tends to be a projection of the values of whoever happens to be the arbiter of essence.

As for the *positivists*, among whose ranks Pinker and Geary would be counted, Connell claims that they must assume the categories they wish to prove: "To list what men and women do requires that people be already sorted into the categories 'men' and 'women.'"²⁴ Further, the presupposition of these categories takes place from within the male-dominant structure of "science" that dons the guise of objectivity, but actually is a gendered place in social relations. Yet further, statistical generalizations based upon what men and women do lead to limited characterizations that are insufficiently flexible to be applied to broader structures and entities such as governments and corporations, which are equally gendered.

Normative definitions are irrelevant. They propose norms that nobody meets. What's more, they tend to drift towards essentialism; for the proposed norm must find its foundation in something.

The *symbolic* approach - such as that of Lacan - according to Connell, is a great improvement. Its weakness is that it is too limited. If all that exists is discourse, then the Lacanian approach would be valid. Connell holds, however, that masculinity must be applied in other relational structures, such as "production and consumption, places in institutions and in natural environments, places in social military struggles."²⁵ Further, the symbolic approach tends to reduce the body to purely passive canvas upon which constructive discourse paints what it will.

First, I will first briefly offer what I think to be the fundamental errors of Connell's position.²⁶ Then, I will offer a few thoughts on how my position answers the challenges that he poses.

For Connell, reality is a matter of construction, which construction is explained primarily in terms of power. What is required, then, is a subversive narrative to deconstruct the structures of power.²⁷ What is unclear, is to what end such deconstruction exists. Connell claims that his work begins from the baseline of social justice.²⁸ In a note explaining why such a stance is not arbitrary, he states that "[c]ritical knowledge should be more scientific than positivism, not less: more respectful of facts, more profound in its exploration of social reality."²⁹ If, however, truth and the corrupting influence of power are indeed inseparable, one has no reason for thinking that Connell's protestations of social justice are anything other than a ruse by which Connell, either consciously or subconsciously, intends to

²⁴ Connell, *Masculinities*, 69.

²⁵ Connell, *Masculinities*, 71.

²⁶ For a more complete treatment of Connell's general intellectual milieu, see MacIntyre, *Three Rival Versions of Moral Enquiry*, 32-57 & 196-215.

²⁷ See MacIntyre, *Three Rival Versions of Moral Enquiry*, 25.

²⁸ Connell, *Masculinities*, 44.

²⁹ Connell, *Masculinities*, 247, Note 76.

control his readers. Once one enters into the fundamentally Nietzschean world inhabited by Connell, there is, to use a phrase of Sartre, no exit. *All* is construction and subversion. There can be no *true* position, only a dominant position. Connell's own work, therefore, must be seen as his quest to be the dominant signifier.

The source of the hopelessness of Connell's situation is precisely the destruction of nature. If all essentialism is essentially arbitrary, then there is no ground upon which to place claims of justice or respect for "facts." There is only the will to power. The deconstructing of that which constitutes an individual's or a group's advantage can only be for purpose of replacing it with new constructions that result in the advantage of another. There is no exit.

Connell's discussion of the role of the body is a good example of the isolation, fragmentation, and adversarial character that follows from his deconstructionist epistemology. Connell rightly diagnoses that many of modernity's problems regarding the understanding of man and woman result from confusion surrounding the Cartesian split of the thinking-mind and the body. According to Connell, there are those who give too much ground to the body, allowing it some normative role, some ability to tell the self something fixed about the self. Connell's sympathies, however, are clearly with the other group - the semiotic camp - who claim that the body is the object of social definition. It is a canvas upon which various social forces impose meaning.

Connell's problem with the semiotic approach is that, in reducing the body to a kind of social prime matter, the body ceases to have *any* significance. He states: "Bodies, in their own right as bodies do matter. They age, get sick, enjoy, engender, give birth. There is an irreducible bodily dimension in experience and practice; the sweat cannot be excluded."³⁰ The body must be given its due. Connell's solution, however, is to give the body one voice among many in the myriad of interlocutors whose propositions shape reality. The body is no longer nothing, but it is one voice among many, a sort of part of a hopelessly fragmented self. As society is an amalgam of interposing, determining forces so is the self in its various parts. Any unity is a kind of tyranny, the ascent of one voice over the others. Thus, the self itself is a battlefield of various components each asserting its separate will to power.

The contrast Connell's vision of the body with that of MacIntyre, in some ways, could not be starker:

Because, as Aquinas put it, I *am* and do not merely have a body, albeit a soul informed body, part of being the same person throughout this bodily life is having one and the same body. Secondly, I as a member of more than one community engage in transactions extended throughout time with others, and because I within

³⁰ Connell, *Masculinities*, 51.

my community undertake projects extended throughout time, it must be possible throughout this bodily life to impute continuing accountability for agency.... Thirdly, because my life is to be understood as a teleologically ordered unity, a whole the nature of which and the good of which I have to learn how to discover, my life has the continuity and unity of a quest, a quest whose object is to discover the truth about my life as a whole which is an indispensable part of the good of that life.³¹

I do not have my body. My body does not propose possible goods to me as if it were something outside of me. It appears that Connell thinks that the only option to his theory of the “proposing body” is that of a biological reductionism akin to that of Pinker. For Thomas, however, to be one’s body is not to be *only* one’s body. It is, in fact, the soul that gives definition to the body, without which the body does not exist. The body, therefore, is revelatory of human nature; for part of being human is to have a body. The body, however, cannot be separated from the whole of human nature, as Connell wishes to do. In considering questions of the body, the body must be seen as integral to the whole person. The body, therefore, does not propose meaning as to some entity other than itself; by so conceiving of the body, Connell fails to overcome the Cartesian split. Rather, the self reflects upon its nature *as soul and body* and is able to discern that which is good based upon the nature of its own being. Connell fails to resolve the Cartesian split by setting the self and the body as separate proposing entities; instead of reducing the body to prime matter, he instead reduces it to the status of a scarcely defined sub-atomic particle, tenuously and accidentally united to the fragmented nucleus of the self.

The definition that I have offered does give the essence of masculinity, but is not arbitrary insofar as it is based upon the causes of masculinity. My account looks to the evidence of science, but is not bound to say that “masculinity is everything men do” because it recognizes that maleness is ordered to an end regarding the common good. As regarding the common good, my definition is likewise normative. The normative capacity of masculine identity, however, follows from its being and a recognition of the goodness of the human being. Masculine identity is therefore ordered to love. In Connell’s epistemology however, love is impossible. Love seeks the good. The love associated with masculinity and fatherhood, I have argued, is a love that follows from the fullness of being and the desire to share one’s being, because that being is good. Such recognition of goodness is impossible for Connell; to assume that one can seek the good for another is to assume that one can know the good for another. But this is not possible if one cannot understand what things

³¹ MacIntyre, *Three Rival Versions of Moral Enquiry*, 196-197.

are in themselves. Love must therefore be reduced to either pleasure or power, which is precisely what Connell does.

II. DIFFICULTIES AND RESOLUTIONS

In the course of this work, I presented a number of difficulties that any explanation of masculinity and fatherhood must account for. As with the responses to the schools, a detailed response to each of the questions treated below would require more time and space than can be given in this dissertation. I will, therefore, *briefly* show how my rendering of masculinity and fatherhood offers possible resolutions of the below difficulties.

