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Fathering Our Sons; Refathering Ourselves: Some Thoughts on Transforming Masculine Legacies

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SUMMARY: Traditional narratives concerning the "masculinization" of boys promote a variety of relational woundings, some active some passive, in the name of fathering. Some current myths about the "development of masculine identity" are deconstructed, the consequences for adult males of the emotional trauma which is an integral part of most boy's development is outlined, and a vision of relational fathering is offered as an alternative. *(Single or multiple copies of this article are available from The Haworth Document Delivery Service: 1-800-342-9678, 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. (EST).)*

A male client of mine once gave me the gift of an old Yiddish saying. I won't pretend to remember the Yiddish, but the translation ran something like this: "The son wishes to remember what the father wishes to forget." In other words, the son, in his journey to maturity, needs somehow to uncover precisely what the father, in his development as a man, felt a need to disavow.

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From the moment I first heard this saying I was struck with its wisdom. What is it exactly that we hungry young men seek to ferret out of our fathers? From where comes this depth of need, this grief-tinged longing? I don't know about Yiddish culture, but, for my own, I have come to believe that that which the sons so passionately wish to remember, that which our fathers have come so thoroughly to forget, is nothing more or less than the relational being, the personhood, of the father himself.

What is fathering? Is it an activity or a relationship distinct from mothering, or from parenting in general? To understand fathering in the present dominant culture, I believe we must silhouette it against the backdrop of current narratives concerning masculinity and the "masculinization" of our sons.

TIMMY

"I remember the first time Bill did it." Ann looks up at me from her chair. "Timmy was lying in my lap, just resting, and Bill simply walked over and took Timmy's hand and said, 'Come here,' and whisked him off. I didn't realize what he was doing, at first. I thought he was taking him somewhere. But then it became obvious.

"So, I said to him, 'Bill, what are you doing?' and he got very angry with me. He said, 'He's too old. You have to learn to let go of him.' And I said, 'He's just a child.' And he bent right over me, very close, very upset and he said, 'You will *not* *maui* that boy!' I knew, of course, that he was talking about his relationship with his own mother, but I honestly didn't know what to say. I still don't know what to say."

"So," I ask, "Have you complied? Have you left Timmy alone?"

Ann smiles mischievously. "I *sneak*," she says.

Ann's smile is so impish. Her solution has such a familiar feel, that it seems misperceived to break with her lighthearted tone. Yet, if we step back a bit and cast a cool eye on this simple transaction, we can see that it speaks volumes about gender arrangements inside the contemporary family, and most of what it has to tell us is not good news.

Let's start by asking the same question about Bill that Ann asked. *What is he doing?*

Bill is attempting to ensure that his son is not babied, "ennmeshed," drained by the "regressive" pull of his mother. Bill wishes to help his son move into masculinity by helping him loosen the maternal bond. While Bill's behavior is abrupt and extreme, what moves him is a force which is everywhere in the dominant culture. It might manifest itself in the voice of a gym teacher who mocks Timmy however good-naturedly when he's too shy to join in a schoolyard game; or in the voices of Timmy's school chums who also ridicule him for not joining in, though less good-naturedly. It is in the silence of Timmy's mother who doesn't quite know what to say to a son who tells her that he cried. Should she support his tears or his need to push through them?

THE MYTH OF "MASCULINE IDENTITY"

What underlies all of these transactions is a belief shared by many about what it means to be a man and how boys achieve manhood. That underlying belief may be summed up in the following assertion: *The establishment of a stable sense of masculine identity is essential for a boy's mental health. Such a process requires a disidentification with mother and a firm identification with father.*

Let's "unpack" some of the assumptions embedded in that assertion.

First, that such a thing as a "masculine identity" exists.

Second, that such an identity is a good thing to have.

Third, that one does not simply have a masculine identity, one needs to establish it and that, furthermore, its establishment may or may not prove "stable."

Fourth, that a critical component of the task of securing such an identity is through "identification" with one's father.

