

A Declaration of Caring: Towards an *ecological masculinism*

It may be true that cultures preceding the rise of state societies ... had no ideologies of dominating nature. It may also be true that many women today, for not only biological but also historical and social reasons, retain characteristics of sympathy and care that many men, for social reasons, have lost (although men, as humans, are also biologically equipped for caring). However, reifying these differences into a “male” and “female nature” tends to exclude the possibility that men may become caring, and it imposes a moral agenda on women to somehow “save” society from the damage that some men have historically wrought [upon the world].

Janet Biehl (1988) “What is Social Ecofeminism?” in *Green Perspectives: A Left Green Publication*, p. 63.

That we are today facing considerable social and environmental calamities is to state the obvious. It is however less obvious who is principal cause in the matter, and whose responsibility it is to do something about creating a healthier world. To date, women and things feminine have carried the burden of caring for people and the planet while men have been traditionally positioned as dominators, doers, inventors and agents for human productivity at the expense of social and environmental health. This polarised gender/nature dynamic can no longer continue if we are to create a sustainable world.

Janet Beihl's epigraph is a telling introduction to the following paper for one key reason. The expectation that men dominate and women care is not only gender polarised, but is also overly simplistic and erroneous. While women have long been positioned as primary carers for children and the earth, the presence of men as carers for self, society and environment is largely absent from gendered social norms – particularly in the West. In other words, men and masculine identities in the traditional sense of the terms, have had little to do with caring for the health and wellbeing of the planet. This paper takes an alternative view that the male experience foster a caring demeanour towards society and environment – men and masculine identities actually stand as equals with women and feminine identities in the task of caring for people and the planet. It is time that a declaration of caring was pronounced that specifically permitted men and masculine identities to claim a central role in the maintenance of sustainable relationships, societies and human/nature exchanges. Agreeing with traditional norms that suggest men and masculinities¹ lack care is based in human distresses, and denies us half the potential allies in the task of making sustainability a mainstream concept. We have clearly been making behavioural choices that are disadvantageous to the health and integrity of the earth's living systems for some time, and we have been doing so from within a masculine hubris. In a world dominated by men and masculine identities, the needs of the earth have paled in comparison to the needs of men – and by this, I literally mean 'men'. Classism, sexism, racism, homophobia, ageism, speciesism and the like are cycles of oppression that share a common feature: they each place men in positions of domination over women and nature. And men's men, macho men, men of 'substance', readily overshadow those facets of maleness that are of softer and gentler persuasions; those attributes that express a man's infinite capacity to care, which are often labelled 'feminine'.

This paper centres on the following thesis statement: ***ALL MEN ARE GOOD AND POSSESS AND INFINITE CAPACITY TO CARE FOR SELF IN RELATIONSHIP WITH SOCIETY AND ENVIRONMENT.*** However, things get in the way of this proposition being realised. These 'things' are compulsive behaviours that find their

¹ I make a distinction between men and masculinities here to note the difference between biological and behavioural maleness – the former is a matter of physiology and physique representative of half the human population, while the latter represents gendered behaviours that may exist in both men and women.

source in the distresses that an individual has acquired throughout their lives that often result in addictions. And these addictions generate considerable social and environmental harm. These harmful patterns are largely perpetrated by men, and either directly or indirectly leave them feeling badly about themselves. It is argued here that this 'feeling badly' lays at the very heart men's ongoing perpetrative role in social and environmental harm. When given permission to release distressed feelings that cause these compulsive addictions, men, like all human beings, are able to exhibit their innate goodness, their ability to care for self, society and environment, and access their gentle and warm real natures in support of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness through the liberation of all peoples and the planet from all forms of oppression (Jackins, *et al.*, 1999: 4). In other words, given the right conditions, men and masculinities will defer to a caring and inclusive relationality towards other men, women and children as well as wider nature, as a default behavioural position. A closer examination of the nexus between men's daily lives, masculine identity and the ways humanity engage with society and environment is needed if this innate goodness in men and masculine identity is to be broadly and freely acknowledged to an extent that we are able to comprehensively orchestrate the creation of sustainable lives, societies and environments.