1. *The intersex disorders*

In Chapter 1, I brought attention to Melissa Hines' statement that the intersex disorders make it nearly impossible to define male or female. If one offers that the essence of human maleness is the Y chromosome, one must consider the case of Complete Androgen Insensitivity Syndrome (CAIS) in which an XY individual might, to all outward appearances, be female. A severe instance of congenital adrenal hyperplasia (CAH) can result in a similar situation for an XX individual whose external genitalia become fully masculinized due to the presence of androgen imposters in the mother's system. These are the extreme cases, but it seems that there exists in nature every gradation in-between the extremes. Thus, the argument runs that sex is inherently ambiguous and exists on a continuum.

Part of the response to the challenge posed to a fixed notion of sexual difference by the intersex disorders lies in their common name: the intersex disorders are *disorders*. They are fortunately relatively rare and are always recognized as pathologies. Nature works for the most part. Sometimes its purposes are thwarted. The occasional failure to achieve its end, however, does not mean that nature's has no purpose or that the purpose is indiscernible because at times it fails - as, for example, the fact that sometimes people, unfortunately, are born with no arms does not lead to the conclusion that it is unclear whether a human being should have arms. *Disorders* aid in explaining natural *order* and normality.

But how can maleness be defined if there can be an XY individual whom all, at seeing this individual, would indicate as female? To be male is to be determined according to a certain role in the divided power of generation. In humans, this determination takes place in virtue of the Y chromosome. In some cases, due to various failures on the part of the matter, the cascade of typical effects that follow from this initial determination are unable to unfold. It is never the case, however, that the result is a female who can reach sexual maturity. Functioning ovaries will never form. Thus the result is always some form of pathology; it is nature's attempt

to make the best of a situation that has, in some manner, gown awry. This is to say, there is no “XY female” that is a normally functioning female regarding that which defines sexual difference. Thus, one is left to say again that such cases are rare, unfortunate disorders.³²

Further, it must be noted that sex is an accidental form. Unlike a substantial form, which is either present or not, an accidental form can exist in degrees – as something can be more or less white. A substance is, for example, either “human” or it is not. As described in Chapter 9, the accidental form of maleness “unfolds.” In humans, its genetic and causal principle is the Y chromosome. The Y chromosome is the initial determination towards the male role in generation. Its presence, however, is the beginning of series of relatively pervasive determinations that are ordered not only towards generating children, but also to rearing those children, and even further ordered to the common good of the entire human society.

A comparison to substantial form will be helpful in understanding the essence of maleness. In examining the coming to be of the substantial form of a human being one witnesses the work of the two agents, mother and father, in preparing the proper matter that is to become a new human. Through the activity of the spermatozoon and what can be called the active receptivity of the ovum the proper matter is finally so disposed so as to be able to receive the human form (or, in the case of other animals, the matter is so disposed so as to evoke the form from the matter). Even though sperm and egg have a particularly “human” character in virtue of their unique potency, the generation of the human being implies the corruption of that which became the new human – the sperm and egg no longer exists as such after the *moment* of conception. Once the human form exists, a developmental process begins in which the new human being proceeds towards the fullness of its being, towards the acquisitions of its perfections, which culminates in the perfections of intellect and will.

When one shifts focus from the substantial form “human” to the coming to be of “maleness” one finds sameness and difference. The initial determination of the new substance as either male or female is coincident with its generation. However, unlike the substantial form, which goes from not-being to being, as it were, in an instant (there is a point before which one says “this is an ovum that has been

³² It should be noted that often, it is very difficult to know how to resolve such disorders. See Paul McHugh. “Surgical Sex.” *First Things*, 147 (November 2004): 34-38, and J. Michael Bailey and Kiira Triea, “What Many Transgender Activists Don’t Want You to Know: and Why You Should Know It Anyway,” *Perspectives in Biology and Medicine*, Vol. 50, No. 4 (Autumn 2007): 521-534.

penetrated by a spermatozoon” and after which, one says “this is a human being”)³³ the accidental form of maleness is first said of the substance imperfectly, as if the form is present but increasing in perfection, perhaps as something white can “move” towards more brilliant shades of white. Thus, “male” can be predicated of the XY zygote but in an imperfect manner; the initial determination of the substance has been made. However, unlike the substantial form, which is either present or not, the accidental form can be said to be present, but not yet wholly present; further development is needed for the form to unfold and grow in perfection.

The form “maleness” reaches a certain perfection with the maturing of the reproductive organs. It is with the presence of the male genitalia that a human person unambiguously receives the predication “male.” If, for instance there were an XY individual who, due to one of the intersex disorders, is missing male genitalia or even has female external genitalia, the predication “male” would be used in a qualified sense. However, the coincidence of an XY genotype and male genitalia elicits the unambiguous predication “male.” This is because the determination to a role in the divided powers of generation is, at that point, clear.

There are yet, of course, further perfections of the male. Absence of these, however, while pertaining to the perfection of maleness does not seem to impact the nature of the predication “male” in the same way as does absence of the genitalia. For instance, a male with some female typical brain functioning is just that: a *male* with some female typical brain functioning. The predication “male” itself is not called into question *in the same manner* that the predication “male” is called into question for an XY child born with no testes or penis. In both cases, the child is lacking perfections typical to the male; the case of the genitalia calls into question the very classification of the individual as male in a manner that brain function and behavior do not.

There is another difference that can be noted between what can be referred to as Baron-Cohen’s first three levels of sexual difference (genetic, gonadal, and genital) and the last two (brain and behavior): The genetic, gonadal, and genital levels of sexual differentiation are *proper* to their sexes while the latter brain and behavioral differences *tend* to exist in overlapping distributions. It is proper to the human male to have a Y chromosome, testes, and a penis. As regards most brain and behavioral differences, these distinctions regard ways in which males and females tend to differ; males tend to be more physically aggressive than females, but there are some females who are more aggressive than some males. Females tend to have better fine motor skills than men, but there are men with better fine motor skills than some females.

³³ Due to the continuous nature of material process, it is difficult to isolate the precise moment at which the change from “not-human” to “human” occurs. Such difficulties, however, do not negate the existence of such a moment.

Thus, to return to the five levels of sexual difference listed by Baron-Cohen in his – I would argue misnamed – book, *The Essential Difference*, it is the first three levels (chromosomal, gonadal, and genital) that have a kind of primacy regarding the essence. The latter two (brain and behavior) flow from the essence. These latter two are more ordered to the raising children and the achieving of the common good. They are thus, more subject to prudence and contingencies of time and place. As Baron-Cohen noted, women tend to be more empathetic, which is one aspect that better suits them to early infant care. Males, however, participate in early infant care and, at times, due to circumstance, are the primary care givers.³⁴

Questions of the different levels of sexual difference and, more precisely, possible dissonances between the levels, inevitably lead, in the modern milieu, to questions of the changeability of sex. Such questions can be intensified by use of words such as “accidental form” or “quality” as such terms sometimes imply that the accidental form in question can be changed. First, it must be repeated that the various instances of intersex disorders and psychological questions of gender identity can be very complex.³⁵ However, that sex – maleness or femaleness – is an accidental form does not *ipso facto* imply its mutability anymore than the fact that the power of nutrition is a quality, and hence an accidental form, implies that one can or should negate one’s ability to nourish oneself. As I have shown throughout this work, sexual determination in the human species is a determination with far-reaching consequences regarding the substance it determines. The initial determinant (XX or XY) is in every cell of the body. The full extent of the effects of the initial determination as XX or XY is as yet unknown. It is clear that unfolding of differences from initial determination extends well beyond the act of generation to

³⁴ It appears that there is the possibility of various levels of inconsistency on Baron-Cohen’s five levels. For instance, it seems possible that disturbances in hormone levels during gestation could lead to a male child having a more female typical brain formation. Depending upon the severity, such a situation could lead to a certain “dissonance” of inclination. Such dissonance explains, in part, why gender identity issues will likely be experienced as painful. The basis of sexual differentiation is the determination of a role in reproduction, which is fundamentally in terms of the organs in which the power of generation resides.

