

ASSESSING HEGEMONIC MASCULINITY USING CRITICAL INCIDENT
METHODOLOGY

By

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To my partner

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I thank my adviser for his outstanding mentorship. I would also like to thank the kind members of my cohort. They have been an exemplary group of peers who have challenged me and helped me grow as a therapist and scholar.

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Abstract of Thesis Presented to the Graduate School
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Hundreds of published studies report development and use of validated measures of male gender roles. Their common approach relies on experts and their theories to develop scale items. One area still in need of measurement is hegemonic masculinity, defined in part as “the normative ideal of masculinity to which men are supposed to aspire” (O’Neil, 2011, p. 379). In this investigation, I take a different approach to assessing hegemonic masculinity. Instead of relying on experts and theories, I sampled 264 regular men about their personal experiences of hegemonic masculinity, specifically asking them about the codes men are expected to follow to be considered men and the consequences of these behaviors. I also assessed whether their reported experiences mirror the content of scales related to masculinity ideology and conformity, all of which were produced by experts. Results revealed three important findings. First, several of the themes from these data mirror dimensions in published scales, but several do not, including the single most common theme participants reported, “Male Friends First.” Second, 33% of participants who provided an incident (using Flanagan’s critical incident technique) reported not following a code of traditional masculine behavior, clearly suggesting a gap between knowing the code and following

it. Third, self-reported consequences for not following the code were more favorable than the consequences reported for following it. This unexpected finding was true for both internal consequences (like pride and guilt) and external consequences (like popularity and shunning). In short, important information was generated by asking men directly about their relevant experiences.

CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

Literature Review

Research on male gender roles and the social construction of gender differences (Wood & Eagly, 2002), also commonly conceptualized as “rules” of masculinity (David & Brannon, 1976; Kimmel, 2004) and as masculine ideology (Pleck, 1981, 1985), has produced an impressive number of scholarly publications. O’Neil (2011) reviewed 249 studies that used a wide array of measures of internalized masculine gender roles and assessed the relationship between gender role and psychological distress in men. O’Neil’s summary makes a convincing case that maladaptive aspects of traditional masculinity significantly predict boys’ and men’s intra- and interpersonal problems. According to O’Neil, one thing is now known empirically that wasn’t known before: measures of masculinity constructs predict the “hazards of being male” (see Goldberg, 1976). What remains unassessed, according to O’Neil, is hegemonic masculinity, which he defined as “the normative ideal of masculinity to which men are supposed to aspire,” that produces and maintains social hierarchy, dominance over women (O’Neil, 2011, p. 379; see Wetherell & Edley, 1999), and conformity pressures on men (Connell, 2005; Whitehead, 2002). The purpose of this investigation is to assess the nature of hegemonic masculinity in a sample of men using critical incident methodology.

Initially theorized in reports from a field study of social inequality in Australian high schools (Kessler et al., 1982) as well as in seminal work completed by Connell on men’s bodies (Connell, 1983) and men’s roles in labor politics (Connell, 1982), the theory of hegemonic masculinity has received attention across academic fields and inspired a wealth of scholarly research. The earlier scholarship on hegemonic

masculinity, which over the decades has evolved to account for how male gender roles relate to social power, male agency, and patriarchy, has, in recent years, inspired important extensions and refinement. Demetriou (2001), for example, has argued that the concept of hegemonic masculinity cannot merely rely on the strict sex roles characteristic of White, heterosexual men, but must also include what Demetriou referred to as the hybridity of masculinities observed in non-White, hetero- and homosexual men. Further, Collier (1998) articulated the concern that hegemonic masculinity cannot be solely associated with characteristics of masculinity that are deemed negative, and that scholars must also be mindful of the traditionally masculine behaviors, which may be hegemonic, that receive praise in society. Hearn (2004) has articulated the need for hegemonic masculinity to be extended to include an understanding of the hegemony of *men*. Hearn has argued that this shift in focus, from societal to personal, is necessary to understand the complexity of men's gender roles. According to Hearn, men are not only members of a social category, but are also individual agents who enforce a variety of social practices that preserve men's place in the socio-political hierarchy.

