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Feeling Like a Man:

A Critical Discursive Analysis of Contemporary Masculinity/Sexuality and Emotions

By Alexander Tant

Abstract:

Western masculinity appears to be polarised between two extremes - more traditional forms of masculinity, and emergent, liberal, oppositional masculinities that attempt to reshape what it means to be a man. Utilising Connell's model of 'hegemonic masculinity', this thesis investigates how the tensions between these varying masculinities are negotiated and play out now in contemporary times for a sample of young, urban, highly educated men in Aotearoa/New Zealand. The investigation focuses in particular on men's discourse about emotion and the ways in which affective discursive meaning making intersects with formulations of masculinity and sexuality. Emotion is a neglected topic in men's studies, and yet one deeply bound up with cultural ideas about how men should be. The research reported in this thesis is qualitative, interview-based and intensive working with a small sample of 13 men seeking to understand their meaning making and identity practices in detail, attentive to complexity and contradictions.

The analysis draws upon Potter and Wetherell's term 'interpretative repertoires' to understand the ways in which emotions are constructed by participants. Sara Ahmed's notion of 'figures' is then drawn upon to analyse particular cultural figures of masculinity, exploring also how the participants position themselves in relation to these. The findings suggest that whilst aspects of traditional masculinities are still highly relevant, a newer discursive identity I have called the 'emotional man' is redefining masculinity for young men. The influence of the 'psy' complex as described by Nikolas Rose and LGBTQ rights appear to be re-shaping young men's conceptualisation of what masculinity entails, and I discuss the implications for Connell's model of hegemonic masculinity. However, the accessibility of these new discursive masculine identities is argued to be limited. Overall, the findings provide insight into the changes occurring within modern masculinity for one demographic and facilitate critical dialogue concerning the future ramifications of such changes.

Acknowledgements:

Firstly, I would like to thank my supervisor Margie Wetherell for her amazing amount of support throughout the process of crafting this thesis. I feel so incredibly lucky to be working under the supervision of such a brilliant academic who has the same areas of interest as me. I hope I have done you proud with this thesis, and thank you again for taking me on as your Masters student.

Thank you to all my participants for all the amazing interview data you contributed to my study. I met an incredibly broad range of people who willingly opened up to me through the interview process, and I ultimately have them to thank for all the interesting insights this study has produced.

To my family, I know you all probably don't understand what it was I was even writing my thesis about, but thank you so much for all your support and encouragement throughout. I could not have done this without you.

To my fellow colleagues, a particular thank you to the PSI group for your feedback in the early stages of formulating my thesis, it has been great to be a part of such a great group of passionate academics. A particular thank you to Maree for her wisdom and guidance throughout my Masters project and for being a great office buddy as well.

Last but not least, thank you to my friends. Despite the chaos, 2016 was a great year for me - one where I finally became a proper part of the gay community in Auckland and met the most incredible group of people. I made so many new friends, people I can no longer imagine my life without. Your love and support has kept me going and made my life worth living. Also a particularly big thank you to Wayne for saving the day in terms of getting my thesis printed and bound, and for being an all-round great guy.

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Introduction:

The recent election of Donald Trump and the enormous Women's Marches in the US and around the world after his inauguration have brought gender politics into view in a new way. In particular, the schisms in contemporary masculine cultures are vividly on display. On the one hand, Trump seems to personify aspects of traditional masculinity. He has been accused of encouraging a 'toxic' (Sexton, 2016) and 'militant evangelical' masculinity (Du Mez, 2017). Jacqueline Rose (2016, para. 1) argues that Trumpism is a "disaster for modern masculinity", reproducing a form not only associated with sexism, but with emotional inexpression and neglect of physical and mental health (Sexton, 2016). In a recent interview, sociologist Michael Kimmel founder of the Center for the Study of Men and Masculinities, argues that Trump is a role model, or rather a figurehead, for an outmoded model of masculinity that appeals to men who feel emasculated by the current order (Jacobs, 2016).

Compare that, however, with the positions and identities of the liberal men who, in 2017, around the world marched with the women, in solidarity with those oppressed by Trump's homophobic, racist, Islamophobic and anti-immigrant standpoints. These men will be diverse for sure but seem likely to share an attempt to redefine what it means to be a man in current times. In particular, among many liberal men there is concern about masculinities which are detrimental to men's mental and physical health in a context, for example, where, globally, men are 3 to 10 times more likely to commit suicide than women (Sher, 2015). Young men are especially concerned with the negative influences of traditional gender roles and the impact of these on men's emotional well being (Cochran & Rabinowitz, 2000).

The research reported in this thesis focuses on the identities and discourse of the latter group - on young, metropolitan, highly educated, gay, bisexual and straight men in New Zealand. It is an attempt to unpack the current forms of what could be called liberal masculinities and their relation to more traditional masculinities. Is it the case that masculinity has polarised and now more obviously takes multiple powerful forms? What is hegemonic for this group of men? I focus in particular on men's discourses of emotion as this is a domain where many issues of how best to be a man are acted out. There has been little research on men's emotional cultures and my project aims to make a contribution to our understanding of the intersections between masculinity/sexuality/emotion discourse for one specific group of men.

To foster a greater understanding of this topic, I have developed a study that uses emotions and sexuality as a framework for understanding contemporary masculinity and how it relates to modern male identity. This study draws largely upon Connell's (1987; 2005) model of 'hegemonic masculinity' as a tool for comprehending and analysing masculinity, but also aims to critique the model in terms of its relevance in understanding emergent paradigms of masculinity where traditional 'hegemonic' forms of masculinity are more uncertain. While traditional, 'hegemonic' masculinity has been heavily documented in masculinity studies, there is less academic work on the masculinity of these men who actively oppose the traditional model. Such men tend to be from educated backgrounds, formulating their critiques of masculinity in liberal environments (Messner, Greenberg & Peretz, 2015), and often support feminist and LGBTQ causes that are actively in opposition to patriarchal ideology (Stotzer, 2009).