But discourses on masculine identity, social justice and ecological wellness are not typically viewed together. When the more radical factions of the masculinities discourse make mention of social concerns, they do so with little mention of environmental concerns (Connell, 1995: 120). Similarly, environmental studies avoid gender issues (Allister (ed), 2004:9) with the exception of ecological feminism, which has made profoundly important contributions to the socio-political deconstruction of the human/nature relationship, and has successfully raised the lot of women and nature. These dual blindspots contribute to a men's oppression which is defined here as: the systematic internalisation of a sense of superiorisation by men and masculine aspects of the self over women and nature. To internalise one's sense of superiority is to compromise one's fuller humanness, is to dehumanise the dominator and desensitise him to the impact his behavioural choices will have not only on others, not only on the environment, but on himself. In addition to the familiar physical symptoms of social and environmental decay, the modern Western social project has effectively diminished the ability

for men to show care for self in-relationship-with the broader 'Other'. Men literally die younger, and this may be a direct consequence of damage to self, society and environment (Courtenay, 2003: 1- 2). Suicide, heart disease, along with crime, and the polluting and destroying of nature have long afflicted Western men in higher numbers than women (Flood, *et al.*, eds., 2007).

Even the most archetypal of malestream men can leap to the level of care for others beyond the self that might ordinarily be considered abnormal. Take the case of Spc. Ross McGinnis as a recent example:

SHIPPENVILLE, Pa. — Growing up in a small rural town, Ross McGinnis was more apt to get in trouble than [be] on the honor roll. So he enlisted in the Army, and in just under a year found his soul mate, a brotherhood, and even himself.

"I just cannot wait for the day when I can connect all three lives into one," McGinnis wrote on his MySpace page ...

The 19-year-old private first class never got that chance. He was in the gunner's hatch of a Humvee on Dec. 4, 2006, when a grenade sailed past him and into the vehicle where four other soldiers sat. He shouted a warning, then jumped back-first onto the grenade, which blew up and killed him. [He was] posthumously presented the nation's highest military award, the Medal of Honor ...

... If McGinnis had jumped from the Humvee to save his own life, as he had been trained, no one would have faulted him ...

[Survivor and retired Staff Sgt. Ian Newland said] "I've never felt more proud in my life to have known somebody and have shared so many experiences with somebody and to have someone call me their friend ... but at the same time, never felt so guilty and ripped apart from the inside and outside and almost wishful that events could have been changed."

(Nepkin, D., 2008, 'Soldier, 19, jumped on grenade to save others' in The Associated Press: Nation. Retrieved on 16th June 2008 from the World Wide Web: <http://www.azstarnet.com/sn/attack/241634>).

Citing the famous Biblical quote from John 15:13, George W. Bush – that attempt at the swaggering archetype of a Texan man's man – is aware that "Greater love hath no man than this, that [he] lay down his life for his friends." Western social norms downplay men's ability to show care, and yet when placed in extreme circumstances and they do exactly that, we honour

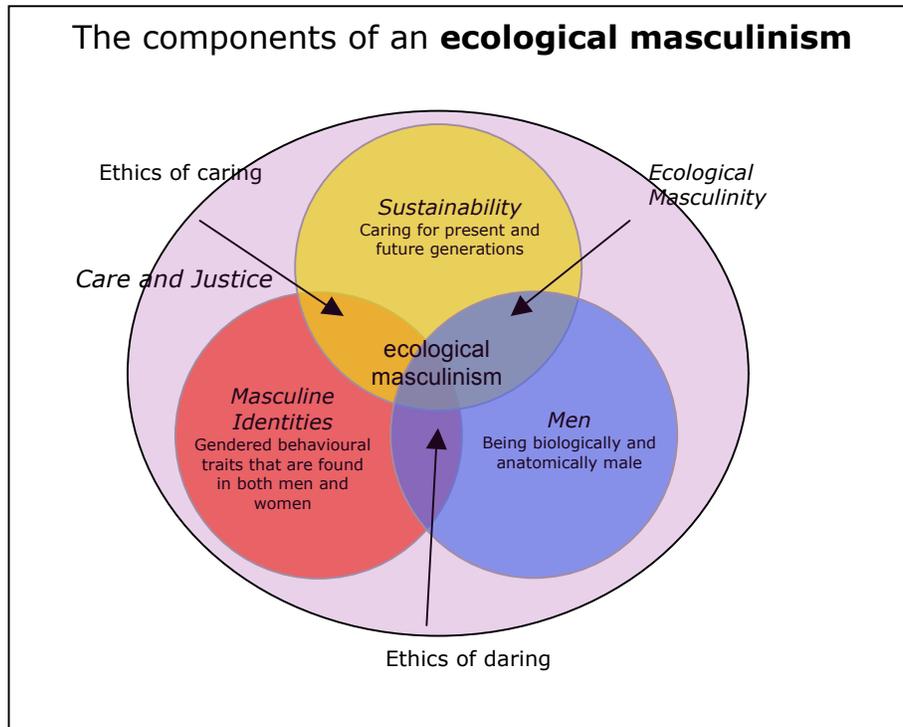
them as the greatest of heroes. Such conflicting yet powerful messages impact men's lives and complicate definitions of traditional masculinity considerably, leaving men with little room to move but to show their capacity to care only under the most extreme of circumstances – in this case coupled with a perverse propaganderised nationalism that was used to support a U.S. military industrial presence in the Gulf at the expense of people's lives. There is little doubt that had McGinnis been injured instead of killed, he would not be honoured thus. This young soldier was valorized precisely because he was killed through his act of compassion for others; his, another life lost in the pursuit of neo-colonial control over oil. McGinnis was posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor at the White House, on the 2nd June 2008 – the United State's highest military decoration, and the Gulf war continues to smolder.