The contributions of Hearn, Demetriou, and Collier are mirrored in Connell and Messerschmidt's (2005) article discussing future directions in the study of hegemonic masculinity. Connell and Messerschmidt have addressed these and other concerns about hegemonic masculinity from an array of academic perspectives. They suggested that (a) the theory of hegemonic masculinity is in need of more rigorous analysis and (b) the definitions of the roles and norms men are socialized to follow, which result in patriarchy, must be refined to reflect the evolving nature of masculinities. To this end,

they encouraged scholars to discard one-dimensional understandings of hierarchy as well as trait conceptions of gender. Useful reformation of the theory, according to Connell and Messerschmidt, will include analysis of the psychological processes that govern gender hierarchy as well as better understanding of how non-traditional masculine behaviors can influence the degree to which men continue to accept traditional behaviors.

Smiler (2004) and O'Neil (2011) have identified several scales that aim to describe internal processes that govern men's adherence to normative ideals of masculinity. These scales include the Male Roles Attitudes Scale (Pleck et al., 1983), the Gender Role Conflict Scale (O'Neil et al., 1986), Wade's (1998) Male Reference Group Identity Scale, the Conformity to Masculine Norms Identity Scale (Mahalik et al., 2003), and the revised Male Role Norms Inventory (Levant et. al, 2007). These scales are important in understanding masculine roles, identity, and ideology, but they have in common a similar approach to scale construction: relying on experts and prior theory. Smiler (2004) has noted that both Pleck and Wade have emphasized flexibility in the measurement of masculine ideology, which reflects a challenge to masculinity as a relatively fixed-state. Yet, neither scholar has assessed the effect of context on masculinity as measured by their scales (Smiler, 2004). The extent to which these measures and other measures of masculine ideology fit theoretical models of hegemonic masculinity has yet to be assessed. O'Neil's call for measurement of hegemonic masculinity is consistent with this need for assessment, as is Connell and Messerschmidt's (2005) concern that hegemonic masculinity has become a catch-all category for any traditionally masculine ideology.

The calls for changes in the conceptualization of hegemonic masculinity reflect a larger change in the philosophy of science that serves as the foundation for scholarship on masculinity. Wester and Vogel (2012) suggested that two movements currently guide psychological investigations of men and masculinity, the essentialist movement and the constructivist movement. According to Wester and Vogel, research conducted from an essentialist perspective treats characteristics of group members as global traits. Men are conceptualized as embracing a set of socialized traits whose enactment produces adverse consequences for them, for those around them, and for society. Consistent with this essentialist movement, O'Neil, among others, has theorized about a global, internalized male gender role identity with fear of femininity at its core (Levant et al., 1992; Mahalik et al., 2003; O'Neil, 1981, 2008). In contrast to the essentialist lens, psychological research conducted from a constructivist perspective is concerned with the contexts in which a man's definition of masculinity develops as well as the degree to which that definition fits the current context (Wester & Vogel, 2012). Fit or lack of fit with the situational largely determines the consequences of enacting aspects of a male gender role, according to the constructivist perspective.

Addis et al. (2010) suggested that the pervasive reliance on essentialist, trait-based paradigms has put the psychology of men and masculinity out of step with scholarly approaches currently used to understand gender in sociology, anthropology, and other behavioral sciences. According to Addis, these other behavioral sciences have adopted constructivist and critical perspectives on masculinities, perspectives in which gender is understood, not as a property of individuals but, as nested layers of highly situated and contextualized social practices (see Falmagne, 2000; McVicker,

Clinchy & Norem, 1998). Addis et al. (2010) pointed out various limitations of earlier investigations of masculinity, concluding that a pragmatic/functional approach may be superior to approaches that he viewed as currently driving most research on the psychology of men and masculinity. These limitations include the small proportion of variance in men's behavior explained by these models and a lack of acknowledgement of the influence of contingencies and context in men's real-world behavior, as well as too much focus on dysfunction and deviance.

The essentialist movement has, indeed, been helpful in describing the impact of gender conflict on men and boys' psychological health. Addis et al.'s (2010) concern about being in touch with the lives of men is an echo of earlier work by sociologist Eric Anderson (2009), whose theory of inclusive masculinity describes recent changes in the ways men conceive of and enact their masculinity. Employing ethnographic methods and what he terms social-feminist thinking, Anderson (2009) has provided evidence that men who attend universities are rapidly discarding the traditional masculinity that scholars have been describing for the past 25 years.

Pairing O'Neil's call for assessment of hegemonic masculinity with the suggestions of Addis and Anderson that the field focus on constructivist approaches to masculinity suggests that the key to developing a precise measure of hegemonic masculinity may be to sample men's everyday experiences as they occurred in their natural context. Consistent with this focus, Ponterotto (2005) articulated the benefits to psychological research of embracing pluralistic methodologies, including constructivist-interpretivist approaches. Ponterotto cautioned scientists against relying only on essentialist approaches. My study is meant to address this disconnect between

psychology and other behavioral sciences, and between scholar-developed measures of male gender roles, on the one hand, and men's everyday experiences of masculinity, on the other.