Though such a more subversive form of masculinity may be seen as subordinate compared with traditional masculinity, the momentum this 'new masculinity' appears to be gaining in the younger generation suggests perhaps an obscuring of conventional masculine politics. With masculinity so polarised - what predicament are young men in today? How pressured are they still to uphold traditional masculinity, and to what extent do they have access to newer, more liberal forms of masculinity? To research this, a qualitative approach has been chosen to focus in detail upon a small

sample size of young men, taking a discursive psychological approach to the data analysis. Three research questions were formulated that form the basis of this thesis:

1. What discourses of emotion do young, urban, university educated men draw upon in contemporary New Zealand society?

This question is one that is broader in its focus - essentially looking into how emotions, in general, are made sense of by the sample. How men make sense of emotion, whether they see it as natural, biological and universal, for instance, and/or as malleable and influenced by work on the self will have an impact on their affective practice, their evaluations of emotion displays, their personal ideals for their own conduct, and their readings of masculinity/sexuality. Exploring their general discourses provides a basis for investigating how masculinity and emotion are constructed and the kinds of emotional cultures that are celebrated and denigrated by this sample.

2. To what extent are traditional 'hegemonic' forms of masculinity still powerful and influential?

The aim of this question is to assess the applicability of Connell's analysis of hegemonic masculinity for contemporary men - specifically young, urban, university educated New Zealand men. It asks whether what was originally outlined as 'hegemonic' under Connell's framework still has the same power among young men who are likely to be part of any vanguard for social change, or whether there has been a shift in recent times. It also goes further and questions whether Connell's model itself is still applicable - whether modern masculinity can still be understood hierarchically with a 'hegemonic' form dominating all others, taking into account more recent critiques of the model's operationality.

3. How do sexuality, masculinity and discourses of emotions intersect to create new frameworks of identity?

Because of its particular relevance to the topic of masculinity (especially regarding the model of hegemonic masculinity), sexuality is a core focus in the nature of this study, and gay, straight and bisexual men were interviewed. Given the changes in representation of same-sex attracted people since Connell's model was first conceived, it will be interesting to see how gay and straight identities are represented by modern young men. It will also be important to explore how the discussions around masculinity, emotions and sexuality relate to the individuals' identities - what discursive resources they have available to construct identities, and from this how they utilise these resources to construct themselves.

Reflexive Note:

As a researcher, I have always been curious about the nature of modern masculinity, and situate myself within the dilemma of navigating polarised discourses of how to 'be a man'. At the time of this research project, I am a 25-year-old man living in Auckland, New Zealand. As a gay man, I have been heavily influenced (often negatively) by the discourses of masculinity that I feel both push me towards attempting to accomplish the hypermasculine ideals of New Zealand society and cause me to struggle with the parts of myself that are reviled by the norms of masculinity, namely my attraction to other men and my feminine attributes. Seeing much change in LGBTQ rights in the 25 years I have been alive, particularly in terms of legal rights and awareness of homosexuality, I have noticed quite drastic shifts regarding acceptance of homosexuality and have been curious around the psychology behind these shifts. As well as this, I have noticed a disparity both between attitudes towards homosexuality of the younger ('Millennial') generation and the older ('Baby Boomer') generation, as well as with what

constitutes an ideal masculinity. It seems that (particularly young) men today have potentially more ability to reject traditionally masculine norms - with movements such as metrosexuality and greater involvement of straight men amongst feminist and LGBTQ movements being paramount examples of this. I wondered what the exact cause of this was - whether it was born out of influence from the gay rights movement and the greater presence the queer community has in wider society, or whether somehow traditional masculinity was failing young men and they were creating new forms of masculinity that were less homophobic, more embracing of aspects traditionally deemed 'feminine', and perhaps even intentionally subversive of the masculine culture of the older generation. Emotions have a particularly significant place in this picture, as traditionally emotionality expressed by men causes them to be seen as "gay". The recent media reports, however, of high male suicide rates and poor male mental health in New Zealand (Collins, 2015), suggest that this lack of emotionality in male culture is problematic. I wanted to know then to what extent do modern young men feel they can express their emotions - particularly given shifts in homosexuality's modern representation and the apparent changes in the masculine culture - and how do they feel about the cultural milieu of masculinity they are in? Also of interest to me is how these changes in masculine culture impact men's identities, particularly with regard to their sense of masculinity. Do they still strive towards a masculine sense of self, and is this selfhood traditional, redefinitive or subversive? Whatever the case may be, what then does the future hold for masculinity in New Zealand, and indeed in the wider Western world?

Outline of the Thesis:

Chapter 1 of the thesis outlines the current state of the literature on emotions, masculinity, sexuality and identity relative to the focus questions of the study. The epistemological approach I take to these four topics is outlined, showcasing how a discursive, constructionist and anti-essentialist framework as a basis for the research. This chapter also demonstrates the centrality of Connell's hegemonic masculinity model to the thesis, displaying its usefulness in understanding masculinity as well as more recent critiques of the model's applicability. Chapter 2 frames the methodological approach of this thesis, explaining the reasoning behind the discursive analytical approach to the data, as well as the process in which participants were obtained, the interview process, and how the data were organised. I argue that through discursively analysing the interview transcripts as data, we see the ways in which modern men situate themselves within the discourses of masculinity they have available to them. The analysis in Chapter 3 caters specifically to the first research question, observing how emotions are constructed by the participants of the study. The chapter utilises Potter and Wetherell's (1987) concept of interpretative repertoires to analyse the ways in which emotions are constructed and understood by the participants, as well as the ramifications that may come from these interpretations. Chapter 4 and Chapter 5 look at various 'figures' of masculinity and how participants made sense of them, drawing on the concept used by Sara Ahmed (2004). Chapter 4 looks at both the figures of traditional masculinity and the emerging new form of liberal masculinity, analysing how participants constructed traditional, often locally situated, figures of masculinity and the figure of an 'alpha male'. The chapter also analyses how men describe their choices to subvert the traditional norms of masculinity, particularly in how to be an 'emotional man'. Chapter 5 analyses participants' discussions of sexuality within the context of masculinity - looking at the relationship between the figural 'gay man' and 'straight man' and how they are represented within the context of modern masculine politics and male emotional culture. This chapter also looks at the figure of the 'human' and how it is utilised by participants in the study to represent a particular kind of ideal. Finally, Chapter 6 discusses the implications of the content of the previous three chapters, discussing the findings and providing conclusions from the analysis. The wider implications, limitations of the study, and suggestions for the direction of future research is also discussed in this chapter.