Ecophilosophy is similarly ignorant of the important role that men and masculinities can play as allies in creating healthier human/nature relationships. Until now, an ecologised masculinities discourse has not existed – Mark Allister's (2004) *Ecoman: A New Perspective on Masculinity and Nature* is the nearest exploration of this nexus to be found. The compilation surveys “ ... fresh [perspectives] about the relations between masculinity and nature” (Allister, *op. cit.*: 1). With hopes of standing as a compliment to ecological feminism, *Ecoman* offers killer stories from North American hunting culture, visions of frontier masculinities, commentary on the imbedded toughness of Rancher maleness, and emphasises the significance of out-of-doors adventuring in defining modern masculinities through the lens of ecocriticism, but veers away from an intentional socio-political analysis of the role that maleness might play in advancing the cause of environmentalism (*Ibid*: 3 – 5). *Ecoman* does not posit an ecologised masculinities theory or praxis. And, until now, no such gender/nature discourse has been presented to the Academy or beyond.

With the intention of remedying this blind spot in the gender/nature discourse, this paper introduces an *ecological masculinism*. *Ecological masculinism* aims to construct an ecologised masculinities theory that stands shoulder-to-shoulder with ecological feminism in sanctioning the ability for both men and women to show care for the self through care for human and other-than-human others. As a new contribution to the human/nature discourse within

ecophilosophy, *ecological masculinism* is constructed on the premise that both genders play important roles in reinforcing as well as challenging malestream norms, but necessarily do so from different vantage points in society. Ecological feminism aims to end the sexist oppression of women and nature. For men, a sense of internalised superiority needs to be given up if we are to live in a gendered and environmentally balanced world. Like women and feminine identities, men and masculinities are subject to ecological processes both literally and metaphorically. This harmful maleness is typically constrained within an oppressive Western mainstream ethic that is misogynist, competitive, aggressive and self-serving (This sexist mainstream is henceforth referred to as 'the malestream'). In such a climate, men's oppression runs rough-shod over effeminate men and masculinities, or men who choose alternative behaviours and identities to that which is sanctioned by the malestream, resulting in suffering similarly experienced by women and nature – these marginalised men and masculine identities (those that are not men's men, not macho men, not men of 'substance'), are marginalised, put down, devalued, and oppressed through the powerful accusation of being 'unmanly'. Malestream norms daringly confront any challenge to their ethical foundations, and conceal the instinctual caring that (as is the case and is widely acknowledged for women) exists between men, masculinities, society, and environment (Biehl, 1988: 63 & 65 – 66). Inside of such contentious dynamics, there is little room for men to show care for self while also taking care of society and the planet. Sanctioned masculine care typically goes only as far as the individual, family or nation state. To care for the broader and anonymous 'other' in the intrinsically valuable sense of the term is to deny one's birthright as a 'real man'.