In the present study, men were invited to report incidents from their lives in which they followed or did not follow what they understood to be an informal rule for behaving as a man. In addition, they were invited to share what they experienced (both internally and externally) as the consequences of their decision to follow or not follow this rule. Asking men about a masculine *code* is consistent with a key observation made by Connell and Messerschmidt (2005) that men are often complicit in their enactment of gendered social practices. Further, asking men about the consequences of followed or not following the code, reflects the possibility that men may not consistently meet the normative standards of hegemonic masculinity (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005). It also is consistent with Martin's (1998) observation that men who are successful and who hold a great deal of social power may not necessarily embody traditional masculinity. Demetriou (2001) has also pointed out that hegemony occurs not only externally (i.e., the institutionalization of men's dominance over women), but also internally (i.e., valuing some masculine behaviors over others), as well. This investigation was designed to provide more information about those internal elements of hegemony.

Participants recounted incidents from their lives using Flanagan's critical incident technique (Flanagan, 1954). His technique was chosen for its demonstrated ability to provide access to people's experiences and for its now well-established utility beyond industrial-organizational psychology, for which it was developed (Butterfield et al., 2005; Woolsey, 1986). Directly capturing men's naturally-occurring experiences represents a

contrasting approach to that of the extensive reliance on formalized scales that characterizes the work reviewed by O'Neil (2011) and Smiler (2004). Capturing men's experiences also addresses Wetherell and Edley's (1999) concern that research on the concept of hegemonic masculinity has failed to specify what conformity to hegemonic masculinity looks like in practice.

Research Questions

I assessed four research questions in this study. First, I assessed whether a statistically significant proportion of participants would describe a critical incident in their lives in which they reported that they either followed or did not follow an informal rule for male conduct. Having a significant proportion of men describe one of these critical incidents would suggest that (a) assessing informal rules for male conduct might enhance psychological understanding of men's behavior and (b) men have at least some conscious awareness of these informal rules.

Second, I assessed whether the resulting critical incidents could be reduced to a significantly smaller number of categories of informal rules, each of which would be instantiated by at least five critical incidents. Men may have a shared set of informal rules for acceptable male behavior if incidents can be reliably grouped into broader categories.

Third, I assessed whether a statistically significant proportion of the participants who provided a critical incident also reported that they failed to follow the code. If so, though influential, these informal rules may not be the only forces acting on men's behavior.

Fourth, I assessed whether men who reported incidents in which they followed informal rules for male behavior would also report receiving significantly more positive

and fewer negative consequences and that men who reported incidents in which they did *not* follow them. If participants who followed informal rules report being rewarded more and punished less than participants who did not follow these rules, operant conditioning can be nominated as at least one mechanism by which adherence to these rules is maintained.

CHAPTER 2 METHODS

Participants

Participants ($n = 264$) were recruited online through a survey link hosted on a popular website that discusses such men's topics as fashion, dating, health, and travel (<http://www.postmasculine.com>). The website has a large domestic and international male audience. The website focuses on self-improvement and dating advice for men. Contributors to the site often write about the "psychology of modern life and culture." To take part in the study, participants had to be at least 18 years of age and identify as male. Participants identified as predominantly (94%) heterosexual. Their reported ages ranged from 18 to 64 years old. Seventy percent reported being single and 63% reported being U.S. citizens. Based on IP addresses, most of the participants from outside the United States appear to have come from the United Kingdom. Participants most frequently reported that they were White (79%). Ten percent reported that they were Hispanic. Most men (85%) reported that they had completed college.

Procedure

Participants accessed the materials using the Qualtrics™ online survey system. Upon accessing the survey link, participants first provided informed consent. Participants then read the following: "Welcome! This study is about understanding the rules that each man is expected to follow in order to be considered a man. These rules have been colloquially called Man Code." Next, they were prompted to write a narrative in a text-box that detailed one specific incident from their lives in which they clearly did or clearly did not follow a "code" that men are expected to abide by to be considered a man. They were reminded to write down any consequences that resulted from their

actions. These consequences could be favorable or unfavorable and could be internal (e.g., “I felt guilty”) or external (e.g., “my friend stopped talking to me for a week”).