Chapter 1: Literature Review

The three sections of this literature review chapter are representative of the main areas of focus of the study, that being emotions, masculinity/sexuality and identity. All three of these topics will be approached from a non-essentialist, social-constructionist and practice-based perspective. The development of this epistemological approach for each area will be explained, outlining how new frameworks for understanding emotion, masculinity/sexuality and identity emerged to counter traditionally essentialist research schemes. Section 2.1 sets up the literature review on the topic of emotions, Section 2.2, 2.3 and 2.4 take up the topic of masculinity and sexuality - reviewing Connell's model of hegemonic masculinity, assessing critiques of this model, and giving examples of the model's utilisation in empirical research respectively, whilst Section 2.5 develops a perspective on identity as a basis for my investigation. The aim of the chapter is to position this study within the body of relevant literature and academic research, note neglected areas, and indicate the contribution new research could make.

2.1 - From Basic Emotions to Affective Practice - Theoretical Approach to Emotion

As Wetherell (2012) notes, the field of emotion research is a complex and diverse one, being fraught with division as to the epistemological approach researchers should take towards emotion as an ontological phenomenon. Early psychological work on emotions, following Darwin's classic analysis of emotional expression in animals and humans, focused on a set of what were called 'basic emotions'. This basic emotion paradigm (initiated by Silvan Tomkins and extensively developed by his student Paul Ekman), dominated research from the 1960s to the 1990s (Wetherell, 2012). The strain of thought under this framework was that emotions could be reduced to several 'basic' emotions which were primitives at the heart of emotional life. These emotions - such as sadness, joy, anger and fear - were considered universal, existing as psychological primitives innate to all human beings. Studies concerning the physiology of emotions were conducted in line with this positivistic, materialist approach to emotions, and psycho-scientific tests observing the physiology of emotions through analysing facial expressions and ANS (Autonomic Nervous System) activity were employed in an attempt to locate the physical existence of these basic emotions (Ekman, 1992). Cross-cultural analyses were also conducted in order to reify the theory as being constitutive of the ontological nature of emotion, such as in the work of Ekman, Sorenson & Friesen (1969), wherein isolated indigenous populations of New Guinea were tested on their recognition of prescribed basic emotions. However, it was ironically through cross-cultural studies that this theory of 'basic emotions' was shown to be precarious (Lutz & White, 1986; also Markus & Kitayama, 1994; Goddard, 1996) - showcasing the broad cultural relativity of conceptualisations of emotion, and how "all emotions that we talk about are culturally informed" (Prinz, 2004, p.69). In the wake of this, researchers developed new theories of emotion that drew upon epistemological approaches such as social-constructionism and discourse theory in order to explore emotions outside of the 'basic emotions' paradigm, moving towards approaches more focused on context, situation and meaning making and on the intertwining of emotion with other social processes.

Theories focused on socially constructed discursive renderings of emotion have re-defined how emotions are studied. In his work on the history of emotions, for example, William Reddy (2001) views language (discourse) as a means by which one can translate one's bodily experiences and states into specific normative formulations. Herein, emotions are not fully 'formed' until they are discursively constructed - suggesting that it is the discursive formulation that contributes to the emotion in question. Ian Burkitt (2002) in a similar vein discusses how feelings are 'completed' by being restructured as an emotion through discourse, becoming "like an object that can be reflected upon" (p.155). Objectified through discourse, the structures of feelings (which guide social relationships) can then be communicated relationally as intelligible linguistic formulations. Both Reddy and Burkitt's

epistemological approach towards emotions showcase the significance of language in constituting emotions. The focus shifts from attempts to universalise and naturalise basic emotions to exploring how in relative socio-cultural, historical spaces emotions are formulated, communicated and understood through language and how such formulations, in turn, shape individual experience and emotional lives. As Wierzbicka (1999) postulates, there is an inherent link between the linguistic resources individuals have at their disposal and their conceptualisation of emotions. Emotions exist as socio-cultural 'bundles', with 'joy', 'anger' or 'fear' taking shape in particular cultural circumstances (Lewis & Michalson, 1983). Whilst basic emotions research tended to reify particular Western formulations as universal, more recent discursive approaches see these formulations as relative and culturally specific.

It is in this constructionist/discursive framework that this study takes its epistemological approach to its study of emotion, particularly the notion of emotions as a form of social practice - drawing in particular upon the work of Wetherell (2012). To focus on emotions as social practice is to shift the focus on to patterns of social activity and how affect and emotion are constituted through social relations and the ramifications thereof. To study emotions as practice is to acknowledge that they are a site of repetition and reproduction of one's socio-cultural influences, as well as one's personal history. Taking a basic emotions approach to the study of affect limits research to the complexities of emotional life and the ways in which the social shapes the emotional. Critiques of this framework make it apparent that it centres around a Western framework that postulates itself as universal (Lutz & White, 1986). In contrast, a practice approach incorporates both social context and habituation, making it potentially enriching for a psychological focus on emotion (Scheer, 2012). As Wetherell (2012) writes, emotional practice is "a way of conceptualising social action as constantly in motion while yet recognising too that the past, and what has been done before, constrains the present and the future" (p.23). Emotion can be analysed diachronically - as a product of history and the past constructions and understandings, yet also has the capacity to be reproduced differently, instigating changes in emotional cultures. A practice approach permits a more synchronic focus, too, on how emotions are enacted and narrated in relation, in interaction and in the moment. Emotions also have a performative element, being brought into existence through discursive practice. For example, to be angry involves engaging with available 'angry' subject positions - the resources in one's socio-cultural toolkit formulating what it means to be 'angry' (Galasiński, 2004). Dealing with qualitative data on emotions, this study benefits from a more complex approach to emotions that positions them within discourse, allowing an analysis that showcases how particular discursive formulations of emotions have wider social effects.