Fifth, that a corollary component of the task of securing such an identity lies in repudiating one's connection with one's mother and with the "feminine" in general.¹

In the pioneering work on the sociology of gender in the 1970's and in the nearly two decades of research that have followed, no

persuasive evidence for a single one of the above assumptions has been established (Bloch, 1978; Fein, 1977; Pleck, 1981). The terms of the many hypothesized "masculinity/femininity" scales and other such measures have been repeatedly critiqued as culturally relative (Pleck, 1981). To date no evidence has emerged to substantiate the notion that boys create a stable internal psychological structure matching the numerous descriptions of "masculine identity," or that such a stable structure is necessary for psychological health.²

As a classroom exercise, I have taken to reading aloud to my students lists of questions from such measures from the fifties and sixties. I have found few things as much fun or as hard to argue with regarding the relativity of our thinking about what constitutes masculine versus feminine attributes. Do you prefer a bath or a shower? Do you get excited very easily? Do you like to read mechanics magazines? (Gough, 1952; cited in Pleck, 1981). And yet, that shibboleth, unstable masculine identities—with its concomitant counterpart, absent father role models—has been blamed for everything from drug addiction to juvenile delinquency, homosexuality and murder.

The myth of the disidentification with mother and necessary identification with father wound its way from Sigmund Freud through Talcott Parsons to generations of feminist writers like Nancy Chodorow, Jean Baker-Miller, Dorothy Dinnerstein and Carol Gilligan. Coming through the triple channels of psychoanalytic theory, sociology and cultural feminism, this narrative has gained extraordinary legitimacy and is offered, with unquestioned centrality, in just about all of the current psychological literature on men (e.g., Betcher & Pollack, 1993; Meth & Pasick, 1990; Osherson, 1986). A typical example can be found in Samuel Osherson's wonderfully sensitive and useful book, *Finding Our Fathers*:

The press to identify with father creates the *crucial dilemma* (italics, mine) for boys. Boys have to give up mother for father, but who is father? Often a shadowy figure at best, difficult to understand. Boys rarely experience fathers as sources of warm, soft nurture. The most salient adult object available for the boy is his mother. . . . What does it mean to be male? If father is

not there to provide a confident rich model of manhood, then the boy is left in a vulnerable position: having distanced himself from mother without a clear and understandable model of male gender upon which to base his emerging identity." (1986, p. 6)

While Osherson renders this account with characteristic empathy and warmth, he, like many others, does not pause to question the story's basic assumptions. Why must the boy give up his mother? Why must he have a "confident rich model of manhood?" Why must he learn what it means to be male at all? Isn't he male, already? Does he need, for example to learn what it means to be two-legged, or tall? Must he labor so intently to establish a stable psychological structure concerning his identity as a redhead or brunette, an American, a Methodist, an Ohioan, a great bowler? Why are we picking out this aspect of identity and making such a fuss over it?

For several decades, researchers attempted to operationalize the concept of masculinization through identification with father through correlational research. Researchers measured "masculinity" in fathers and then in their sons to determine the presence and strength of correlation. They found no robust correlation (Billler, 1971; Lamb, 1986).

The critical variable for the development in boys of a stable sense of identity and a positive attitude toward themselves as males turned out to be, not the degree of "masculinity" measured in the father, as predicted, but the warmth of the father-son relationship (Lamb, 1986). The crucial variables seemed relational—warmth, attachment, affection—the very qualities presumably correlated, according to traditional ideas, with the father's "femininity!"

As Lamb (1986) points out, the idea of identification with fathers was such a *given* that researchers took awhile before asking the very commonsense question, "Why should boys *want to identify* with their fathers?" Subsequent research provided an answer: boys like to be like fathers whom they like (Munsen & Rutherford, 1963; cited in Lamb, 1986). It is a testament to the sway of cultural assumptions that it took several decades to figure that out!

Another question it took some time for researchers to ask was, "What is it exactly that boys who identify with fathers identify

with?" In other words, what is this manhood that fathers supposedly model? Again, the answer that emerged ran counter to researchers' expectations. As a number of investigators and writers noted, boys' and men's senses of themselves as masculine have little to do with the attainment of any positive value. Masculinity is, as Chodorow put it, "a negative achievement" (Chodorow, 1978). Boys' "emerging masculine identities" seem less about positive attributes we call masculine than they are about the repudiation of what the dominant culture deems feminine—not being girlish, not being like mother, not crying and so on. In theory, a man's identification with his father is thought to be highly significant, but when one invites boys and men to speak in depth about their masculinity, it is emphatically the disidentification with mother that most matters to them (Levinson, 1978).