An ecological masculinism is conceptualised according to the figure below:



Ecological masculinity is not prescriptive, nor definitive, but rather traverses the politicised spectrum of the masculinities/nature discourse dynamically, and in reflection of the politics and personal experiences of each individual. I propose a twelve-point platform for an *ecological masculinity* that guides masculinities theory through this social and environmental ecologisation process:

Twelve-Point Platform for an *ecological masculinity*:

1. The masculine hubris that exists throughout Western societies, and the ways that Western humanity interacts with the more-than-human world are unsustainable
2. Such unsustainable consequences are becoming increasingly unmanageable and are the product of distressed experiences. These distressed experiences often result in addictive behaviours such as compulsive drug and alcohol use, sex, crime, warfare, competition in work and play, religious zealotry, inequitable access to information, and the domination of men and masculine identities over social interactions at the familial, social, national and international levels

3. These distressed experiences have been perpetrated most intensely by men and masculine identities resulting in the mutual oppression of nature, women and marginalised men through the mainstreaming of ethics of daring
4. Creating a more sustainable world requires men and masculinities to eliminate malestream ethics (ethics of daring), and openly embrace caring ethics (ethics of caring)
5. Taking responsibility for the impact that these ethics of daring have on 'otherised' nature, women and marginalised men is vital if sustainable societies are to be constructed – to do otherwise is to compromise one's full-humanness; it must be broadly and publicly permissible for men and masculinities to demonstrate care for self through expressions of care for society and environment
6. For men to do so effectively requires humility and the elimination of a 'pretense of confidence' that obscures men's feelings and isolates them from society and environment such that men and masculine identities become synonymous with connectivity and relationality. In other words, men and masculine identities must be ecologised, beginning with their being permitted to show their feelings and heal through them
7. Enrolling other men to realise their fullest potential of the self through care for human and other-than-human others is vital for sustainability to emerge as a mainstream ethical premise throughout the West and beyond. To do otherwise is to abandon men and masculinities to traditional gender norms that leave them isolated and de-humanised, effectively constraining the liberation process for men, women and nature
8. Upon assuming responsibility for the lion's share of social and environmental malaise, the harm that men and masculinities have wrought upon the world must be actively amended both conceptually and practically, within the individual, throughout society, and in the ways that men and masculine identities engage with wider nature
9. In making amends to society and environment, no further harm can be caused to human or other-than-human others by men or masculine identities
10. Individuals engaged in the ecologisation of men and masculinities must be willing to 'hang in there' with each other through breakdowns. Those engaged in formulating an *ecological masculinism* must be willingness to self-reflect and self-manage, whereby any reversion to ethics of daring are swiftly checked to enable a caring environment to be restored. This self and

societal maintenance requires compassionate vigilance where the innate goodness of men and masculinities is preserved

11. The role of men and masculinities in forwarding the cause of social and environmental justice must become mainstreamed; men and masculinities must stand shoulder-to-shoulder with women and feminism in showing care for society and the environment
12. In creating a sustainable social and environmental mainstream of which men and masculinities play a key role, this sentiment is to be intentionally and strategically spread throughout human societies ²

This twelve-point platform is intentionally subjective and relativistic in guiding the individual towards an ecologised masculinities theory and praxis. The platform is also deliberately non-prescriptive, reflecting the unique experiences of the individual inquirer. There may well be significant overlap between the ethical constructs of one individual versus another in formulating an *ecological masculinism*. Similarly, there may be considerable overlap between the nuances of masculine identity positionalities throughout the spectrum of existing masculinities positionalities, each containing various degrees of malestream ethics (ethics of daring) and caring ethics (ethics of caring).³ To ecologise the masculinities discourse requires the building of a conceptual framework that excludes the former, and centralises the latter. *Ecological masculinism* must dispel ethics of daring and prioritise ethics of caring. Various renditions of ethics of daring within masculinities theory will continue to exist throughout the discourse and in Western society into the foreseeable future, even with the best of intentions to eradicate the hubristic nature of Western malestreams. Ecologised masculinities can however assist with the demise of this ethical hubris from within masculinities theory and in conjunction with similar intents from non-masculinist ecophilosophies such as ecological feminism, by introducing caring to all men and masculinities. The figure below captures the plural nature of the masculinities discourse, noting the eight core positionalities that have been

² The twelve -point platform for an *ecological masculinism* listed here is inspired and adapted from the twelve-steps of Alcoholics Anonymous World Services Inc., (See Co-Dependents Anonymous Inc.,1999, p. 5).