Bourdieu's (1977) notion of 'habitus' describes acquired practice that becomes the way in which individuals behave in given situations - be it in external interaction or internal cognitive activity. Habitus envelops schemes, habits, attitudes and mannerisms that develop through an individual's life history in tandem with their social positions. Emotions, under this paradigm, come to be seen as a form of social practice intertwined with habitus: emotions are something learnt and understood through the socio-cultural discourses and practical and material activities that are characteristic as habitus, for example, different social class positions in hierarchical societies. The habitus approach, when applied to emotions, recognises both the embodied nature of emotion as part of the body's hexis - the postures and gestures of the physical body developed through its social conditioning - as well as the culturally specific ways in which emotions are embodied (Scheer, 2012). Certain forms of habitus also can become privileged over others, depending upon the cultural environment one is in. Extending the notion of capital beyond simply an economic function, Bourdieu (1977) showcases how capital can be cultural, social and symbolic - giving the bearer of such capital power in particular fields. Emotions, as a part of one's habitus, can be constituted as 'emotional capital' - forms of expressing, utilising and manipulating their emotions in a way that is socially privileged, with class and gender implications (Reay, 2004). In this line of thought, emotions are 'resources' produced in one's cultural environment, holding certain value depending on one's location - with motherhood and

school-teaching being sites where emotional capital are particularly valued (Zembylas, 2007). Emotions thus are not simply personal and relational, they are political - being part of the privileging and restricting processes that structure society.

The political nature of emotions is particularly salient throughout Sara Ahmed's work 'The Cultural Politics of Emotion' (2004). Ahmed showcases the connections between power and emotion and thus the political functioning of emotion on both a macro and micro scale. Emotions, for example, are used to both bring communities together and marginalise others - formulating personal and collective identities in the process. Her notion of 'affective economies' relates to the conceptualisation of emotions as 'capital', showing how emotionality operates economically, connecting and distancing us from others. She gives the example of hate - arguing that it does not reside 'inside' individuals but instead circulates in a way that draws bodies together through a united hatred against other bodies. Thus emotional capital not only denotes one's personal habitus, but operates also as a politically mobilising force within an affective economy. Ahmed (2004) also discusses the notion of the 'sticky figure' - a cultural archetype who becomes defined through the emotions and discourses 'stuck' to it or accrued. This concept is central to this study and will be explained more thoroughly later in Chapter 2 and utilised within the analyses of Chapters 4 and 5. Ahmed (2004) gives the example of how asylum seekers were constructed by British conservative public figures through 'sticky words' such as 'flood' and 'overwhelmed', producing the threatening nature of the asylum seeker discursively as a figure and evoking emotions of fear and hate that too became 'stuck' to it and constitutive of the meaning of the category. Emotions here become part of identity politics - the social constitution of individuals (particularly in the form of 'figures') has an affective element that influences their political relationships with others that can reinforce their structural oppression or privilege.

With this study being centred around the intersections between masculinity/sexuality and emotions, it is paramount that it situates itself within contemporary research involving these topics. However, as Holmes (2015) notes, there is minimal literature and research in existence that focuses upon masculine emotionality, and thus it is an area that necessitates further exploration. Responding to this scarcity of research, Pease (2012) argues that there may be a lack of focus on emotions in critical masculinity studies due to a fear of psychologising men at the expense of sociologically investigating the social power that men hold. Academic focus on men's emotions, he argues, tends to construct men as victims of patriarchy in that it is made difficult for them to express their emotions. Pease (2012) believes that, whilst true, this often obscures the fact that men are the primary producers and beneficiaries of patriarchal ideology, being privileged despite the certain downsides. Men's supposed unemotionality allows men a degree control over themselves and others and ignores the fact that male aggression and violence are strongly idealised in traditional masculinity (Pease, 2012). What then counts as emotion, and why? The limited research on male emotionality does indeed show how patriarchal ideology consumes men's emotional practices. As Walton, Coyle and Lyons (2004) found, men believed that they could express emotions only in certain circumstances (such as funerals), with Stoicism being central to Western masculinity - construing the male self as strong and rational, and therefore not emotional and feminine. This merges with Bennett's (2007) study on how emotions were constructed as "sissy stuff" by older bereaved men - observing how the men embodied the 'stiff upper lip' and 'sturdy oak' discourses of male emotional repression. Whilst men may be trapped in, and yet largely benefit from the emotionally repressive norms of masculinity, the possibility for change for those that want it is impeded. As Seidler (1989) argues, men struggle to form an emotional language, which leads to a struggle with emotional expression and therein the ability to reshape oneself as emotionally expressive. Language (discourse) is thus a central part of not only how emotions are formulated, but also in how they are expressed (Galasiński, 2004), and thus a discursive focus allows for both an epistomology of emotions but also a means to which they can be observed in practice. Analysing how men discursively construct emotions thus allows a means to which they see emotions operationally, but also how these constructions lend to their expression. This research project builds

upon a small knowledge body of men and emotions, arguing for greater research in this area given its social and political significance.

2.2 - The Tyranny of Hegemony - Theoretical Approach to Masculinity

This second section draws largely upon the work of R.W. Connell, in particular her[1] model of 'hegemonic masculinity' (1987; 2005), a highly influential and broadly cited framework in masculinity studies, utilised mostly for understanding the legitimisation of male dominance in society and the existence of multiple masculinities (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005). The model is centred around the form of masculinity deemed 'traditional' - characterised by traits such as aggression, dominance and emotionlessness, and activities such as sports, drinking and risk-taking - and how it occupies a 'hegemonic' status. Connell (1987; 2005) draws upon Antonio Gramsci's notion of hegemony developed to analyse class relations, utilising it instead to understand gender hierarchies under which particular forms of masculinity come to dominate other forms of masculinities and femininity as a whole. In Connell's words: "hegemonic masculinity can be defined as the configuration of gender practice which embodies the currently accepted answer to the problem of the legitimacy of patriarchy, which guarantees (or is taken to guarantee) the dominant position of men and the subordination of women" (2005, p.77). Connell's definition displays how it is that this particular style of masculine practice maintains patriarchal power, and thus is central to understanding the operations of gender politics. While Connell's model of 'hegemonic masculinity' has been a crucial component in the literature of masculinity studies, it is also one that has been widely contested (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005). This study situates itself in the space between Connell's (1987; 2005) theory and the many critiques of her model that have been formulated (discussed in Connell & Messerschmidt (2005)). It is important to note, though, regardless of critiques to the operationality of the model (which will be discussed later in this chapter), to recognise a change in traditional masculinity's ideological status does not ultimately mean a failing of Connell's model's applicability altogether. As Connell and Messerschmidt (2005) note, it is inevitable that what is deemed 'hegemonic' will shift, as the result of a range of social factors from politics to economics (Connell, 2005). This means that the model can be utilised in order to understand changes in the gender power order, even if Connell's initial description of 'traditional' masculinity being the dominant, hegemonic form is no longer viable.