Participants were then asked to complete a brief demographic questionnaire.

Flanagan’s Critical Incident Technique

Narratives provided by the participants were collected and coded using Flanagan’s critical incident technique (CIT; Flanagan, 1954; see also Butterfield et al., 2005). The CIT outlines a practical step-by-step approach for collecting indirect observations of human behavior having special significance while meeting systematically defined criteria (Flanagan, 1954, p. 327). As the name suggests, the CIT involves the study of critical incidents, or memorable personal experiences of a specific activity, as reported by research participants. Analysis of these critical incidents enables researchers to identify similarities, differences, and patterns and to garner insight into how and why people engage in the target activity (Hughes, 2007). Self-reports of real-life incidents constitute the focus of CIT studies. What qualifies an incident as “critical,” according to Flanagan, is if it makes a “significant” contribution, either positively or negatively, to the general aim of the activity (Flanagan, 1954, p. 344). Woolsey (1986) suggested that the CIT is both flexible and appropriate for counseling psychology research, because of its ability to capture factual happenings, qualities, and attributes, not just critical incidents, and because of its utility as both foundation/exploratory tool in the early stages of research and its role in building theories or models. The CIT produces a categorization scheme that describes and synthesizes the narrative data, while at the same time “sacrificing as little as possible of their [the narratives’] comprehensiveness, specificity, and validity” (Flanagan 1954, p. 344).

The CIT requires five steps: (1) description of the general aims of the studied activity (2) setting plans and specifications; (3) collecting data (4) data analysis; and (5) data interpretation and reporting results. Because the general aim of this study was to assess whether men could identify incidents in which they followed or failed to follow elements of a male code, the critical incidence prompt directed participants to recall as many details as they could about a specific incident in their lives in which they clearly did or clearly did not follow some aspect of an informal code that men are expected to follow in order to be considered a man. The prompt also asked participants to provide any consequences that resulted from their actions. As noted in the prompt, these consequences could have been favorable or unfavorable and could have been internal or external.

Each of the 264 participants' narrative responses were first categorized as "qualified," meaning they represented a critical incident, or "not qualified," meaning they did not represent a critical incident. What qualified a response as a critical incident were the following: (a) a specific, real incident was described, (b) a specific aspect of male code was mentioned, and (c) the response included a description of internal and/or external consequences that the person perceived as being related to following or not following the code. The qualified critical incident narratives were then coded for categories (see Table A-1), for whether or not the men reported following the code, as well as for the reported consequences of following or not following this code. My category coding was then independently judged by an undergraduate research assistant with no familiarity with the study. Cohen's kappa was calculated to assess inter-rater agreement.

CHAPTER 3 RESULTS

The first research question assessed whether a statistically significant proportion of the men in the sample would be able to describe a critical incident that occurred in their lives, in which they either followed or did not follow a rule for male conduct. Indeed, a significant proportion of surveyed men described a critical incident in their lives, 56% (148/264; $z(256)=88.44$, $p < .0001$). In addition, nearly all (97.7%) of the men surveyed indicated that they believed in the existence of an unwritten code of male conduct (variously labeled “bro code,” “guy code,” or “man code”).

The second research question asked whether reported incidents could be reduced to a significantly smaller number of categories. The 148 incidents were significantly reduced to 8 discrete categories, plus *other*, each of which included at least five critical incidents, $z(148)= 110.04$, $p < .0001$. I entitled these categories (in descending frequency): *Male Friends First* (63 incidents), *Stand by Your Man*, (17 incidents), *Gallantry* (13 incidents), *Wingman* (12 incidents), *Sex as Conquest* (8 incidents), *Feminizing Objects* (7 incidents) *Restricted Emotionality* (6 incidents), *Restrictive Affectionate Behavior Between Men* (5 incidents), and *Other* (17 incidents; see Table A-1 for descriptions and examples of these Categories). An undergraduate research assistant also coded each of the incidents after being provided Table A-1 (without incident frequency, percentage, or examples). An inter-rater agreement analysis using Cohen’s kappa coefficient was performed to determine whether an independent judge would significantly agree with my coding of these incidents and she did, $\kappa = .84$. In addition to these 148 incidents, participants wrote 116 responses that did not qualify as critical incidents. In the vast majority of these cases,

the response did not qualify because it referred to a group or class of incidents that exemplified a man code, rather than detailing one specific, actual incident. In the case of the *other* category, more often than not the narrative provided a critical incident, but the thematic content did not meet the defined criteria required by the CIT to warrant its own category, *i.e.* five critical incidents. An example of an incident that was deemed qualified but whose theme did not come up frequently enough to be categorized was a narrative that described a participant's disdain for the sexual advances of another man. Demographic variables did not significantly predict whether participants did or did not provide a qualifying incident (all p 's > .05).