TRADITIONAL FATHERING AS PSYCHOLOGICAL VIOLENCE

When we, as fathers, clinicians, and researchers, stand clear of the embedded assumptions, it becomes apparent that our anxiety over and endless quest for masculine identity is not about furthering our sons' development, but about the imposition of role compliance through enforced repudiation. To teach our boys to become men, to father them traditionally, is to teach them, indeed to compel them, to disconnect—from their mothers, from their needs, from their soft emotional sides, from expressiveness, vulnerability, support—in a word, from the relational domain both within and without.³ Traditional fathering, intrinsically, structurally, inescapably, requires psychological violence.

I agree with Silverstein's (1994) observation that, in the current dominant culture, each sex is asked to halve itself. Girls and women are traditionally asked to inhibit the development and expression of public assertive agency, boys and men are traditionally asked to inhibit the development and expression of relational and affective connectedness. For decades, feminist scholars have documented both the coercion necessary to enforce role compliance and the negative psychological consequences of such compliance for women (e.g., Crowley, 1991). I believe a complimentary coercion

and a reciprocal set of psychological consequences are operative for men (e.g., Connoll, 1987).

Take an utterly mundane occurrence. Janie and her sons sit at the dining room table. David, who is fatigued and somewhat depressed, joins them after a long day at the office followed by a tough commute home. Janie wants to talk—to David, to the boys—about their day and hers. David wants to "relax," that is, to be left alone. After a few abortive efforts, Janie gives up and, rather than confront David, supplements his lack of interest with redoubled efforts of her own toward the kids. The boys, particularly the oldest, pick up Dad's cue and freeze out their mother with monosyllabic responses. Janie, afraid to "infantalize," willing to give her men "their space," eventually amiably withdraws. She putsers about the kitchen and cleans up while David listens to the news and the boys go off to sports or video games or homework. What has just occurred is completely, thoroughly seamless. There passes not a ripple of overt discontent. And yet, from the perspective I have gained from work with men, this simple, everyday scene is nothing short of psychologically chilling. What have these sons learned about what it means to be a man?

First, they have learned not to expect their father to attend to them or to be expressive about much of anything. They have come to expect him to be psychologically unavailable. Second, they have learned that he is not accountable in his emotional absence, that Mother does not have the power to either engage him or confront him. In other words, Father's neglect and Mother's ineffectiveness at countering it teach the boys that, in this family, at least, men's participation is not a responsibility but rather something voluntary and discretionary. Third, they learn that Mother, perhaps women in general, need not be negotiated with or taken too seriously. One can, just like Dad, stonewall them. Fourth, they learn that not just Mother, but the values she manifests in the family—connection, expressivity—are to be devalued and not responded to. The subtext message is, "engage in 'feminine' values and activities and risk a similar devaluation." The paradox for the boys is that the only way to connect with Father is to join him in apparent needlessness. Conversely, being too much like Mother threatens further disconnection or perhaps, active reprisal.⁴ In this moment, and thousands of other ordinary moments, these boys are learning to accept psy-

chological neglect, to discount nurture, and to turn the vice of such abandonment into a manly virtue.

ACTIVE AND PASSIVE ABUSE

To understand the ordinary moments of psychological violence that are an intrinsic part of most boys' development, I have found it helpful to keep in mind a distinction I first encountered in the literature on trauma recovery; a distinction between what I call *active* and *passive* abuse.⁵

Active abuse is usually a boundary violation of some kind, a clearly toxic interaction. Passive abuse, on the other hand, is a form of physical or psychic neglect. Rather than a violent presence, passive abuse may be defined as a violent lack, the lack of forms of nurturance or responsibility which one might minimally expect a caregiver to demonstrate.

While passive abuse is, in all but the most extreme instances, more elusive than flagrant active abuse, my clinical work has brought me to agree with the observation that passive abuse in childhood, particularly when pervasive and covert, may cause serious impairment in later years (Janoff-Bulman, 1992; Melody, 1989).

One of the things I have learned in working with issues of abuse over the years is that there isn't always a simple and direct correspondence between the flagrancy and severity of childhood abuse and the degree of impairment in later life. The child of a consistently psychotic parent, for example, may emerge relatively unscathed if he or she is fortunate enough to find others for nurture, guidance and the support of his or her reality testing about the sick parent. On the other hand, I have worked with people whose major caregivers looked nurturing enough overtly but who were capricious and inconsistent, whose emotional withdrawal or punitiveness was subtle and covert. That environment left my clients deeply impaired in their capacity for intimacy and impaired, furthermore, in a way that was difficult to rectify even with years of therapy.