Connell (1987) argues for masculinity to be viewed in a non-essentialist framework - masculinity is not something with essential properties or a 'real' existence but is born out of the regimes available in one's cultural and historical location. This counteracts (largely psychoanalytic and evolutionary psychological) discourses analysing masculinity as an essential force that shapes an individual's behaviour. Prior to the 1970s, 'male sex role theory' dominated research on masculinity, theorising that men attempt to affirm their biological identity through acquiring characteristics of a singular definition of masculinity (Smiler, 2004). Such characteristics were believed to be 'essential' in nature, and therefore cultural relativity was not taken into account. However, social-constructionist approaches to masculinity have challenged this, such as the work of Judith Butler (1988), whose work runs parallels with Connell's in its theoretical approach. Butler's theory of gender performativity de-essentialised gender through showcasing how its enactment is not reflective of a 'reality' behind the performance, but it is the reproduction of this enactment in itself that constitutes what gender is. In terms of identity, one's gender is not something one so much 'has', but rather something one 'acquires' over time, depending on the ways in which one performs that which is deemed gendered. Hence we see masculinity as a socially-constructed and therein changeable product of human socialisation - something one adopts from one's environment and reproduces throughout one's life. It

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[1] Although identifying as male at the time of the model's conceptualisation, I refer to Connell as female, acknowledging her current identity as a trans woman.

is through this non-essentialist framework of gender and masculinity that this study's focus will be conducted, in line with Connell's (1987; 2005) epistemological approach. An essentialised approach to masculinity is ignorant of the cultural and historical relativity of masculinity, made obvious through studies on the multiple styles of masculinities that exist (Smiler, 2004). Taking a non-essential, social-constructionist approach to masculinity means masculinity can be understood as bound up with discourse and meaning making, and thus how masculinity is constituted through language becomes very important. As Foucault (1972) discusses, it is not through monopolising power that groups hold status, but instead through instituting regulated discourses that maintain a status quo to their benefit. Drawing on this, we can see how the discursive productions of masculinity are crucial to maintaining a hegemonic form that reifies patriarchy and the gender hierarchy.

A core facet to Connell's (1987; 2005) model of hegemonic masculinity is the recognition of multiple masculinities, as opposed to one monolithic 'masculinity'. These masculinities have political relationships with one-another and through this formulate a gender system that maintains patriarchy and legitimates particular styles of masculinity over others. However, rather than focus on specific masculinities, such as black masculinity or working-class masculinity, Connell (2005) instead focuses on masculinities with regard to their positioning relative to hegemonic masculinity. Besides hegemonic masculinity, the idealised masculinity that is at the top of the hierarchy of masculinities and the gender system, there are also masculinities that are classed as subordinated masculinities and complicit masculinities. The oppression of gay men is central to Connell's theory, with gay masculinity being the main example Connell (2005) gives of a subordinated masculinity. Because gay men are stereotyped as being weak, effeminate and emotional, gayness becomes assimilated into what is deemed 'feminine', reflected in the oppression gay men face, particularly by men representative of more 'hegemonic' forms of masculinity. Homophobia is herein a key part of what upholds hegemonic masculinity at least in terms of Connell's (1987; 2005) formulation of her model, as it distinguishes hegemonic masculinity from a form of masculinity deemed less 'manly', and thus legitimises hegemonic masculinity as the dominant masculine form. Heterosexuality and hegemonic masculinity appear to go hand-in-hand in both the straight and gay gaze - as Burke (2016) notes in his study of how hegemonic masculinity is performed in gay adult films in order to present men as heterosexual and therefore privileged and desirable. However, as Foucault (1978) brings to light, the denotation of same-sex attracted men as being feminine is a relatively modern construction, and thus the potential for this understanding to be reconfigured is indeed possible. How homosexuality is positioned in light of more traditional forms of masculinity will thus serve as a kind of litmus test as to the degree of change that has occurred in how Connell's hegemonic masculinity model in its operation amongst different populations of men, although it is important to note that such shifts will not completely render Connell's model no longer applicable.

In light of this, it is important to discuss the trajectory of LGBTQ rights and the changes that have occurred for the gay community to avoid characterising gay men as facing the same form and degree of marginalisation since the 'homosexual' first emerged as a category of personhood. Much progress has been made since the Gay Liberation movement emerged and the queer community progressed through events such as the 1969 Stonewall riots and epidemics such as the AIDS crisis of the 1980s. Indeed, even since Connell's text 'Masculinities' was originally published in 1995, outlining the subordinated position of gay men in the hierarchy of masculinity as well as gay men's complex relationship with masculinity itself, there has been significant shifts in gay men's social positioning. Certainly the more recent improvements in rights for same-sex attracted individuals have improved within the last two decades, reflecting a shift in public mindsets towards homosexuality. By the end of 2016, 21 countries had legalised same-sex marriage, with these countries along with many others supporting gay rights by passing anti-discrimination bills and attempting to tackle hate crimes. In New Zealand, where this study is situated, rights for LGBTQ people are some of the most liberal in the world, with the country being the 13th globally to legalise same-sex marriage (Carroll, 2016). Not only

this, but there has been a colossal increase in progressive attitudes towards homosexuality and a decrease in homophobia (Clements & Field, 2014; Kozlowski, 2010).