³ Malestream ethics are referred to as ethics of daring in reflection of the daring nature of traditional masculinities, and the daring response to any affront to their demise. Similarly, caring ethics are henceforth referred to as ethics of caring to reflect the softer, nurturing behaviours that can and do exist in men and masculinities.

identified and locates an ecological masculinity, ethics of daring and ethics of caring within. The eight key positionalities identified within the masculinities discourse are Socialist, Queer, Gay, Profeminist, Black, Mythopoeitic, Men's Rights, and Christian masculinities theories:

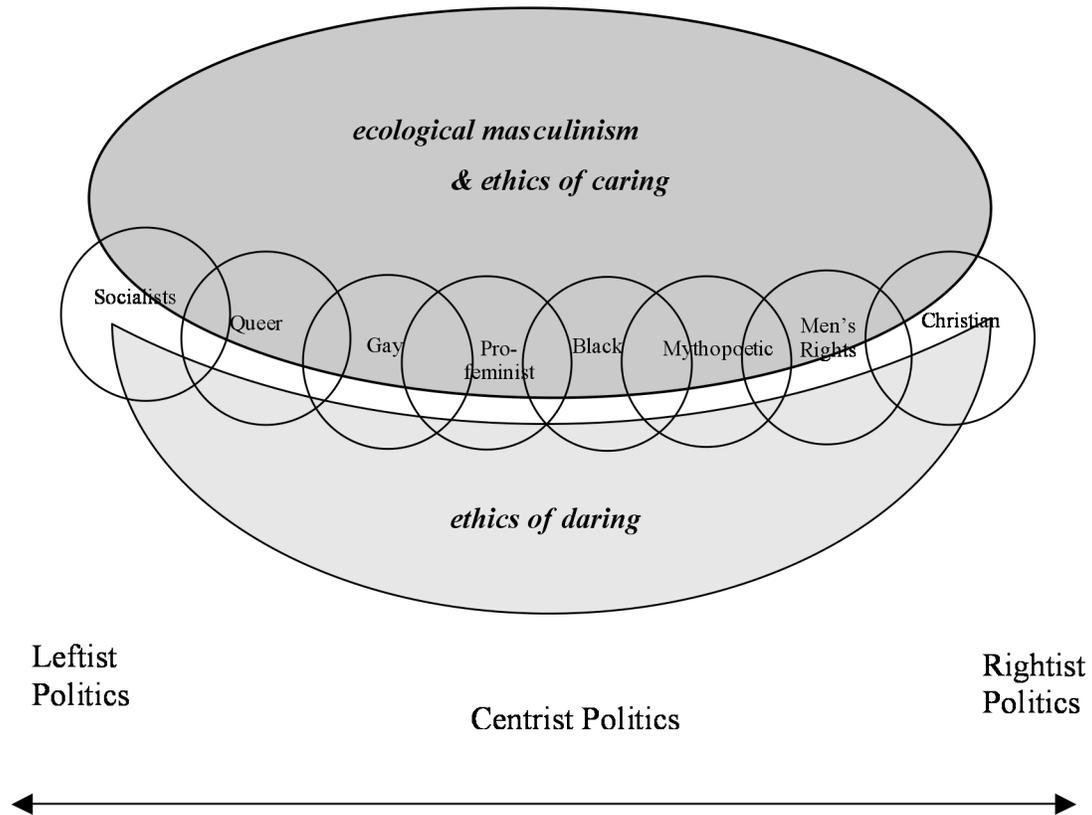
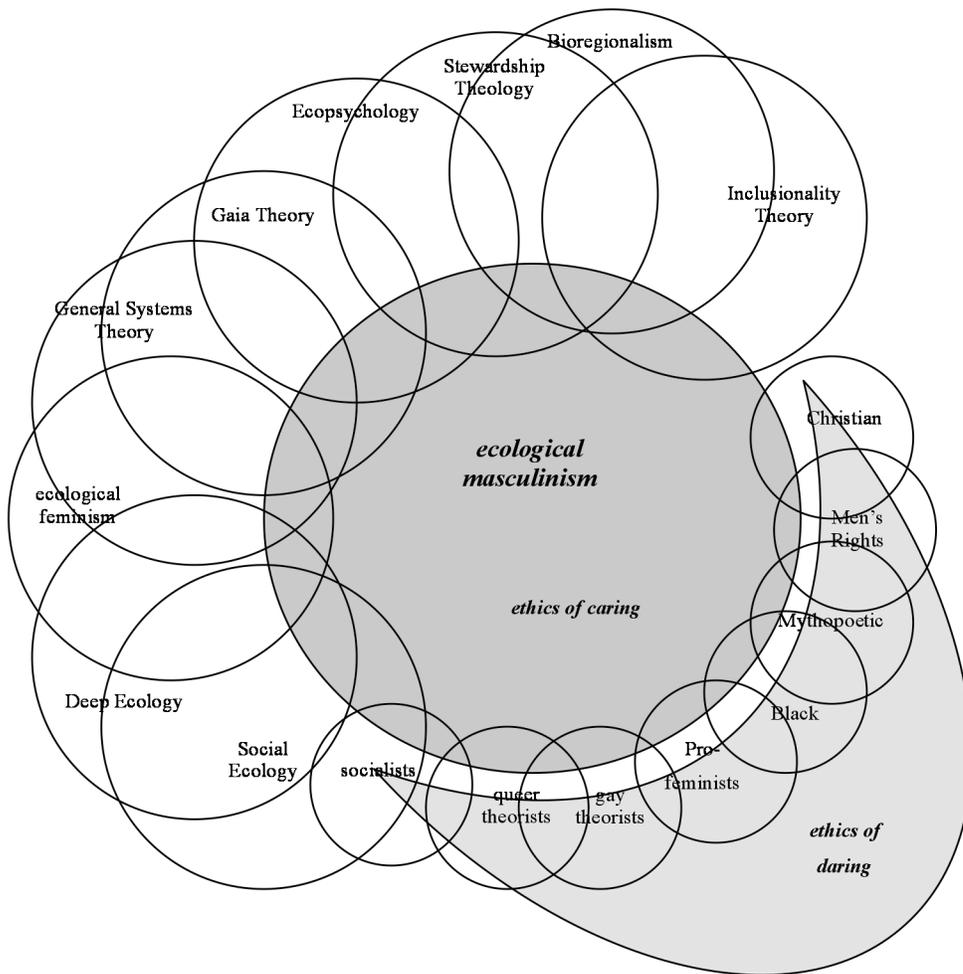