³⁵ Once again, see McHugh. “Surgical Sex” and J. Michael Bailey and Kiira Triea, “What Many Transgender Activists Don’t Want You to Know,” are helpful. In my comments I in no way intend to minimize or oversimplify the suffering that can follow from such disorders. For instance, the above author Kiira Triea is an XX individual who was born with masculinized genitalia due to prenatal exposure to androgens. Parents’ and doctors’ choices at the birth of children with such discord of various levels of sexual differentiation are by no estimation easy.

acts that impact the entire life cycle of an individual and impact the common good. It is therefore likewise clear that nature has not determined this quality as mutable.

The question of what to do in the face of certain intersex disorders, given the powers of modern medicine is, indeed a difficult one. For instance, in the case of CAIS, that an individual is XY with testes might not be discovered until puberty and menstruation does not occur. Nature appears to adapt to make the best of a bad situation and androgens are converted to estrogens so that female typical musculature, hair growth, and breast development (with under-developed nipples) occurs. It must be said, though, the sex of such individuals is ambiguous. Prudence must therefore be utilized in how best to resolve such situations.

It should be noted in passing that the fact that a certain tropical fish can change sex according to ecological contingencies is interesting but not relevant to the form “maleness” as it exists in man. Accidents inhere in substances. Maleness in the human being has reference to the human being and is ordered to the perfection of the human being. In the human being, the role that maleness plays vis-à-vis man’s perfection and the common good demands the stability of the accidental form. As such it is stable as evidenced by the ubiquity of its principle (the Y chromosome, which is in every cell) and the pervasiveness of the effects of this principle. In some tropical fish, the nature of the substantial form apparently demands that, under given circumstances, for the good of the species, some members of species be able to change sex. In humans, the good of the species demands that sex remain stable.

2. *Analogy and univocity*

Perhaps the most consistently vexing difficulty that I have encountered in this dissertation is the question of analogy or univocity of the predication “male” as it applies variously within an individual and as it applies across species. Thus, as I referred to in the previous subsection, one can ask the question of the nature of the predication “male” at each of the five of Baron-Cohen’s levels of sexual difference. Next, I must consider the nature of the predication “male” across species. How does the predication “John is male” relate to “this dog is male” relate to “this plant is male”? Finally, I must consider how the various predications from the five levels apply across species. I will first indicate the primary texts that I will use for understanding analogy. Next I will consider the five levels, followed by a consideration of trans-special predication. Before proceeding, I must add that any one of the above considerations could easily be the work of an entire dissertation. I will here, therefore, simply attempt to give the outline of a response that provides a basis for further research.

i. *Principal texts and divisions*: The subject of analogy is vast and complex. I will limit myself to more or less two texts from Thomas in order to make the primary divisions in the kinds of analogical predication. With the first text, I hope to divide

analogical predications into two general categories. With the second text, I will follow Thomas in subdividing one of the primary categories.

In the *Commentary on the Metaphysics*, Thomas explains the principal division of analogical predication:

And those things are proportionally or analogically one which agree in this respect that one is related to another as some third thing is to a fourth. Now this can be taken in two ways: (1) either in the sense that any two things are related in different ways to one third thing (for example, the term healthy is predicated of urine because it signifies the relationship of a sign of health [to health itself]; and of medicine because it signifies the relationship of a cause to the same health); (2) or it may be taken in the sense that the proportion of two things to two other things is the same (for example, tranquility to the sea and serenity to the air; for tranquility is a state of rest in the sea, and serenity is a state of rest in the air).³⁶

There are two principal kinds of analogy: The first kind obtains when several things are related to *one* thing. Thomas offers the classic example of health: health as said of both urine and medicine as having reference to the one, primary instance of health – health in an organism. The second general kind of analogy obtains when there is a proportion of relations between two pairs of things. Thus the relationship serenity to the air is analogous to the relationship of serenity in the sea; they are both states of rest in the given medium. In order to understand the breadth of predications of the term “male,” there is need to employ both principal kinds of analogy.

In his commentary on the *Sentences* of Peter Lombard, Thomas distinguishes three ways in which something is said according to analogy.³⁷ This division subdivides the first category given above. Something is said according to analogy either: 1) According to notion and not according to being. As an instance, Thomas returns to the venerable example of health. Health means different things regarding an animal, urine, and diet. The being of health, however always refers to health in the animal. 2) According to being and not according to notion. “[T]his occurs when many things are taken as equal in the notion of something common, but that

³⁶ “Proportione vero vel analogia sunt unum quaecumque in hoc conveniunt, quod hoc se habet ad illud sicut aliud ad aliud. Et hoc quidem potest accipi duobus modis, vel in eo quod aliqua duo habent diversas habitudines ad unum; sicut sanativum de urina dictum habitudinem significat signi sanitatis; de medicina vero, quia significat habitudinem causae respectu eiusdem. Vel in eo quod est eadem proportio duorum ad diversa, sicut tranquillitatis ad mare et serenitatis ad aerem. Tranquillitas enim est quies maris et serenitas aeris (CM, Book 5, Lecture 8, § 879).

³⁷ Thomas Aquinas, *Scriptum Super Sentiis*, I.19.5 ad 1. See also Dewan, “St. Thomas and Analogy: the logician and the metaphysician,” in *Form and Being*, 81-95.

common item does not have being of one intelligible character in all..."³⁸ The example given here is that of body, which the logician says univocally of corruptible and incorruptible bodies. The being, however, of incorruptible and corruptible bodies is distinct. Hence, the physicist and metaphysician, "who consider things according to their being,"³⁹ must recognize that body does not mean the same thing in reference to an incorruptible body and a corruptible body. 3) According to notion and according to being. Here, Thomas employs another classic example of analogy: "to be" as said of substance is distinct in notion and being from "to be" as said of an accident. Thus, analogy as said in reference to one thing (the first kind of analogy from the first division) can be said in the three above manners.

Once again, my intention is not to enter into a lengthy discussion on the kinds of analogical predication, but rather to provide a brief description of the categories I will employ in offering some tentative solutions as to the manner in which male is predicated in the man instances I noted in the introduction to this section.⁴⁰ With the above classification of analogy in mind, I will now consider how "male" is said of the five levels of sexual difference.

ii. *Intra-special predications*: In Chapter 9.I.1 & 2, I noted various manners in which "male" can be said of an individual within a species and posed the question of whether there might be "degrees" of maleness such that one member of a species could be said to be more male than another. I will first consider the manner in which male can be said of various aspects of the same individual. As this dissertation principally concerns maleness in humans, I will use the instance of maleness in humans for the purpose of this discussion.

John is male. XY is male. Testes are male. The penis and scrotum are male. Greater lateralization of brain function is male. A greater tendency to engage in rough-and-tumble play is male. I offer that these predications are analogical like health is analogical. Maleness applies principally to maleness in John. Further, according to its being, maleness only exists really in John. Thus, the remaining items (XY, testes, etc.) are called male in reference to the primary instance, which is maleness in John. To be male is to be determined according to a certain mode of participating in the divided power of generation. XY is said to be male because it is the genotype of a male human being and has been shown to further play a causal role in the masculinization of the human being. The testes, penis, and scrotum are

³⁸ "[E]t hoc contingit quando plura parificantur in intentione alicujus communis, sed illud commune non habet esse unius rationis in omnibus... (*Scriptum Super Sentiis*, I.19.5 ad 1)." The translation is Dewan's, *Form and Being*, 88.