As Anderson (2009) argues, there has been a rise in what he deems 'inclusive masculinity' around young heterosexual men in the Western world. Drawing on Connell's work, Anderson discusses 'homohysteria' - the homophobic culture that regulates traditional 'orthodox' masculinity and reifies a fundamental divide between gay and straight men, and the subsequent fear that straight men have in being perceived as gay. Anderson argues that a decline in homohysteria is occurring, meaning that straight men are not only becoming less prejudiced against homosexuality but also leads straight men freer to engage in behaviours typically coded as 'feminine' or 'homosexual'. Studies drawing upon Anderson's work indicate signs of this shift, such as greater male physical tactility and policing of homophobia (McCormack, 2011) and wider association with gay peers (Jarvis, 2015). Anderson's work, although drawing upon Connell's theory of hegemonic masculinity, also implies the 'hegemonic' and 'subordinated' masculinities of Connell's model cannot be as easily construed along the lines of homophobia as the model initially advocated, given the shifts in attitudes towards homosexuality that have occurred in modern times. However, it is important to note that Anderson's work is not without criticism - with de Boise (2015) arguing that such inclusive attitudes towards homosexuality may be somewhat of a political strategy of (largely white and middle-class Western) men to maintain male hegemony in the wake of gay rights and that Anderson's theory glosses over the very real homophobia still in existence within modern Western societies. Nonetheless, Anderson's work does show signs of a clear shift in the public attitudes that heterosexual men hold around homosexuality, and is certainly in line with the increasingly progressive politics regarding gay rights of the contemporary age. It is also important to note too Ghaziani's (2011) point that the gay community itself, in the wake of much civil rights progress, has become less monolithic in its aims and more fragmented depending on the degree of privilege and ability to conform to fit into the wider heterosexual society. As Connell (2005) discusses, gay men may be privileged in the degree to which they are able to accomplish performing a more traditional masculinity, a "very straight gay" (Connell, 1992, p.746), meaning that some gay men will hold a social advantage whilst others miss out. Thus it is important to be mindful of disparities within the gay community and to be intersectional in approaching the analysis of gay-straight relations to avoid condensing what is a very diverse community of people.

The place of complicit masculinities in terms of Connell's hegemonic masculinity model is also worth discussing. Connell notes that despite a hegemonic form of masculinity being the most powerful and idealised form of masculinity, it is one that is embodied by relatively few men. What really upholds this ideal is the complicit masculinities, which while not being highly representative of hegemonic forms of masculinity, nonetheless idealise it as well as benefit from reinforcing its idealised position. Glorification of hegemonic masculinity can give capital to men, even though they may not fully embody the current archetype of a hegemonic masculine man. This is because it substantiates the notion that men occupy a dominant positioning over women, as well as men rendered less masculine such as gay men. It is also important to consider Donaldson's (1993) point that it is the weavers of the cultural fabric that are seen to be reinforcers of hegemonic masculinity, not necessarily those who embody it. Thus the media, in particular, is a powerful force in reinforcing the valorisation of hegemonic masculinity, particularly with regards to the coverage of sport and the idealisation of male sports figures (Trujillo, 1991; Park, 2015). It could ultimately be said that the endorsement of hegemonic masculinity is the means by which masculine privilege is upheld altogether. This then begs the question of what the result would be if there is a shift in what is deemed hegemonic? Or indeed if what is deemed hegemonic lost its power altogether and even dissipated? This then brings into question whether a new idealised form of masculinity that replaces the traditional form could be deemed hegemonic if it fails to be one that upholds patriarchal ideology and dominance, as an idealised masculinity and a hegemonic masculinity are not necessarily synonymous. It is thus

important to observe the ongoing changes in masculinity in order to observe how relevant Connell's model is as a means of understanding masculinity in operation.

2.3 - Reflections and Reconstructions - Critiques of Connell's 'Hegemonic Masculinity' Model

In the wake of many critiques since its formulation in 1987, Connell, along with her colleague James Messerschmidt (2005), wrote an article acknowledging that the model of hegemonic masculinity may be somewhat limited in its applicability in changing times, needing re-clarification and re-invention due to complications with its utilisation. One critique of Connell's hegemonic masculinity model that is particularly pertinent to the focus of this study is that of Christine Beasley (2008). Criticising the model's application to masculinity on a global scale leads her to propose a narrowing of the term 'hegemonic masculinity'. Beasley (2008) is concerned with how Connell's model has set up a kind of monolithic hegemonic masculinity that is seen as representing institutional as opposed to symbolic power. She cites this as being caused by Connell attempting to see hegemonic masculinity as both 'discursive' and 'material' - with the latter giving rise to a focus on authority and the operations of institutional power. Instead, Beasley (2008) believes the model needs to be re-thought as a discourse only. This shifts hegemonic masculinity to being formulated as a 'political ideal' - a mode of representation focusing on the legitimating function of male hegemony as opposed to actual held power. She gives the example of working-class masculinity as a representation of a cultural ideal of masculinity despite working class men not always wielding institutional power (Beasley, 2008), as is the case in New Zealand, where this study is situated (Phillips, 1996). Herein, Beasley's positioning of hegemonic masculinity in the realm of the political helps to refine the focus of hegemonic masculinity in this study as being centred around the symbolic and discursive nature of masculinity as opposed to 'material' institutional power held by men.

Another important critique of Connell's model of hegemonic masculinity is that of Wetherell and Edley (1999) who again suggest a reconfiguration as to what the term 'hegemonic masculinity' entails. Like Beasley (2008), Wetherell and Edley (1999) centre the utilisation of hegemonic masculinity in discursive terms and discuss the capacity for the model to be used in terms of understanding individuals' subject positioning relative to masculine norms within the framework of psychology. Essentially, Wetherell and Edley (1999) are discussing the ways in which Connell's model can be shaped in order to understand identity - whether men position themselves in alignment with hegemonic masculinity, or in opposition to it - ultimately what it is that happens psychologically with regard to hegemonic masculinity. In this case, hegemonic masculinity becomes not so much a 'type of man' but a discursive subject positioning that men can take on, or position themselves towards or against. Complications arise with this, however, given the seemingly near impossibility of embodying hegemonic masculinity given its 'fantastic' construction as hypermasculine prowess. They also argue that how hegemonic masculinity operates in practice is not clear from Connell's (1987; 2005) outlining of the model - and propose a discursive practice approach to masculinity in order to understand how hegemonic masculinity operates discursively on a micro and interactional level. However, Wetherell and Edley (1999) argue that there cannot be just one hegemonic form of masculinity taking a discursive practice approach, given the complexities of sense-making which do not operate in an organised and clearly definitive way. What is deemed hegemonic by Connell's model (typically 'macho' masculinity) thus cannot be defined as the only form of hegemonic masculinity, and instead the situational specifics and processes of sense-making must be taken into account, painting a more complex picture.