Figure 1: Spectrum of existing Western masculinities theories in the context of an *ecological masculinity*

A post-patriarchal ecocentric world would be cultivated and enable ecologised masculinities along with non-masculinist ecosphilosophies to become mainstreamed (biocentric) alternatives to the malestream. In such a scenario, humanity would prioritise relationality, and sustainability, effectively positing care for the Other as care for the self as the norm. Ecological feminism has a thirty-year lead in supporting the feminist advance towards this goal. Men and masculinities must go through some catch-up with ecological feminism if humanity in general is to stand ethically aligned with sustainability as a matter of course. And until we reach such

levels of social evolution, the need to 'ecologise' Western masculinities not only remains relevant but may also be timely and assist in getting us closer to a goal of trans (as-in beyond) gendered ecocentrism. A litany of existing environmental philosophies may be of additional assistance in helping to formulate a plural and effective *ecological masculinism*. An array of ecophilosophical disciplines that inform the formulation of an *ecological masculinism* offer unique insights into the human and other-than-human/nature relationships. They are: Inclusivity theory, Bioregionalism, Stewardship Theology, Ecopsychology, Gaia theory, General Systems theory, ecological feminism, deep ecology, and social ecology.⁴ When combined and drawn upon to help construct an effective *ecological masculinism*, they collectively support a shift away from the hubristic nature of malestream ethics of daring. In doing so, they give relevance to relationships, albeit on varying scopes and scales, and are therefore interactive across the full spectrum of masculinities positionalities, and when combined with the plurality of positionalities within masculinities theory, might be schematically summarised thus:

⁴ I summarise the significance of these ecophilosophies to an *ecological masculinism* elsewhere (See Pulé in Flood, *et al., op. cit.*: 66 – 74)



Schema for an *ecological masculinity*

Ecological masculinism offers masculinities theory the opportunity to be ecologised, and to specifically enrol concerns for men and masculinities into the ecophilosophy discourse. And while ethics of daring are not likely to be eliminated through an *ecological masculinism* theory and praxis, the centralisation of ethics of caring can serve as a counter balance to their malign consequences, helping to diminish the impact of hegemonisation on society and environment. The ecologisation of masculinities theory on both the personal and political levels must be met in the context of men's lived experiences and masculine identity, relative to ecological sensitivities. Such work may not only play a crucial role in achieving fuller-humanness for men and masculinities, but may also provide a missing link in reawakening a synergistic perception of humanity that redefines what it means to be male, masculine and human, playing a crucial role in the mainstreaming of sustainability by allowing men and masculine identities to centralise care.