³⁹ *Scriptum Super Sentiis*, I.19.5 ad 1.

⁴⁰ For a more detailed discussion of analogy, see John Mortensen, *Understanding St. Thomas on Analogy* (Rome: Edizioni Università della Santa Croce, 2006).

said to be male because they are organs proper to the male and that facilitate the male mode of participating in generation. A male brain is a brain typical to a male human; it is a brain that is modified according to that which is fitting to the male role in generation. Similarly, male behavior is behavior that is typical to or fitting to a male. Maleness exists primarily in the male human being.

A brief comparison to the predication “human” will be helpful. John is human. Reason is human. To give to the poor is human. Humanity really exists only in John. Reason – here I am thinking precisely of the specific difference – is clearly part of the essence of humanity. Nevertheless, humanity cannot be said to be in reason. Reason, rather is said to be human because it is the specific difference of humanity. Thus, it is in humanity, not humanity in it. Likewise, to give to the poor is said to be human because it is a perfection of human nature. Similarly, though the Y chromosome the testes are essential aspects of being male, maleness is not in them. They are aspects of what make the substance male, like reason is the difference that defines one as human. Thus, the various levels sexual difference follow the same pattern of analogical predication as that of “health” or “humanity.”

Regarding varying levels of the predication male when said of one individual in comparison to another other same species, I noted in the previous subsection that, because maleness is an accidental form, it can be said to exist in varying degrees. I noted that various intersex disorders can lead to situations in which the presence of the form itself is had imperfectly. Thus, an XY individual with female external genitalia and female secondary sex characteristics due to CAIS might be said to be partially male or partially masculinized. The same thing cannot be said of a substantial form, such as humanity; one is never partially human as regards the substantial form. However, one does speak of in some way of being more or less human. Once again, a comparison will be helpful for assessing maleness.

One might say of Mother Teresa of Calcutta: “Now, there is a human being.” The implication is that she is somehow more human than others. Similarly, of firefighters who run into an already-burning building, risking their own lives in order to save others, one might say: “Now those are men.” One clearly intends to say more than that Mother Teresa is a rational animal, and that the firefighters are determined to reproduce by means of spermatozoa. In the given phrases, are “human being” and “men” therefore said analogically?

I offer that, in both cases, there is an implied and unstated qualifier that modifies a fundamentally univocal predication. Thus, of Mother Teresa, what the phrase means is that Mother Teresa was a *true* human being. Of the firemen, one intends to say that these were *real* men. Both “human” and “man” (meaning, this case male human) retain their univocal meaning as indicating an essence, but they are qualified so as to further indicate the perfection of the form in question. Thus, Mother Teresa is *more* human because she possessed the fullness of the nature.

Similarly, the New York firemen are more men because they exhibited a perfection fitting to the male human beings. Thus, like humanity, maleness can be said according to more or less regarding perfections due to the form.

It is worth noting that, in humans, common speech changes when referring to *perfections* due to the human male. Such perfections tend to receive an adjective such as “manly” rather than “male.” Such a change seems to underscore the relationship of the action fitting to the human as it is also a perfection of the individual considered as human. I will return to the significance of referring to acts of regarding the perfection of maleness in man as “masculine” or “manly” after discussing the trans-special predication of maleness.

iii. *Trans-special predication*: John is male. This chimp is male. This cannabis plant is male. How do these predications relate to each other. I will argue that there is a sense in which they are univocal, and a sense in which they are analogical. I begin with the manner in which trans-special predications of maleness are univocal.

The difficulty of discerning whether “male” is said univocally of all species is underscored well by biologists R. A. Lockshin:

The multiple origins of the sex-determining genes makes it very difficult to extrapolate from lower animals to humans. More importantly, the somatic origin of the sex-determining genes and sex chromosomes forces us to ask: what were these genes doing before they were sex determining, and what residual somatic activities to they retain? We are only now beginning to acquire some information about the somatic functions of the sex determining genes.⁴¹

However, as I noted throughout Chapter 9.II, maleness is bound to the power of generation. Like the other powers of vegetative soul, nutrition and augmentation, generation is said univocally across all living things. As discussed in Chapter 9.II, in the cases of some plants and nearly all animals, nature has divided the generative power among two modally distinct members of a species. Nature’s immediate biological purpose appears to be to produce offspring that are the genetic combination of two parents. Though, as the quotation from Lockshin above indicates, there are remarkable differences in how sexual differentiation is achieved, there is nevertheless an even more remarkable sameness in the manner in which nature has determined to accomplish reproduction by means of the genetic contribution of two parents. In practically all cases, nature employs a manner of dividing the powers of generation such that there are two primary mating types: one that produces ova – the female – and another that produces spermatozoa – the male. To be a living substance determined to reproduce by means of spermatozoa is to be

⁴¹ Lockshin, “Gender Differences: the perspective from biology,” 363.

male. In all cases where the power of generation is divided such that reproduction is achieved by means of gametes, being male means to same thing.

A sign of the univocity of “male” when speaking of its fundamental meaning is that there is no need for reference to any “third” thing in order to apply the predication male. Consider predicating “health” of a man and a monkey and medicine. In saying health of a man and a monkey, each receives the predication independently; one need only know what health is and then apply the concept to man and monkey. The term is univocal. However, when saying “health” of medicine there must be reference to a third thing; reference must be made to health in the animal in order for the medicine to receive the predication. “Male” is said of those plants and animals where it obtains independently. Thus, it appears that, as regards the determining of the generative power according to a certain measure, the predication “male” is univocal across species.

In discussing why “body” is not said univocally of corruptible and incorruptible bodies, Dewan offers some insight into univocal predication that is pertinent here:

The basis for the discussed difference concerning “body” is the doctrine that the genus is a name for a thing taken from the side of matter.⁴² The reason why “body” is different from a genus such as “animal” is that the things called “animals,” though they have natures which are ordered according to more perfect and less perfect, nevertheless have at bottom the same sort of matter: the genus has a *foundation in reality* which is one. In the case of “body,” the matter of the corruptible is of a different order than that of the incorruptible. Hence, the genus “body is called “logical,” in the sense that it does not have the sort of foundation in reality that generable and corruptible things have.⁴³

“Animal” when said of a human and a giraffe means the same thing because there is a kind of common matter. There is a real foundation for the likeness. Notwithstanding the fact that sexual differentiation possibly has developed independently in some species, there remains a common root –the univocally said power of generation, which is common to all living things. In virtue of this common foundation in reality, a like modification (e.g. maleness) of that which is at root common is said univocally.

The sense in which “male” is said analogically is more difficult to see; the analogical sense regards the perfections due to maleness and how that perfection is entwined with the perfection of the substance in question. In Chapter 11, I argued

⁴² “What is proper to the notion of the genus, as found in material things, is its being a name for the whole, but one derived from the (common) matter.” Dewan, *Form and Being*, 84.

⁴³ Dewan, *Form and Being*, 91. Emphasis added.

that monogamy and involved fathering are perfections of the human male. Thus, one could say “to have an exclusive, permanent commitment to one female is male” and “to teach, provide for, and protect one’s offspring is male.” These statements are true *if* the male in question is a human male. If the male in question were an elephant seal, the predication would not apply. Thus, male in referring to perfections due to a given species are analogical in the second sense of the primary division (i.e. like serenity said of air and water.)