The third research question assessed whether a statistically significant proportion of men reported that they did *not* follow the code. Of the 148 participants who both reported a critical incident and who indicated whether they did or did not follow a that code, a statistically significant portion (33.1% or 49 participants) reported that they did *not* follow the code, $z(148)=39.25, p < .0001$.

The fourth research question assessed whether men who reported following the code would also report receiving significantly more positive and fewer negative personal and/or social consequences than men who did not follow the code. The findings were surprising: Following a man code was associated with significantly *fewer* positive and significantly *more* negative consequences than not following it. This pattern was true for both internally-generated consequences, such as guilt or satisfaction, $\chi^2(2, N= 79) = 8.74, p < .05$, as well as for external consequences, such as social rejection or praise by friends, $\chi^2(2, N= 110) = 14.10, p < .05$ (see Tables A-2 & A-3).

CHAPTER 4 CONCLUSION

These data provide support for the notion that hegemonic masculinity operates at the psychological level, in addition to the sociological level, as described by Connell and Messerschmidt (2005). This notion is supported by the fact that not only are the reported incidents the product of individual experience, but also the incidents included in the five most common categories all depict men creating and sustaining male social power. The findings presented here also advance work done by Wetherell and Edley (1999), who proposed that hegemonic norms, in this case traditional masculine behaviors, are enacted strategically by men in particular circumstances. Wetherell and Edley did not provide a description of how individual men negotiate these hegemonic norms, so the present study addresses that need by providing information about the specific content of men's norms as reflected in reports of critical incidents from their everyday experiences.

The data also support the notion that men may have a shared set of informal rules for acceptable male behavior: the 148 separate qualifying incidents were readily and reliably reducible to eight categories, plus other. Moreover, an independent rater significantly agreed on my categorizations, suggesting that the categories are stable. The content of incidents in two of these categories, restricted emotionality and restrictive affectionate behavior between men, closely mirrors the items in two of the four subscales of the Gender Role Conflict Scale (O'Neil et al., 1986). Perhaps the most surprising result with regard to categorization is that nearly half of the incidents fell into the category Male Friends First, which is an aspect of masculinity that I do not see clearly reflected in any of the published scales or subscales measuring adherence to

masculine norms and ideology reviewed by Smiler (2004) or O'Neill (2011). Further, common factors found in the most popular scales of masculine conformity, such as "winning" and "disdain for homosexuals" (Mahalik et al., 2003), as well as "avoidance of femininity," "achievement/status," and "restrictive emotionality" (Levant et al., 2007) were among the least frequently reported incidents in this study. This discrepancy in what men reported being part of their masculine ideology and what experts have theorized represents an important methodological issue. I uncovered no research assessing how the most popular measures of masculine norms fit with theoretical models of hegemonic masculinity. Results from the present study revealed two categories of masculine ideology that appear to be very closely related to the hegemonic masculinity construct: Male Friends First, which is the belief that loyalty to male friends takes precedence over loyalty to female romantic partners or romantic interests, and Stand by your Man, which is the belief that one must remain loyal to male friends even if they engage in behaviors one disagrees with.

Reported incidents suggest that men's day-to-day negotiation of male codes may take their focus away from the hegemonic consequences of following these codes. As I have understood from reading participant accounts, Male Friends First and Stand by your Man appear to have the largely unacknowledged and unrecognized consequence of preserving status over women by creating normative pressure for men to embrace them or risk losing this status. Perhaps the reason scholars have not developed psychological measures of hegemonic masculinity is because they have not been aware of the possibility that these specific personal codes of male behavior may serve as the building blocks of hegemonic masculinity.

One-third of participants who reported an incident also reported that they did not follow the code. This finding complements research in the essentialist literature, which tends to focus only on the degree to which men believe in traditional masculinity, not on cases when they do not follow its dictates. This observation is in line with some of the most common critiques of Connell's theory of hegemonic masculinity: it cannot account for how male identities are communicated among men, whether more than one hegemonic strategy can exist at any one time, or whether men experience conflict or tension as they move from one version of masculinity to another (Wetherell & Edley, 1999). Collecting narrative content using critical incident methodology from a sample of community-dwelling men holds the promise of determining not only what is hegemonic about masculinity, but what is not. O'Neil's (2010, p. 399) recommendation that new lines of research should evaluate violations of masculine norms suggests that learning what is not hegemonic in masculinity may be as valuable as learning what is. These data raise the question of whether whole categories of traditional masculinity, including some that relate directly to male hegemony, have gone heretofore unidentified, and suggest that men sometimes follow these codes but sometime they do not.