In practical terms, accessing the ecologisation of masculine identity is here modelled on Arne Naess's deep ecological principle of 'Ecosophy-T'. Ecosophy-T is defined as an internal state of being in relationship with nature, arrived at by the individual through unique identifications with one's surroundings (Naess, 1986: 3). An individual ecosophy assumes that the construction of the self was necessarily:

... in, of and for Nature from our very beginning. Society and human relations are important, but our self is richer in its constitutive relations. These relations are not only relations we have to other humans and the human community (Naess in Drengson and Inoue, 1995: 14).

Ecosophy-T facilitates internal access to a biocentric world-view located within the ethics of intrinsic value. Naess refers to his observation of a slow and painful death of flea that leapt inadvertently into a dish of acid as a prime example of the natural arising of " ... a painful compassion and empathy" that enabled him to see himself in the flea (Naess in Drengson and Inoue, 1995:15 – 16). Naess reported being able to see himself as the flea, effectively dissolving the boundaries between the self and the other, a shift in perception that has become the basis for a deep ecological awakening within the self (*Ibid*: 15-16). Naess's personal ecosophy is termed Ecosophy-T. The 'T' represents Tvergastein, Naess's mountain hut, and reflects his belief that everyone should develop their own unique environmental philosophy through self-

reflection and active engagement with other-than-human nature. Within deep ecology, there is no specific or prescribed ecosophy but rather an ecosophy for every person who is able to step towards self-realisation through their engagement with wider nature. This nuance lends great wisdom to the practical application of an *ecological masculinism*, that is termed an ecomasculinity.

Ecomasculinity within an *ecological masculinism* similarly encourages individuals to arrive at their own unique understanding of the ecologisation of maleness in both theory and practice. As is the case with deep ecology, there is similarly no definitive application of an *ecological masculinism* to the daily lives of men or for that matter women (who harbour masculine traits as well). Rather, an ecomasculinity within *ecological masculinism* supports ecologised masculine identities that emphasises ethics of caring as well as the individual finding their own unique and practical expressions of care for self, society and environment in reflection of their own experiences and politics. In this sense, such an *ecological masculinism* praxis might better be termed 'ecomasculinity-?'. The ? here represents the possibility for each participant in the discourse to formulate an ecomasculinity of their own, substituting the ? for an initial that represents them personally or an ecologisation story that has moved them towards notions of masculine identity that are uniquely ecologised. I have followed Naess's lead on this point of detail for a specific reason. To posit a prescriptive *ecological masculinism* would not only render this contribution to ecophilosophy overly theoretical – leaving little room for the emergence of an *ecological masculinism* praxis, but doing so would also be arrogant, hyper-masculinist and thereby put into practice the very traditional renditions of maleness that *ecological masculinism* aims to subvert. The *ecological masculinism* theory and praxis posited here assumes a plurality of positionalities in the same way that there are a plurality of masculinities theories, ecophilosophies, ecological feminisms, ecosophies within deep ecology, etc.

Ecological masculinism as it is conceptualised here must include the construction of an ethical platform that publicly declares the ability for men and masculinities to express care, and does so through a socio-political analysis of both masculinities theory and contemporary

ecophilosophy. And its practical application is no small undertaking. Men are widely conditioned to be protectors and providers, which implies considerable levels of caring for others. However, traditionally, this care has been quite narrow or impersonal – extending as far as one’s personal relationships on the local level, and affecting the policies and practices of nations and the world in stoic ways that leave little room for emotional investment on the broader scale. Rarely for men and masculinities is this sentiment taken to the level of a universal maxim to include care for self as care of human and other-than-human Others. One telling point of supportive evidence for this claim is the aforementioned suppression of intrinsic value that is common throughout Western malestreams. Embodying such a sentiment requires a willingness to show considerable care for others even if they are not part of one’s immediate life, which men, like women, are capable of.⁵ Further, as a core masculine behavioural trait, the socially sanctioned ‘localised’ caring that does predominate Western men’s lives and masculine identities is easily co-opted into a form of ‘separate and above-ness’ that can enhance men’s alienation from human and other-than-human Others even in the local context. Such an outcome is exacerbated by positioning men and masculinities as bastions of stability, islands of effectiveness, and nodes of ‘doing’ at the expense of authentic connection with others. In this sense, men and masculinities in the traditional sense are mechanised, rationalised, and effectively cut-off from society and environment, leaving maleness in a state of isolated separation that has profoundly malign psychological and physiological effects on men as individuals, and results in the vilification of masculine identity, which can have similarly malign ‘knock-on’ effects upon the social constructions and environmental interactions that they participate in. In Steve Biddulph’s view, the result pulls no punches: “... [traditionally speaking] men are a mess ... Our marriages fail, our kids hate us, we die from stress and on the way we destroy the world” (Biddulph, 1995: 4). Such a dire synopsis of the male experience tragically indicates the depth of loss of fuller-humanness that has resulted from the vice-like grip of ethics