It will be helpful to quickly reflect on what can be called the analogy of proportion. Thomas notes that this kind of analogy applies *not* when many things have reference to some one thing but rather when two things have the same relationship to two other things. One can consider both the numbers 4 and 6 as doubles. Double is said of 4. Double is also said of 6. However, 4 can only be understood as “double” in relation to 2, and 6 in relation to 3. The relationship is the same, but to understand the predication, there must be reference to a third thing, which becomes a foundation of the predication. Thus, 4 is double only by reference to 2, and 6 with reference to 3. Double, therefore, is analogical because reference to a third thing is necessary.

“Male” when said of certain perfections is likewise analogical in that reference must be made to the nature of the substance in which maleness inheres. I must add that analogical predication does not apply to all perfections of maleness. For instance to say “to be ordered to the female is male” or “fatherhood is male” is to be speak univocally. This is the case because such perfections pertain to the notion of maleness itself as it is said univocally of all species; there is no need to reference what distinguishes males of different species. However, in the case of saying “to teach, provide for, and protect one’s offspring is male” one must refer to human nature to make the predication. It is likely for this reason that, as I noted above, common speech frequently changes adjectives when referring to such perfections; thus perfections of the human male are typically referred to as “manly” or “masculine” rather than “male.”

The reason why analogical predications regarding the perfection due to maleness are necessary is likely due to the pervasive effects of the principle of sexual difference in most higher species. The unfolding effects of the Y chromosome modify human organs in ways that touch upon human life in arenas that extend significantly beyond the act of generation. As Aristotle noted, the difference of male and female bear upon the very founding and functioning of human society as a community ordered in a complementary manner to common goods. The extension of “maleness” into such realms makes reference to substance in which it inheres necessary in order to understand the full dynamism of the form.

iv. Further considerations: A further question could be raised: Are not what I have called the perfections of maleness – or at least those perfections which relate to

the political realm – simply the case of nature putting something made for one purpose to use for another. Thus, maleness would have one foundation in generation from which certain morphological and behavioral differences flow based upon the dynamics of human courtship and mating. The differences that follow from maleness in generation would then have an effect in the political realm either as an unintended consequence, or as putting something made for one use to another unrelated use – as the tongue which appears to have a primary use for tasting and swallowing in humans is also used for speech. Understanding maleness as such would essentially make a second foundation for understanding maleness: there is maleness as it pertains to generation and maleness as differences originally made for the purpose of generation are put to other purposes, such as social division of labor.

I have argued that the maleness has one foundation, which is a role in generation, and that all the perfections of maleness can and must be understood in terms of generativity. On my understanding, generativity must be seen as applying to more than the act of generation strictly taken as the act of procreation. First, generativity must be understood as extending to a “generative” role in facilitating the natural development of one’s offspring. Next, generativity must extend to common goods of human society. Maleness is ordered to the above modes generativity and thus to the above modes of fatherhood. In simpler species, because the good of species is simpler – as proportioned to their natures – the ordering of maleness to common goods beyond the preservation of the species is not as clearly seen. It is because of the richness of the goods due to the human person and human society that the full trajectory of maleness is seen therein.

Consideration of the perfections due to human maleness and their relationship to one another bring to the fore yet another question: Above, in subsection i, I noted that the prime analogate in predications within the human individual is the foundational predication “John is male.” In this predication, the meaning of “male” retains its biological foundation by having reference to a mode of reproducing – a male is one ordered to reproduce by means of spermatozoa. Throughout Chapters 9,10, and 11, I noted various ways in which sexual differentiation obtains in humans beyond simply the act of procreation: Fathering is different than mothering. To be a father of a nation is different than to be a mother of a nation. Is it fathering “male” simply because it done by a male or is there rather, perhaps, some notion of maleness that consistently applies to the various modes of man’s generativity? I have offered that there is a consistent modality and that it can be described by three principal adjectives: outward, initiating, and penetrating. These attributes are complemented by the feminine attributes of the inward and

actively receptive. Thus, it is possible to see male and female, as it were, as instances of modes of generativity.⁴⁴

3. *Intraspecies/transcultural and transtemporal difference in maleness*

Noting the existence of significant differences in understanding the meaning of maleness and fatherhood, and the manner in which fatherhood and manhood are lived in different times and cultures is the most prevalent manner in which maleness and fatherhood are stripped of any fixed meaning. Pointing to the many cultural and temporal variants of masculinity was certainly the principal arrow in Connell's deconstructive quiver. Such variation must therefore be accounted for.

Connell points to some of the proper sources of an account of distinct manifestations of masculinity when arguing against biological determinism. He states that "[g]ender exists precisely to the extent that biology does not determine social practice. It marks one of those points of transition where historical process supersedes biological evolution as the form of change."⁴⁵ Specifically human practices, in a manner of speaking, break man out of purely biological determination. Thus, Connell points to an important source of variation in how human maleness is lived. The human person is not *wholly* biologically determined as other animals are bound to act by instinct. Further, as discussed above in this chapter, Connell notes the importance of the Cartesian split as it contributes to biological determinism. A proper understanding of the relationship between soul and body is indeed necessary for an account of the many variations in how manhood is understood over time and across cultures. Misunderstanding the body means misunderstanding manhood. Once again, Connell, points to a critical area in accounting for masculinity. However, to vary a theme of Chesterton, while Connell may be, in part, right about what is wrong, he is wrong about what is right.

⁴⁴ Thus understanding the various levels of human fatherhood as modes of generativity is consistent with an understanding of God as Father in Christian theology. God's fatherhood applies principally within His own nature regarding the begetting of the Son. What I have described above as the outward-initiating must be understood rather in terms of internal procession. Thomas writes: "Since procession always supposes action, and as there is an outward procession corresponding to the act tending to external matter, so there must be an inward procession corresponding to the act remaining within the agent (ST.I.27.1)." The generation of the Son is an inward procession (See ST.I.27.2), which, considered as a procession has its analogue in the outward (processing)-initiative mode of the human father. Thus, human fatherhood is analogous to God's fatherhood because of the mode of generativity of human fatherhood. Obviously, much more must be said on this topic. Such, however, is the work of a theological treatise.

⁴⁵ Connell, *Masculinities*, 71-72.

Following MacIntyre, Hall, and Gahl, I have discussed how natural law confronts various historical and cultural contexts. Natural law guides the human person to his final end. It is the role of prudence to adapt to various situations and to achieve the good in the midst of the countless complexities that are part and parcel of man's practical life. Thus, the fact that the natural law is human participation in the eternal law does not preclude the appearance of many cultural and temporal variants of masculinity. Some of these variants are proper prudential responses to circumstantial contingencies; some are not.

As MacIntyre points out, man's progress in practical wisdom is like the growth of a master-craft.⁴⁶ Within any craft, a certain amount of legitimate variation is to be expected; various situations demand prudential decisions regarding what best leads to the fulfillment of the end in a given circumstance. A particular situation may require a particular adaptation according to prudence. Thus variation is explained in terms of prudential adaptation to particular circumstances. Further, human beings work corporately towards achieving the common good. Thus, not every human person does exactly the same thing. For instance, some men will be biological fathers, while others may dedicate their lives wholly to service to the common good in other ways. Such variations are aspects of a society that is ordered communally towards the common good. Masculinity can have various legitimate expressions according to circumstance and the communal ordering to the common good. Thus, various manifestation of masculinity are explained.