Data on the reported consequences of adhering or not adhering to a male code of conduct were unexpected and raise an interesting question: Why follow a code that produces more self-perceived costs than benefits? The research literature indicates that men often expect to benefit from following a code of masculinity and also expect to be punished for not following it. This investigation of men's experiences suggests the opposite. So, should not these non-reinforcing experiences eventually lead to abandonment of these informal rules? Not necessarily. Anderson, Lepper, and Ross

(1980) found that many people were unwilling to admit that their assumptions were incorrect, even when shown convincing evidence of their incorrectness. Anderson et al. labeled this “belief perseverance,” which they defined as the tendency to reject convincing proof and cling to inaccurate beliefs even more tenaciously, especially when the belief has been publicly announced to others. Said more plainly, once people have decided that we believe something, they will tend to keep on believing it, even in the face of disconfirming evidence. Particularly, if other people know of our beliefs, it can be especially embarrassing to recant them. It is also difficult to change a belief that has been woven into a wider web of belief, because to do so would disturb that entire network of beliefs.

Findings from a recent series of studies completed by Vendello and Bosson (2013) suggest that manhood can be understood as a precarious social status, one that is both difficult to achieve and easy to lose. According to these authors, what makes manhood precarious is the constant need for it to be proven or displayed across a wide variety of situations. Though the precarious manhood hypothesis can potentially integrate and explain an array of male behaviors, Addis and Schwab (2013) pointed out that Vandello and Bosson (2013) asked men about manhood in contrast to womanhood. According to Addis and Schwab (2013), this kind of binary approach to assessing gender roles limits advancement of a broader, contextual understanding of gender. With this critique in mind, I chose not to ask men about manhood in reference to womanhood, but rather simply to ask about their own personal experiences of manhood.

I have argued elsewhere (Heesacker & Snowden, 2013) that the concept of precarious manhood (Vandello & Bosson, 2013), unlike most other negative characterizations of traditional masculinity, challenges men's potency. In this study, in which participants, not scholars, were recruited to provide experiences of hegemonic masculinity operating at the psychological level, what I observed was largely consistent with precarious masculinity concerns. The content of the codes point to insulation from the loss of potency as a primary motivator for adhering to the code, and so do these two curious findings: First, many participants reported knowing and believing in the code, yet did not report following it consistently and second, participants reported following the code even though the outcomes of following it were more likely to be negative than not following the code. Consistent with O'Neil's observation that scholars have not been measuring hegemonic masculinity, my findings revealed different categories of expectations, such as Male Friend First and Stand by your Man, than those reported in prior research. The emergence of these different categories provides support for the idea that studying the experiences of regular men may represent a different and useful lens through which to view hegemonic masculinity. The lens I used suggests that hegemonic masculinity may have as much to do with preserving potency at the individual level as it does with preserving the status quo and preservation of existing power structures at the societal level. A formalized measure of hegemonic masculinity at the psychological level holds promise for researchers interested in investigating the extent to which the need to prove one's masculine potency affects behaviors and mental health.

Although results generally supported my hypotheses, they need to be evaluated with study limitations in mind. The first limitation of this study is sample characteristics. Participants were primarily White, heterosexual men. These men also typically reported formal education beyond high school. Future studies should include samples of men who differ in race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, level of education, and other aspects of diversity. Collecting the critical incidents of more diverse samples of men should add richness to the field's understanding of men's experiences.

The second limitation of this study is its reliance on a self-selected convenience sample. Men who chose to participate in the study may possess characteristics that would make them both more inclined to visit the website the study was hosted on, but also more likely to have or recall gender-related incidents different from those of other men. Future research should employ samples of men who are not as likely to select into or out of participation based on a description of the research that highlights masculinity and a male code.

Another limitation of this study is that it relies exclusively on the memory of participants, with no collateral confirmation from friends or family members. Future research should be designed to get input from other people in the participants' world, who can provide different perspectives on the same incidents.