Although this study has chosen to take a discursive and anti-essentialist psychological approach to its study of men and masculinity, this is certainly not the only path that is available for research in this field. The field of masculinity studies is divided by different approaches to both understanding and researching masculinity, and results differ greatly depending on the epistemological framework the

research chooses to take. Alternatively to the approach of this study, many researchers have attempted to understand male behaviour through biological and evolutionary frameworks, wherein hormones, physiological dimorphism and genetics have been utilised in order to explain gender differences that account for statistical variances between men and women (Cochran, 2010). However, the dominant paradigm for psychological research on men and masculinities in North American academia is versions of role theory used to conduct quantitative research (Wetherell & Edley, 2014). Researchers in this area tend to rely on the Gender Role Strain Paradigm (GRSP) to conceptualise masculinity, as opposed to a discursive approach. This paradigm is centred around the idea that gender roles are acquired through the influence of prevailing gender ideologies in variable ways depending on an individual's socio-cultural context (Levant & Richmond, 2007). While GRSP and discursive psychology are similar in that they take a non-essential approach that acknowledges the politics of masculinity, the two paths differ largely in their methodological employment (Wetherell & Edley, 2014). Research in GRSP is largely quantitative, often drawing upon surveys and questionnaires to obtain data, whereas discursive research, of course, is qualitative in nature and focuses on linguistic resources such as interview transcription or written text as data to be analysed. Because of this, Wetherell and Edley (2014) argue, GRSP's results tend to be more determinate of the nature of the social actor - ideologically splitting itself off from the focus of discursive psychology, which is the practices individuals engage in that exist in the wider world as opposed to the nature of the individuals engaging in them. We see this even when GRSP is applied to qualitative data, such as in Fields et al.'s (2015) study on HIV risk amongst young black men who have sex with other men. The 'gender role strain' these men experience from being unable to fulfil the requirements of masculinity in their socio-cultural environment, I would argue, centralises the discussion around the men as psychological subjects with coherent and consistent 'strains' that they are experiencing in their lives due to the disparity between the masculine norms expected of them and their homosexual activity. Taking a discursive focus instead, the focus shifts onto the discursive practices as opposed to them men themselves and acknowledges the often conflicting nature of individuals' positioning. Complications are especially apparent in studies on masculinity that take a quantitative approach, such as by Smith, Parrott, Swartout and Tharp (2015) who compare 'hegemonic' viewpoints, gender role stress, and sexual aggression towards partners. The researchers assessed questionnaire data designed to assess anti-femininity attitudes and masculine gender role stress and compared it with questionnaire data observing sexual dominance and aggression - finding a correlation between negative attitudes towards women and the likelihood of perpetrating sexual aggression towards women. However, through using only quantitative results, the men's actual construction of their masculinity and how it relates to their relationships with women becomes oversimplified and again centralises the discussion to being around the nature of the individuals in question as opposed to the nature of the masculine practices they engage in. Thus, in order to have a more detailed understanding of how masculinity operates in practice and how it is understood and reproduced discursively, a discursive psychological focus appears to be the tool of best fit.

2.4 - Masculinity in Practice/Masculinity as Practice - Empirical Studies Utilising Hegemonic Masculinity

Connell's model of hegemonic masculinity has not simply remained in theory form. A variety of studies have attempted to assess its validity by conducting empirical studies that attempt to contextualise hegemonic masculinity (as well as the multiplicity of masculinities she outlines) within the real world. Many of the studies that have employed Connell's model have shown the breadth to which it can be applied, and have revealed interesting conclusions around how masculinity operates in practice that cannot be drawn from simply looking at hegemonic masculinity in theory form. One such example is a study by Bartholomaeus (2012) who drew upon Connell's model to assess masculinities of primary school boys, attempting to see whether a 'hegemonic' form of masculinity dominated other masculinities within the boys' social world as is the case amongst adult men. She

found that whilst the accounts suggested an existence of a form of 'hegemonic' masculinity amongst the young boys, the patterns and constructions of masculinity of the boys were not the same as amongst adults. This goes to show the locational relativity of Connell's model - whilst applicable in a broad range of settings where masculinity is relevant, there is nonetheless no fixed 'universal' definition as to what hegemonic masculinity necessarily entails. In another study, Montes (2013) looked at hegemonic masculinity in the context of emotional expression of men who have migrated or been impacted by migration from Guatemala to the United States. Through the reflexivity offered by the process of migration, she argues, the men were given an opportunity to reflect on their emotions towards to their children and other members of their family, countering many discourses endemic to hegemonic masculinity around unemotionality, aggression and being non-nurturing. The study shows how situational experiences can alter men's need to adhere to hegemonic forms of masculinity, with men finding solace in counter-hegemonic practices whilst in difficult positions with higher stakes. Hegemonic masculinity's significance in practice is thus situational and contextual, with wider circumstances having the capacity to shape its ultimate significance to individuals. Toerien and Durrheim (2001) use Connell's model of multiple masculinities to observe what they see to be a synthesis of the 'new man' and 'retributive' or 'macho man' forms of masculinity, drawing on these particular conceptualisations of masculinity as discussed by Edley and Wetherell (1997). The authors conducted a discursive analysis of 15 editions of the South African edition of Men's Health magazine, and discuss what they refer to as the discourse of the 'real man' - a coherent masculine subject position that attempts to resolve the contemporary 'masculine crisis' by essentialising masculinity in harmony with macho masculinity, whilst avoiding critiques of sexism and traditionalism through employing facets of the masculinity of the 'new man'. This 'real man', they argue, is a kind of political strategy wherein the discourses of the 'new man' are utilised to maintain the patriarchal power and essentialised masculinity of the 'macho man' in a more socially acceptable way, but are hesitant to deem this 'real man' as hegemonic. Instead, they employ Wetherell and Edley's (1999) caution in dichotomising discourses as fundamentally complicit or resistant to hegemony and argue that context of the discourse operating in practice is necessary for assessing its relationship with patriarchal agenda.