While there is legitimate variation in the expression of masculinity due to diverse circumstances and prudential adaptation thereto, and distinct roles played in achieving the common good, there is also variation in the expression of masculinity due to distinct levels of cultural and personal defect. As I noted in Chapter 10, the principles of the natural law can be and are obscured by sin. These disorders often are ensconced in cultures and passed from generation to generation. The human being has various levels of inclinations; frequently, the human person allows a lower appetite to usurp a higher appetite. This usurpation can happen in the countless variations that Connell witnesses. Thus cultures can come to call "manliness" that which is actually its opposite, or a corruption of its genuine features.

My account is able to explain the many variations that exist in masculinity across time and cultures. Unlike Connell's account, however, my rendering can explain which expressions of masculinity are genuine and which are corruptions of masculinity. Connell offers that his work proceeds from the stance of social justice but offers no way to ground such judgments of justice. In fact, as I observed above, in deconstructing the human person, he leaves only the possibility of man as master or slave.

⁴⁶ MacIntyre, *Three Rival Versions of Moral Enquiry*, 60-64.

Conclusion

INTRODUCTION

I mentioned in the introduction to this dissertation that the distance that divided my initial intuition about the relationship of fatherhood and masculine identity and the reasoned argument in light of the evidence that defended that intuition was not only extensive, but was also difficult terrain, rife with confusion and polemics. In this work, I have sought to follow the evidence and the argument where they led. Having reached the end, a quick look back at the course followed will be helpful in attempting to assess the dissertation as a whole. The extent of ground covered and the twists and turns of the path are too many for a detailed review. By way of summary, however, I will quickly retrace the way that has led to this point.

The purpose of this dissertation was to discern the relationship between fatherhood and manhood, to address the question of the role that fatherhood plays in the fulfillment of masculine identity. Is it important for a man to be a father if he is to live a flourishing life? Addressing such a question, however, presumes that one knows what masculine identity is, that one knows the formal cause of maleness in the human male. My first goal was, therefore, to understand what the human male is. Only having understood the nature of the human as male could I reasonably propose a thesis regarding the importance of fatherhood in the flourishing life of a man.

It became clear quickly that discerning the nature of the human male would be no easy task. I therefore decided to employ a systematic and dialectical approach in Part I, similar to the method used by Aristotle in the *Physics*. I thus attempted to survey the most salient and influential accounts of masculine identity. The first step, however, was to collect the facts and evidence regarding the phenomenon of masculinity with an emphasis on those biological findings that have significantly changed since the time of Thomas. The task of collecting the data on masculinity proved more difficult than anticipated. Many studies in the burgeoning science of the form and function of the brain focus on differences in the male and female brain. Behavioral correlates to differences in brain structure or function (and

sometimes even the structural or functional differences themselves) are often, however, matters of speculation and disagreement. Similarly, one must be very attentive when attributing behavioral correlates to hormonal differences between the male and female.¹

Nevertheless, when one assesses the mass of scientific evidence regarding the differences between men and women, it is difficult not to conclude that there is something which could be called a masculine nature.² Discerning *the nature* of this “masculine nature” was the work of much of this dissertation. However, at the end of Chapter 1, it was clear that there is at least some way in which maleness can be considered a principle of movement that is different than femaleness.³

In Chapters 2-7, I presented various accounts that seek to explain the human male as male. The first account I considered, that of the evolutionists, is espoused by most of the scientists whose research was presented in Chapter 1. The evolutionary position has two principal merits that possibly render it the strongest existing account of maleness. First, it attempts not only to *describe* the way in which the human male and males of other species act, but also to explain *why* they act as they do. Neither does it content itself simply with a chemical or physiological explanation – such as “men are more aggressive because they have more testosterone.” Rather, it seeks to know how men came to have more testosterone. Second, the evolutionary account attempts to explain not only the psychology of maleness, but also the morphology of maleness and the very origins of sexual difference itself. As such, the evolutionists offer a broader solution than any other school of thought covered in Part I. Yet further, thinkers like Pinker seek to place their evolutionary explanations in a broad anthropological context. They, thus, offer what claims to be a complete explanation of the human male as male.

To present their position, I began by reviewing Pinker’s attempt to create an unbroken chain of being that begins with inert matter and proceeds to the human being by means of incremental advances in complexity. There were many branches of science that helped to construct this chain, but the primary architect was evolution. I thus discussed the principal mechanism of evolution: random mutation, adaptation, and natural selection. With the basic principles understood, I proceeded

¹ I found that some of those commentating upon scientific research seemed to be too “aggressive” in their interpretation of contemporary research. I, therefore, approached the subject with care.

² Here, I am not speaking of the nature of a species, but of what might be called a common “individual” nature. See ST.I-II.51.1 for the fundamental distinction between *naturam speciei* and *naturam individui*.

³ This point is generally denied by the sociological position which attributes almost all differences between male and female to sociological or psychological factors.

to show how evolutionary theory offers an explanation for the origin of sexual difference, for the varied characteristics associated with males and females of numerous species, and how such traits arose as adaptations that suited a given species' nature in a given ecology. Thus, for example, the size and aggression of the male elephant seal is explained by the natural selection of traits that followed male-male competition for access to females in the ecology (or ecologies) in which the elephant seal developed. According to the evolutionists, all differences between male and female in all species can be explained by the fundamental principles of random mutation, natural selection, and the economic principle that the lesser-investing sex competes for access to the greater-investing sex, while the greater-investing sex chooses mates and limits sexual access. Maleness in the human being is thus explained just as it is in the gorilla or the gold fish; one must look to those attributes that led to the survival and future reproductive success in a given ecology.

I next turned my attention to the father of modern psychology, Sigmund Freud. Freud is not interested in explaining how the human male came to be as he is physiologically; for Freud, male and female physiology are starting points. From this starting point, he attempts to explain how and why the male psyche - the male conscious and subconscious mind - differ from the female psyche. Finally, for Freud, the differences between the male and the female center on the presence or absence of the penis. Freud begins with evolutionary principles; reproduction is therefore central to his thought. Human psychological development must lead the individual to reproductive behavior, or what can be called full genital expression. Pleasure is the human being's prime mover. The center of pleasure is ultimately the genital organs. Regarding genital pleasure, Freud saw the male as having a privileged place in virtue of possessing the penis. Thus the presence or lack of a penis becomes the basis for distinction in male and female psychological dynamics. The human male is directed towards fatherhood for he is directed towards full genital expression by the pleasure principle.

In Chapter 4, I reviewed a contemporary, symbolic re-rendering of Freud according to French psychoanalyst, Jacques Lacan. In Lacan's symbolic interpretation of Freud, the phallus is not seen primarily as a physical organ; it is rather a place of privilege in the constructing of meaning. To be masculine is to have the phallus. To have the phallus is to have the power to signify. The father is the signifier, the maker of meaning. His position of power, however, is undermined by the inescapable, unconscious feminine. The power and privilege of the masculine, therefore, prove to be empty and absurd. In removing all but the most tenuous references to the human body, Lacan and his followers seek to detach masculinity from its corporeal foundation and reestablish it exclusively in the realm conscious and unconscious psychological dynamics.

In Chapter 5, I attempted to follow Carl Jung as he described the realization of the self, noting how sexual difference enters into the process of self-realization. Central to Jung's thought is the integration of opposites, chief of which is the integration of the conscious and the unconscious. For the male, the integration of the conscious and unconscious is experienced as (and is) an integration of the conscious masculine and the unconscious feminine. Maleness is identified with *logos* while the feminine with *eros*. The male tends to be erotically blind; he is in need of soul. The female instead is in need of *logs*, which Jung identifies with spirit. Soul needs spirit and spirit needs soul. Man enters into his unconscious through the feminine; it is only through the integration of the unconscious feminine that the male can begin to approach his true self. Thus, for Jung, the male self differs from the female self, but each must integrate the other to achieve its fulfillment.