Although consistent with past practice using Flanagan's (1954) CIT, one concern is that only a single narrative was solicited from each participant. In addition, I asked all participants first about an incident in which they did follow a code and only second about one in which they did not follow the code. When combined, these two aspects of the method may have influenced participants to contribute incidents in which they

followed the code more than they might have, had I asked for more than one incident and/or counterbalanced the order of follow and did not follow the code. This concern raises the possibility that the one third of men who reported not following the code was an underestimate, because they were first primed to think of an incident in which they followed the code and were only given the opportunity to report one incident. Future research can address the degree to which these procedures produced more reported incidents of following the code than would occur naturally.

Finally, the categories of code generated in this study by following the CIT's method await validation in future research, using both similar research methods and, perhaps more importantly, using different methods. For example, if these incident categories can be transformed into an easy-to-administer instrument, confirmatory factor analysis can be conducted to assess the degree to which the model that emerged using critical incidents is corroborated by data from a questionnaire. Such corroboration would lend credence to the conclusion that this study may have identified enduring and viable categories of the psychology of hegemonic masculinity.

APPENDIX A
TABLES

Table A-1. Coding scheme for qualified critical Incidents

Code Label	Incident Frequency	Definition	Example
Male Friends First	63	Men should be more loyal to male friends than to women, regardless of the type of relationship the man has with a woman.	<p>Typical "bro code" states that you don't date your friend's ex-girlfriend. Usually, you're never allowed to do this, ever - no amount of time is enough time before it's okay. Only in some rare cases does the dumped friend condone his friend dating his ex-girlfriend. In my situation, I was friends with a guy for several years, we went to high school together and played on the same sports teams. We had the same taste in movies which was a big part of our friendship. He had a girlfriend that was awesome but he never really appreciated her. Her and I became acquaintances via group hangouts where they'd both come along. Their relationship eventually started to deteriorate and during that time I started talking to her more and more. It began as simple support for her during the difficult time with her boyfriend. But eventually, I started falling for her. / / They eventually broke up and I had an opportunity to express My feelings for her. I knew that if I didn't take that chance, I'd probably never see her again. So I told her how I felt and to my surprise, she felt the same way. Obviously, this became a bit of an issue because I was in direct violation of "bro code" or "man code" - which in general is something my friends and I don't even talk about, we're far from typical "bros" but the notion still stands: don't date your friends' ex!. / / I was</p>

			<p>very afraid that being with this girl would lose me all the mutual friends I shared with the guy, as well as the guy himself. Rather than be sketchy and carry-on behind his back, I told him what was up. He was obviously very angry and stopped speaking to me. As for the mutual friends we shared? They couldn't care less. Turns out they never really liked this guy so they didn't care. Plus, they knew that I'd had a run of bad luck with girls and that this girl was a perfect match for me, so they understood why I couldn't let her go. / / So, bottom line: I broke the guy code of never dating your friend's ex-girlfriend, the consequence (turned out to be a positive) was that I lost him as a friend which has never really bothered me because I was getting annoyed with him anyway, I didn't lose any friends, and I found an amazing woman that I've formed a great relationship with - going on four years now.</p>
Stand by your Man	17	Men must remain loyal to male friends, regardless of the context.	<p>Guys aren't supposed to snitch on their guy friends. You gotta keep your mouth shut no matter what. My friend once stole a bottle of adderal from our pill head roommate. We found a chick who was willing to take the blame, but she rolled over immediately and said it was us. I was confronted about it and had a hard time dealing with the pressure. My girlfriend convinced me that I should be honest, so I told the truth. My buddy STILL gives me **** about it. It's been 9 years. This occurred in college- there were 5 of us in a small house. Things got tense and there was confrontation as a consequence. I also felt pretty ***** about getting caught.</p>
Gallantry	13	Men should protect women based on the assumption that they are less mature	<p>During high school (we were around 17) I was in a party with my classmates (guys and girls), around 20 in total. A girl got really drunk and a lot of guys where</p>