Men's Group

In the Wednesday night men's group I have lead for the past two years, Ryan "checks in," with the tale of a "small roadside epiph-

any." Coming home from a party, Ryan's wife, Lilly, expressed hurt and anger at a repeated pattern in which Ryan, affectionate in private, would "disown and shun" her in public gatherings.

"She told me it felt as if I wanted to act like I didn't know her."

Ryan told us. "In the past, I would have gotten defensive and probably started a fight, but this time I was so . . . I don't know, so stunned, I just pulled over on the side of the road and shut off the car." Lilly was right, Ryan realized. With a few years of therapy behind him, Ryan allowed himself to be flooded not only with the truth of her account and the pain it caused her, but also with remembered associations. Ryan's parents rarely demonstrated physical affection for one another and, while they had shown physical nurture to him as a young boy and still did to his sister, they had severed that connection with him from about the age of six or seven.

What Ryan recalled, sitting on the side of the road, was a vivid memory of himself as a boy of seven or eight, crying hysterically in the middle of the kitchen asking for a "pick up," while his family bustled around him preparing dinner as if he simply wasn't there. "It was as if my parents made a decision one day to stop, although I'm sure they didn't because they didn't talk about things like that. I don't think my father touched me again, except maybe once or twice every few years he would totally lose it and throw me against a wall. I think that was it."

I lead Ryan through a quick guided imagery exercise. I asked him to close his eyes and see himself lifting his infant son in the air and laughing together, a scene he had described many times to the group. I asked him to note the joy, the sheer pleasure in each of their faces. Then I asked him to imagine himself as a child being touched with such joy by his father. Ryan began to cry, softly, silently. "That was your birthright," I told him. "His thrill to be with you. You deserved that." Beside Ryan, George also began quietly to cry. When I asked what was triggered, he recalled that on the afternoon of his MBA graduation, his father hugged him and said he loved him for the first time in his life. "I was twenty six years old," he mused. "Even a BA wasn't enough to get it out of him. I had to earn a fucking *graduate* degree." George smiled ruefully, tears still in his eyes. "If I'm still in this damn group when I have a child, I

swear I am going to tell that precious creature I care about him or her at least once a day, do you hear me? At least once a day. If I don't, you can drag me out of the house and knock some goddamn sense into me."

Does calling such neglect abusive trivialize the nature of abuse? I don't think so. I think not touching a child for decades at a time is a form of violence. I think withholding any expression of love until a young child is a grown man is a form of violence. And I believe that the violence men level against themselves and others is bred from just such circumstances. Ryan first came to therapy after a year of escalated alcohol abuse and several instances of hitting his fiancée. He lost the relationship but, with my help, entered treatment for his drinking and an underlying depression. When George was referred to me for a consult, he was suicidally depressed and on the verge of an emergency hospitalization. These men are not whining. These injuries are not shallow. Minimizing their distress, minimizing men's distress in general, is not merely wrong, it is dangerous.

In trade for multilevelled, pervasive abandonment, and the demand that boys learn to abandon whole parts of themselves, the dominant culture traditionally offers boys and men the recompense of privilege. We are to be catered to, we are to be waited upon, we are to be "supported." When push comes to shove, whether it's in corporate glass ceilings or in the flash of domestic violence, if men's interests are sufficiently threatened, many will allow themselves recourse to outright coercion.

Good therapy with men demonstrates with each session that the traditional *quid pro quo* is a deal with the devil. It is exactly the deal Faust struck with the marvelously seductive Mephistopheles, the trade of worlds of power and knowledge, of the capacity to *do*, in return for our very (relational) souls.

Melody draws a distinction between abuse of disempowerment, shaming transactions, and abuse of "false empowerment," transactions which further grandiosity (Melody, 1989). Either puffing up a child inappropriately or simply failing to limit a child's natural grandiosity is a form of abuse which leads inevitably to disorders of self-esteem. We may be unaccustomed to thinking (particularly those of us who are used to a political analysis) of inflation of ego

as a form of abuse, but in terms of the requirements of good parenting such transactions are demonstrably bad for children.

The relevance of gender to the distinction of disempowering and falsely empowering abuse is important and should be obvious. Girls and women in this culture tend to be subject to abuse of disempowerment, boys and men are subject to transactions which alternate between the two. Neither leads to healthy self-esteem or a mature capacity to tolerate the vigorous negotiation of relationship.