In Chapter 6, I offered a brief summary of two branches of contemporary neo-Jungianism. First I showed how some followers of Jung, while maintaining his fundamental understanding of the collective unconscious and the archetypes, have abandoned his notion of the fittingness of the primacy of the masculine in the male individual. For Jung, a predominantly feminine man (or, a masculine woman) is one who lives his background. Though, for Jung, one's "background" must be integrated into the self in order that the whole self may be seen, nevertheless, the background must remain background, and the foreground remain foreground. Some of Jung's modern commentators, however, have put forward the "androgynous self" as a kind of ideal of integration. This concept of self implies that the process of integration results in a self that is minimally sexually differentiated. Integration thus becomes amalgamation.

The other school of neo-Jungians moves Jung in the opposite direction, towards greater definition of the masculine self. While the first branch places the androgynous self as an ideal, the second posits the existence of the masculine archetypes of the King, the Warrior, the Magician, and the Lover. These archetypes guide masculine development and in a way constitute the realization or perfection of masculine identity. They thus, as it were, define the masculine self in terms of the above archetypes.

In the final chapter of Part I, I discussed the thought R. W. Connell on the question of masculinity. Connell denies the existence of a masculine nature. For Connell, the findings of Chapter 1 all pale in comparison to the power of social construction. There is, thus, no one masculinity; there are rather many masculinities that are formed and dissolve in relation to the realm of reproduction and in reference to bodies, but that are emphatically not defined by either reproduction or the male body. Masculinity is always, therefore, in flux; it thus eschews definition. While absolutely denying the body any normative role in "defining" masculinity, Connell notes the dire consequences suffered by the body at the hands of symbolic

theories – such as that of Lacan; he therefore seeks to rescue the body from theoretical irrelevance by giving it a voice in the onto-formative social discourse.

What Part I demonstrates is great disagreement on the nature and meaning the human male. The two most complete accounts offered – that of the evolutionists and that of Connell – are diametrically opposed to each other. The evolutionists see masculinity as a phenomenon that, like all others, is the result of the processes of evolution. Masculinity, therefore, can and must be explained in terms of its adaptiveness. Someone like Pinker does not deny that ethics can and must enter the picture when considering human maleness. However, to understand maleness is to understand the evolutionary processes that forged it. By contrast, for Connell, the hammer and forge that shape masculinities are not evolutionary forces, but rather relations of power held between individuals and societies. Masculinities are thus social constructs that transcend evolutionary determination. For Connell, the discussion of masculinity begins precisely where the sphere of evolutionary influence ends.

Having reviewed the principal contemporary theories on the meaning of maleness, in Part II, I offered a Thomistic analysis of maleness, fatherhood, and the relationship of the two. However, before applying Thomas's thought to the findings of contemporary science and to the many challenges posed by the various schools of thought in Part I, in Chapter 8, I first gave a brief summary of Thomas's position on sexual difference, noting its dependence upon the biological explanations proposed by Aristotle. I then proceeded to offer a Thomistic account of manhood and fatherhood in light of contemporary science.

In order to succinctly summarize the ground covered in Chapters 9-11, I will first give a very brief summary of the principal task of each chapter and then summarize how these three chapters answer the principal questions of this dissertation: 1) What is the human male as male? 2) What is fatherhood? 3) How does fatherhood related to maleness?

In Chapter 9, I considered maleness and asked what its formal, efficient, material, and final causes are. Thomas held that male and female were qualities proper to perfect animals. The evolutionists offer a general explanation of maleness and femaleness that applies to *all instances* of male and female, even though the two mating types are thought to have evolved several times throughout evolutionary history, and though nature employs various means to achieve sexual differentiation. I, thus, found it necessary to consider first the causes of maleness taken generally, as applying to all instances of maleness. I then considered maleness as it exists in the human male. In Chapter 9, I consider the causes of maleness. In Chapter 10, I proceed to consider human maleness as a cause, i.e. as a quality that modifies human nature and thus influences human acts. I thus considered the relationship of masculinity to the natural law. Finally, having seen the nature of masculinity and

how man's ordering to his end is modified by maleness, in Chapter 11, I considered the relationship of fatherhood to masculinity. Brief responses to the three principal question noted above will serve to concisely summarize the substance of Chapters 9-11.

1. *What is the human male as male?*

Maleness is a determination of a substance according to a certain role in the divided power of generation. It is a proper accident of a substance that is ordered to that substance's ability to generate another individual of the species. Primarily, maleness refers to a *modality* of a substance that orders an individual to participate in the act generation in a specific way. Hence, maleness principally regards that which surrounds the power of reproduction. However, the accidental form "maleness" is neither defined as the "male" mode of having the power generation nor is its ordering limited only to the act reproduction. Maleness is ordered to generativity. Generativity extends beyond the human role in the transmission of the human substantial form to modes of agency that pertain to the perfection of the human form in a man's offspring. The ordering of maleness to the perfection of his offspring, however, implies and leads to an ordering to the common good of the family and the broader common good of the community; it is finally ordered to the highest common good, which is God. Maleness can only be understood in its expansively generative capacity. Those attributes of the human male which may be typically or statistically associated with men, but that violate his essential ordering to the common good are wrongly called "masculine," or are accidentally so-called insofar as they follow from a typical disordering of a man's appetites.

To understand the male modality of generativity, one must look to the male modality of being. The clearest instance of the male modality, not surprisingly, regards the act of generation. I have referred to the male modality severally as the outward, proceeding, penetrating, and initiating (while the female mode is the actively receptive). Maleness refers to a difference in the *mode* of participating in generation. Male and female equally contribute to that which properly constitutes generation - their haploid cells are equally haploid cells. They participate, however, in different *ways*. This "equality-and-difference" paradigm precedes the act of generation in courtship and sexual intimacy, and extends beyond it as witnessed in the modes of generativity concerning the perfection of offspring and, even more broadly, regarding complementary participation in the promotion of the common good. Thus, I argued that the division of male and female is ordered towards establishing a complementary commitment to the common good based upon true friendship and the recognition of the goodness of the human being.

2. *What is fatherhood?*

Fatherhood is the completion of the act of generation. A father is one who has generated another according to the male mode of generation. It names the relationship of the generator to the generated. Fatherhood, however, extends beyond only the act of reproduction – beyond participating in the advent of a new human person. Fatherhood also pertains to man’s agency regarding the perfection of the human form in his children. Thomas notes that higher levels of being achieve perfect goodness through fewer movements, with the limit being God, who achieves perfect goodness with no movement at all.⁴ Thus, Thomas argues that the human beings require many powers of soul to attain to perfect goodness. This argument can be applied to the human achievement of their common goods, which must be done through many individual and corporate acts, *and* to man’s fatherhood. As regards a human male’s participating in the unfolding of the perfection of the human form in the offspring, many acts are needed. I divided a father’s modes of agency that regard the perfection of his offspring into three categories: father as guide and teacher, father as provider, and father as defender. The first of these is more perfectly a mode of fatherhood as it regards sharing, as is possible, a mode of being already possessed. The second regards provision of that which is needed for the child to grow and which the man is most suited to provide in virtue of his being. The third regards the removal of threats. I argued further, that man’s fatherhood extends to care for and promotion of the common good.