⁵ Case in point: After the Boxing Day (2005) Tsunami. An outpouring of aid from around the world materialised to the approximate sum of \$4.6bn (US). When moved deeply, human beings are incredibly generous; this generosity is spurred by our natural ability to care for the well-being of others, human and other-than-human alike (See Marks, K. (2007) ‘The Big Question: Three years on from the Boxing Day tsunami, have the countries recovered?’ Retrieved on 18th April, 2008 from the World Wide Web: <http://www.independent.co.uk/environment/green-living/the-big-question-three-years-on-from-the-boxing-day-tsunami-have-the-countries-recovered-766838.html>).

of daring over 'doing' men and masculine identities. That men and masculinities are socialised away from 'being' comes at a considerable cost – the spectrum of permissible humanness expressed is narrowed. *Ecological masculinism* aims to address this circumstance, and the ecomasculinity-? offers moment-to-moment opportunities to put this theory into practice – effectively grounding *ecological masculinism* in lived experiences by shifting the ways that men and masculinities are able to show care towards society and environment.

In conclusion, *ecological masculinism* represents an ethical and behavioural reawakening of care in men and masculine identities throughout the West that has long been a part of the European tradition. The theory and praxis suggested here has been both pragmatic and intuitive, traversing the masculinities and ecophilosophy discourses, while also encouraging the individual to 'follow their nose' so to speak come to their own subjective and relative understanding of an *ecological masculinism* that contains an their own subjective and relative ecomasculinity praxis. The boundaries between individual contributions to the discussion remain discrete in honouring difference, but also honour (indeed rely upon) intersections between proponents that make up a holistic view of the ways that maleness intersects nature. The *ecological masculinism* proposed here is not a meta-narrative but rather is an intentional and strategic contribution to mainstreaming sustainability by enrolling a plurality of men and masculine identities as advocates for social and environmental justice. *Ecological masculinism* ecologises men and masculinities in specific and unique ways that increase the likelihood of male enrolment into social and environmental justice through an emphasis on relationality. Its is worth reiterating that such a concept stands diametrically opposed to accepted masculine norms and is often met with resistance from both men and women, publicly or even in the private relationships between men and women.

With the looming sceptre of climate change and calls for the mainstreaming of sustainability taking centre stage throughout the West, we are now facing a crucial choice: do we continue with business as usual for men and masculine identities, do we allow ethics of daring to continue to run their course, and deal with the social and environmental consequences that have, are and will continue to affect the quality of our lives and our world? Or do we step

proactively towards wider behavioural possibilities for men and masculinities? Do we ecologise the male experience to ensure relationality is prioritised? In effect, do we make it permissible for men and masculine identities to show care for self through caring for and about others – human and other-than-human alike? This paper has not only supported the latter scenario, but has also hopefully provided a beginning point for a dialogue about how we can actively engage with such a shift in perception in widening the behavioural possibilities for men and masculinities, and therefore improve the wellbeing of the planet writ-large. We are now at a crucial stage of human existence. The very fabric of our social structures, which are built upon our (masculinized) industrious harvesting of resources, suggests that were we to do nothing, worsening hardship for life across the globe would be a given. *Ecological masculinism* provides some guidance in constructing an ecologised masculine ‘beings-ness’ that is both theoretical and practical, while also permitting personal, relative subjectivities to be validated. My hope is that in doing so, this paper contributes to an emerging socially and environmentally sustainable planet; one that locates men and the masculine experience along side women and nature in being not simply at the heart of the social and environmental problems we face, but also as intricate contributors to being part of the solution.

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