For decades feminist writers have shed light on the victimization of girls who are disempowered and shamed. Dare we now risk empathy for those who are falsely empowered, those who will offend others? Not only can we, but I believe that we must if we are to heal the split currently in the culture with regard to men. In my view, those of us who have held a feminist position have historically viewed men, and have used rhetoric which described men, primarily as oppressors. While such descriptions may make for good political analysis, they are an untenable language for therapy. On the other hand, traditional empathy-driven therapy, and certainly the "man-as-wounded" frame current in most of the literature coming out of the men's movement (both the mythopoetic men's movement and current books on men's psychology) woefully ignore the whole issue of privilege and oppression. Bograd (1993) has asserted the need for "a new lexicon" of therapy for men. I believe she is right and I believe that looking at issues of abuse provides an excellent alternative to the extremes of either further objectifying men in the name of politics or depoliticizing men's actions in the name of psychological understanding.

Therapeutic Implications

In therapy with men, the therapist—male or female—must simultaneously hold clients in empathy and yet still hold them accountable. Therapists must hold male clients, as Sternbach puts it, as both *wounded and wounding* (Sternbach, 1993). I believe therapy that looks sympathetically and squarely at the ways in which men are both abused and are also set up to become abusive to others offers hope for real change.

Mephistopheles, like any traditional father/mentor, offers Faust, his spiritual son, a double dose of toxicity: the abandonment of real

vulnerability and relatedness which is then compensated for by grandiosity, the illusion of needlessness and privilege. It is a fountain of knowledge without wisdom which leaves the drinker thirstier than before.

The position that boys, later men, inhabit is akin to that of the "special child" (Lomas, 1967) in the narcissistically disordered family, the position of the "parentified child" (Minuchin, 1974) and the "hero" (Woititz, 1983). I have described this position as "the masochism of grandiosity" (Real, 1978). The child has inordinate power and place, but only upon condition that he abdicate his own authentic needs. In other words, I believe that a narcissistic disorder, a disorder of self, is to some degree the norm for men in our society.

Furthermore, in the very moments that we are being abjured by our fathers to "grow up," "stop whining," "break away," we are being bathed, covertly, in their grief over the very wounds inside themselves that they now inflict. The "unfinished business" (Osherson, 1986) our fathers have not attended to, the issues and feelings they have not responsibly dealt with inside themselves, are absorbed by their porous sons.⁶

For years I, quite wisely, refused to work with violent fathers. Now, I work with them often. Each time I do, I vividly recall my own father out of control in his rage, and yet my feeling, even as he lashed out, was mostly sad for him, tender. Through the tone of his voice, the quality of his touch, the pain in his eyes, my father leaked the depression he didn't know he had out onto me, and, upon occasion, like many fathers of his generation, he beat it into me with the back end of a strap.

In hindsight it is clear to me that I became a therapist so I could cultivate the skills I needed to heal my own father—to heal him at least enough to get him to talk to me. I needed enough information from him to be able to come to terms with his brutality so that I might lay my hatred of him to rest. At first I did this, quite unconsciously, not out of any great love for him, but out of an instinct to save myself. I wanted the legacy to stop.

I had to refather my father enough to allow him to at least minimally father me. In the last years of his life, we managed to do a lot better than the minimum, but that is another story. Suffice it to say

that I take what I learned from that process into the task of refathering the men I work with each day. While space will not allow a detailed illustration of a variety of techniques I find helpful, I will provide a conceptualization of what refathering means.

Refathering as Parenting

To understand refathering, I must first be clear that I do not believe in the idea of fathering to begin with, any more than I believe in mothering. I do not believe in the division of life experience or the doctrine of separate spheres. I believe in parenting. I don't believe that we need bother turning boys into men or girls into women—nature will take care of that all on its own. I do believe that mature adults need to help children turn into mature adults. What this means is that mothers can show their children, both boys and girls, how to be sensitive *and* assertive. That fathers can show their children, both boys and girls, how to be competent *and* vulnerable (Silverstein, 1994).

While I do not believe that boys internalize masculinity from their fathers and other role models, I do believe that they internalize something. Among other things, I believe, they internalize contempt. The true sequelae of the abuse leveled against boys is closer to the psychoanalytic idea of identification with the aggressor than it is with the idea of role models. What the trauma and abuse literature tells us is that in moments of abuse, or, in other words, of boundary failure, predictably, the victimized child will move to protect the psychic equilibrium of the offender and will adopt the attitudes toward himself or herself that the offender has (Gelinas, 1983; Melody, 1989). This moment of what I call "empathic reversal" lies at the heart of understanding men in our society. In such instances of abuse, either active or passive, discrete or acted out over time, the boy comes to shift his allegiance (identification, if you like) to the views and attitudes of the offender (or the contemptuous messages of the culture at large). He loses empathy with his own boyish, needy, "feminine" self and adopts empathic attention to those who hold that self in contempt. This is the moment (or, more accurately, thousands upon thousands of repeated moments) of loss of the boy's relational self.