3. *How are human maleness and fatherhood related?*

Maleness determines a substance according to a certain mode of participation in generation. Fatherhood encompasses the completion of that generation. Fatherhood is a realization of that to which the human male is ordered as male. In its primary sense, it is a transmission of being, which is only possible after a man has reached a certain perfection of his own being. Man is inclined to share his form in virtue of the recognition of its goodness. Once he has become a father, he tends to experience a “developmental push” that follows from an awareness of the responsibilities he has assumed regarding his children. He recognizes that fathering must go beyond begetting children; he also must help his children to flourish. Thus, fatherhood is a catalyst for a man’s growth in at least two ways. First, a man is perfected in living up to the responsibilities he has assumed. Thus, in taking up the responsibilities of fatherhood, occasions for virtue are likewise realized. Secondly, there is a fundamental human recognition that one cannot give what one does not have. As mentioned throughout Chapters 10 and 11, the natural law directs man not only towards the begetting of children, but also

⁴ See ST.1.77.2.

towards providing both bodily nourishment but, even more, spiritual nourishment. Thomas said that the father must be the “guide and guardian under whom he [the child] progresses in goods both internal and external.”⁵ If a man does not have courage, he will fall short as a guardian. If he is not himself rich in “internal goods,” he will have nothing to give his children. He is therefore “pushed” towards his own perfection. Thus, fatherhood is both an overflowing of perfection already had and a kind of “push” towards further perfection.

Thomas is clear, however, that not all men are directed by the natural law to *biological* fatherhood. Procreation regards the human community taken as a whole, which community “needs not only to multiply in body, but also to advance spiritually.”⁶ Therefore, if sufficient provision has been made for the growth of the human community, some among the community can forego biological fatherhood to dedicate themselves “to the contemplation of Divine things, *for the beauty and welfare of the whole human race.*”⁷ I have argued that there are three general modes of fatherhood: 1) As regards his substantial form. 2) As regards the perfection of the substantial form. 3) As regards the completion of the common good. The setting aside of the first mode of fatherhood is done only so that the second two can be embraced more fully for the sake of the beauty and well-being of all. Thus, maleness is ordered to the generativity that finds its completion in fatherhood.

IMPLICATIONS AND DISCUSSION

In *Three Rival Versions of Moral Enquiry*, Alasdair MacIntyre speaks of philosophy as a master-craft that is passed down from the master-craftsman to the apprentice.⁸ The apprentice must be humble enough to learn from the master. He must recognize the good that he and the master-craftsman are working towards and grow in his own skills in order to reach the level of skill of the mater-craftsman. Work takes place in the context of a community in which each learns from the masters who have come before him. The good of the work finally measures both master and apprentice. And it is possible that the pupil can surpass the teacher, for the measure is the good; and it measures them both.

However, to recognize the good, one must first make oneself the pupil. At the beginning of the endeavor, one must accept the tradition and history of the craft. As I mentioned when speaking of the natural law, its principles are self-evident, but they can be obscured by contrary habits. One’s community, therefore,

⁵ ST.II-II.152.2.

⁶ ST.II-II.152.2. ad 1.

⁷ ST.II-II.152.2. ad 1.

⁸ See MacIntyre, *Three Rival Versions*, Chapter III, pp. 58-81.

takes on great importance as providing the *ethos* in which habits are formed, which either serves to enlighten or obscure one's understanding of the good. Tradition accepts the reliance upon history and community but finally subjects both to the truth as evidenced by the progress of the craft over time.

MacIntyre observes that the need for a community and for teachers sets the follower of a tradition apart from both the encyclopedist and the genealogist.

Such conceptions [of tradition] are of course deeply at odds both with the *ethos* of encyclopaedia and with that of genealogy. The encyclopaedists had learned from Kant that to be rational is to think for oneself, to emancipate oneself from the tutelage of authority. Any notion that I can only think adequately by and for myself insofar as I do so in the company of others, to some of whom authority must be accorded, is quite alien to the encyclopaedist, as it is indeed also the genealogist, who cannot but see in such authority the exercise of a subjugating power which has to be resisted.⁹

He proceeds to speak of the relationship of time and authority. For tradition, time marks the progress of a story towards a goal. The craft and craftsmen within it proceed towards that end, with each generation building upon the work of the previous one towards the perfection of the work. The encyclopedist, by contrast, must exclude tradition; he must stand wholly independent of time, place, and circumstance. While the genealogist may be grateful that tradition situates its pursuit of wisdom within an historical context, he nevertheless must see that pursuit of wisdom as folly; reliance upon tradition is subjugation of the present to the past. Those who hold to tradition exhibit a desire for power that wears the mask of learning; as such, tradition must be cast off.¹⁰

MacIntyre's vision of philosophy and moral enquiry occurring in the context of a community that is corporately dedicated to achieving a *telos*, or common good, that both, in a sense, stands above, but also animates the community, is entirely consistent with the understanding of fatherhood and masculinity that I have offered in this work. Many of the conditions that make involved fatherhood necessary in the life of a developing child also demand that learning in general take place in the context of a community pursuing the common good. A child needs a mother *and* a father because human growth and development is a complex process which requires a dedicated community to achieve. The isolation of the encyclopedist and the subversion of the genealogist are distinct but not unrelated modes of rejecting the father. For the encyclopedist, the father must be seen as a hindrance to autonomy. For the genealogist, Sartre well expressed the view that a father must be a burden

⁹ MacIntyre, *Three Rival Versions*, 64.

¹⁰ See MacIntyre, *Three Rival Versions*, 65-66.

and imposer of dominance. It is difficult for a man, then, to see the goodness of fatherhood. In one way or another, fathers are burdens.

I have presented what could be called a unified view of masculinity and fatherhood. I begin from within a philosophical tradition that includes basic notions such as form and finality. The form unifies the human being giving it an order in virtue of which the various parts and powers can be seen as functioning towards an end. Understanding the end unifies action. The nature of human society and the necessity of community for the pursuit and achievement of wisdom and the common good place the human person as a part of unified society. Masculinity and fatherhood find their meaning in generativity regarding the unity of the individual and the unity of society. Manhood is ordered towards fatherhood both as regards the generation and perfection of individuals but also as regards the accomplishment of common goods. When isolated from the fullness of its generative purpose, masculinity quickly degenerates into destructiveness.

This thesis began with the question, "Is fatherhood a burden?" Obviously, it can be a burden to both father and child. There are abusive fathers who do their children more harm than good. More subtly, there are father's who instrumentalize their children, using them to some selfish end, or as a means of living a vicarious life. Such instances of fatherhood give credence to the deconstructionist's view that fatherhood is domination. As Marcel rightly observed however, such errant notions of fatherhood follow from mistaking fatherhood for ownership. The understanding of fatherhood I have advanced is based upon the insight that man, as Marcel put it, can no more cause the being of another than he can cause his own being. A father is one who shares a gift received because he recognizes the goodness of that gift and has nurtured it to a certain fullness that permits its radiance. Sartre saw fatherhood as a burden because he believed in the impossibility of love. All relationships are struggles for power. Fatherhood is irrational and rotten because Hell is other people.

Adam feared fatherhood and, according to John Paul II, chose loneliness instead.¹¹ Fatherhood is contrasted with loneliness. I have argued that the font of fatherhood is the recognition of the goodness of human being - a recognition which leads ultimately to God as the source of being, and to the creative vow observed by Marcel. The rejection of fatherhood is therefore at root a rejection of such goodness, which is, among other things a mode of self-hatred, from which stance, isolation is the only option. Fatherhood is opposed to loneliness because its font is the beholding of the goodness of being. And goodness is the font of love. And love is the font of union.

¹¹ See Wojtyla, *The Radiation of Fatherhood*, 336.

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