		and more vulnerable than men.	trying to hit on her, touch her, etc... and the girl was playing the girl too. Not even close to rape or something related. Other girls were actually cool with the situation and I did play along until I felt this was already too much so I went to talk with one of the girls who was closer to this drunk girl. I talked to my friends and told them this was unacceptable, shame on you, etc... Everybody reacted right away and the other girl brought the drunk girl to her room and in a way I "shut the party down" / I guess the next day a few people were ashamed but I also got reactions like... ooh man, wtf did you do, etc... / I didn't feel bad with myself at all, and I actually felt kind of proud. But in a way, I still feel like I broke the 'code.'
Wingman	12	A man should assist a male friend in his efforts to attract and have sex with a woman.	My first year of university, I joined a fraternity so as to impress my older brother. This led to many such cases of "man code" which I still regret years later. It was expected of us to do several things far beyond what my moral compass allowed and I left the fraternity shortly after joining. / / This specific incident has to do with my pseudo-mentor within the frat. He was a pretty decent guy but surprisingly shy and so he didn't get many girls. This is one of the most intense pressures in a fraternity, to be a Lothario of sorts. Well, there was a girl who had been coming around lately who I found out really liked me. 3y "Big borthor (mentor)" apparently really wanted to date her. I knew that he would be offended if, after all his effort and flirting with her, I became her boyfriend. So, I followed the code. I took her to a club, asked her to dance, and then, I did nothing. I knew that if I backed off immediately she would think it was strange. I danced with her for about 10 minutes, and then I literally just left without making

			<p>anymore advances. I didn't kiss her, or take her home, and I also quit calling her. That was that, my wingman duties were complete. Consequences: She got somewhat upset with me being so terrible to her and soon chose the guy who's shoulder she cried on. That's right, my mentor. / / Well, they dated for about a month. I felt like crap for hurting a girl's feelings so he could date her for a month. Lovely. / / Oh, also, by the end, everybody assumed I was gay because I wasn't a man-whore.</p>
Sex as Conquest	8	Men win by having sex with women, regardless of the context or the nature of the relationship.	<p>This happens to me quite often. Last week I was at the bar chatting with a girl. I then left her for a few minutes and had guys telling me "dude you gotta hit that" etc. They told me to take her home. I did not hook up with the girl. The code here would be that guys are supposed to hook up with girls they meet out on weekends, I did not follow the code. But, the consequences for me have actually been pretty good. The girl appreciated that I didn't come on too strong, I feel happy, and my friends actually ended up thinking it was a smart move.</p>
Feminizing Objects	7	Men should avoid involvement with traditionally feminine objects or activities.	<p>Guys are supposed to drink beer. I drink sweet cider or vodka mixed with juice. One night, about two years or so ago, I had ordered such a drink at a friendly get-together (me and mixed group of friends). One of my guy friends pointed out to me several times that it's a very girlish or "gay" thing to do, the meaning obviously being that it's inferior. I've been asked if I was gay (I'm not), and when I asked why, one of the reasons was my choice of drinks. It's kinda odd, but it doesn't really bother me. As far as consequences, I was proud I didn't back down and order a beer and most of my other friends praised me for not caring.</p>

Restricted Emotionality	6	Men should not display emotional vulnerability.	It was sophomore year and I was sitting with my buddy at lunch. Guys are not supposed to get emotional with each other is the code, and when I tried to talk to my friend about how my sophomore year breakup had been affecting me he told me he didn't want to talk about it because he "didn't have time for emotional ****". So, following the code, and trying to not show my emotions has actually really affected me, for example, I felt pretty sad and angry at my friend for not being there for me. I was 20.
Restricted Affectionate Behaviors Between Men	5	Men should limit how verbally and physically affectionate they are with other men.	I was walking down the street with my friend P and we were talking and laughing. Suddenly, overcame with "brolove" I grabbed his head and kissed the top of it. I felt a suddenly felt ashamed and that I had violated the bro code " don't touch or kiss your male friends" and also "its bad to love or feel too much affection for your male friends". The consequences were an (entirely self-created) sense of shame and some embarrassment."
Other	17	Incidents too few in number to merit a separate category ($n < 5$).	

Table A-2. Chi-square table for internal consequences

Followed Code?	Internal Consequences			χ^2	Φ
	Favorable	Unfavorable	Mixed		
Yes	10	32	12	8.74*	.33
No	12	7	6		

Note. * = $p < .05$

Table A-3. Chi-square table for external consequences

Followed Code?	External Consequences			χ^2	Φ
	Favorable	Unfavorable	Mixed		
Yes	9	53	16	14.10*	.25
No	13	12	6		

Note. * = $p < .05$

APPENDIX B
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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Steven Snowden received his Bachelors of Arts in psychology and criminology from Marquette University located in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Currently, the author is pursuing his Doctor of Philosophy in counseling psychology at the University of Florida. His main research interests include the psychology of men and masculinities, suicide prevention in the veteran population, and improving quality of therapeutic care for LGBT persons.