What all of the techniques of refathering have in common, as I

use them, is a reversal of this reversal, so that empathy is reestablished for the boy in the man, and accountability is reasserted vis-à-vis the offender (whether that means the original offending caregiver, the offending messages from the culture at large, or the offensive parts of his grown-up self). This can be done through adapting a variety of commonly used family therapy techniques: for example, through role play experiences in which parts of the self may be extracted, acted out, modified; or through family of origin work, either by letter, role play, or with the adult male's actual parents. The therapist can move the client into a light trance and do age regression work, in which the client relives some traumatic moments and the therapist champions the reversal of empathy in trance. One may use guided imagery, as I did with Ryan, or the power of a group, as was effective with George. There are any number of ways to redo the original inversion.

What they all have in common is the conviction that the deal men are offered by patriarchy is ultimately of no great benefit to them—even though it does afford them certain privileges.

In order to help men question and ultimately distance themselves from a host of accustomed but unfruitful behaviors I have found it useful to first understand the ways in which the man's particular abuse history, as well as forces in the culture at large, have set him up to be immature or unskilled in the realm of relationship (empathic holding). Then we look squarely together at the cost, to him and to those around him, should he continue in the same vein (confrontation). Faced with such a combination of understanding and clarity, I have found few men refuse to embark on an exploration of new repertoires of behavior, repertoires which, I am convinced, will leave them less depressed and less impoverished in the long run.

CONCLUSION

If the theme of disconnection is implicated in the transmission of injury, in toxic fathering, then reconnection, re-remembering, the cure. Refathering is a slow, sometimes painful relearning of how to take care—how to listen to and cherish those inner voices which have been stilled, how to listen to and cherish the needs of

those around us. The great challenge for men of this generation, men who seem to be questioning the constraints of traditional roles, lies in understanding that in order to teach our sons how to move into adulthood with unrepuddiated hearts, we must show them ours.

Fathering sons in this culture has too often been about depriving the child's deepest emotional needs while simultaneously pumping him up with false privilege. Real "fathering" by man or woman, by a therapist to a client, a father to a son, a man to a part of himself, is about holding the child at once with empathy and accountability. Fathering, as I see it, is about bringing the child into cherishing the skills of relational maturity, skills which include sensitivity to others (the traditional domain of women) and public assertive action (the traditional domain of men).

If each father is a bridge, stretching from the generation behind to the promise ahead, if each father transmits to his children—in parts knowingly, in parts not—the legacy of what it means to be a man, then each child, and particularly each son, offers the father an opportunity to transform that masculine legacy. To my mind this is the deepest sense of the idea that fatherhood is a crisis for each man. It is, above all, a crisis in identity with all of the difficulty and all of the transformative potential any real crisis affords. If he is to be authentic, a father's capacity to shape the legacy of masculinity he passes on to his children requires nothing less of him than a willingness to reshape the terms of masculinity by which he himself has lived. We men will be able to father our sons maturely to the degree to which we learn to father ourselves maturely.

AUTHOR NOTE

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NOTES

1. I am indebted to the pioneering work of Joe Pleck (1983) for many of these thoughts.
2. See Pleck (1981, 1983) and Solomon (1982) for reviews of the literature.
3. I am particularly indebted to Olga Silverstein for helping me clarify my thinking on this point. Cf. Bergman (1991), Betcher & Pollack (1993), Silverstein (1994) and Weingarten (1994).
4. The principle here is an old one. Advocate for or too strongly identify with an oppressed group and risk a similar oppression—the fate of the “Indian lover,” “Jew lover,” “Nigger lover.” The fate of the sissy. The film, “Casualties of War,” dramatizes the true story of a young American soldier who stands against his peers in their capture and repeated rape of a Vietnamese woman. He is taunted, assaulted and finally threatened with rape himself.
5. Melloby (1989) uses the terms *overt* and *covert* abuse to mean both open not-Bulman (1992) and McCann & Pearlman (1990) especially pp. 57-79.
6. See Melloby (1989) on the issue of “carried feelings.”

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