One particular area where empirical research on hegemonic masculinity has been significantly employed is within the field of men's health - used by researchers often to attempt to explain health disparities between men and women. Studies show that men are more likely to adopt beliefs that ultimately put them at greater risk for health adversities because the enactment of such beliefs is considered demonstrative of masculinity (Courtenay, 2000). Consequently, men have been found to have poorer health outcomes than women - both in terms of physical and mental health - with these results influenced by masculine discourses valorising men's toughness, glorifying risk-taking and perceiving the act of asking for help as feminine (Lee & Owens, 2002). As well as this, the contemporary environment appears to be particularly reinforcing of masculine norms, and subsequently perpetuates this health disparity. Scott-Samuel, Stanistreet and Crawshaw (2009) use Connell's theory of hegemonic masculinity to explain potential health inequalities between men and women. The authors draw parallels with hegemonic masculinity and the competitive nature of the modern neoliberal economy, and argues that such an economy is a by-product of hypermasculine ideology in its rejection of community-based values in favour of aggressive competition in the market. In this way, hegemonic masculinity is the cause of the structural violence that leads to gendered health inequality.

In light of evidence of gendered health disparities, much research has been conducted that looks at specific areas of men relative to healthcare in an attempt to explain their poorer outcomes compared with women. A study by Emslie, Ridge, Ziebland and Hunt (2006), investigates men's accounts of depression relative to their masculinity - finding that maintaining a sense of masculinity was important to recovery. The research showed the need to navigate the discourses of hegemonic masculinity in a way that allows for men to engage in therapy without threatening their masculinity whilst steering men

away from the pitfalls of traditional masculine ideology that discount the importance of mental health. The authors also found that men's ability to successfully navigate their depression and their masculinity often depended upon the socio-discursive resources they had available, with some finding it easier to resist hegemonic discourses over others. Indeed, discourse itself appears to be highly influential and indeed constitutive of shaping men's attitudes towards their health. Fleming, Lee and Dworkin (2014) warn of how public health campaigns that utilise discourses of masculinity can ultimately end up reiterating the very hegemonic discourses responsible for men's poor health outcomes. Hegemonic masculinity as a model has also been used to understand specific gendered facets of men's health, such as Terry and Braun's (2012) study of men's vasectomies. The study observed how discursive strategies were developed by the men to resist the norms of masculinity they were defying through their operation, and yet how they still potentially reinforce hegemonic masculinity itself in the process. This is done so in that they are partaking in reproductive technology (typically associated with femininity) and rejecting the norms of fatherhood, and yet doing so in a way that centralises personal agency and independence - prominent facets of hegemonic masculinity. This shows how complicated strategies of navigating one's masculinity can be, as the men did not need to reject other elements of traditional masculinity in their 'rebellion' against one particular element.

Many studies empirically employing Connell's hegemonic masculinity model investigate specifically men's identities and the ways in which masculinity shapes men's discursive understandings of their sense of 'self'. The significance of sexuality was often a focal point, given its centrality in Connell's model in determining men's hegemonic status or lack thereof. Wilson et al. (2010) studied the negotiation strategies that gay, bisexual and questioning men utilised in order to construct a sense of masculinity in a context where they are specifically marginalised by hegemonic masculinity due to their sexual orientations. The researchers looked at the discursive strategies the men adopted in order to negotiate hegemonic masculinity, finding that because of their already subordinated position in the hierarchy of masculinities based upon their sexuality, the men were able to adopt more subversive strategies with regards to masculinity and identity, such as balancing a masculine identity with a feminine one. Alternately, Korobov (2004), taking a discursive psychological approach, observes the talk of young men around homophobia and sexism, showcasing how through discursive means the young men appear simultaneously complicit and subversive to the hegemonic norms of masculinity. The young men engaged in work to resist appearing prejudiced, and yet in the process of this also worked on presenting themselves as confident and secure in a way that was representative of traditional masculinity. In another study, Gough and Edwards (1998) used discourse analysis and the model of hegemonic masculinity in order to observe how masculinities are reproduced by young men consuming alcohol together. They found Connell's model being reproduced through the subordination of women and gay men as 'others' through their discursive constructions by the men, hereby reinforcing their personal masculinity as one that is more in-line with what Connell's model would deem to be 'hegemonic'. This study is also important in that it showcases how discourses of masculinity are involved in individuals' construction of their own identity, and thus how identity is discursive in nature - born from the discursive resources one has available in one's cultural environment. In a similar vein, Johnston and Morrison (2007) interviewed a series of Irish men around their masculine self-presentation. They found that the men constructed masculinity in terms of a hegemonic 'other', one in line with traditional stereotypes of masculinity, and a masculine 'self' which was positioned between the extremes of hypermasculinity and femininity. Men also discussed their situational and contextual variations in their masculine presentation, drawing on Smiler's (2004) conceptualisation of masculinity as both intrapersonal and interpersonal.

2.5 - Practicing Oneself - Theoretical Approach to Identity

The third area of discussion is that of identities and how they relate to the work on emotions and masculinity previously discussed. The focus of this section is to briefly outline the trajectory that the

study of identities has taken in the academy, locate the epistemological positioning that this study takes and explain the reasonings as to why this particular framework of studying identities has been taken. As with emotions and masculinity, this thesis also takes a non-essentialist and discursive approach to its study of identities. In general terms, I approach identity as a form of practice, attentive to social categories and their intersectionality and the role of narrative and meaning making in the constitution of self. Identity research is a field where, despite much interest in the area, many complexities and complications exist around framing what exactly an 'identity' constitutes (Wetherell, 2010). 'Identity' as a term is used to refer to both one's personal sense of self, as well as their group category. As Wetherell (2010) explains, both are socially produced and rooted in discourse. Whilst more obvious in the case of group categories, individuals nonetheless also draw on available discursive resources to construct their senses of self. Avtar Brah (2007) explains how identity has also come to constitute the 'social categories' that individuals are a part of - such as being a 'woman', 'gay', 'black' or 'Muslim'. These social categories denote group membership, but are internalised and become part of one's personal identity.

The conceptualisation of identities as socially constituted has had a broad influence in the academy. As van Meijl (2010) notes, initial psychological models of identity have branched out into the realm of the social through their de-essentialisation. Within this, identity studies moved from a framework of assuming a coherent, independent individual to how the individual itself is constructed through discourse, often in complex and contradictory ways (Wetherell, 2010). This opened up space for socio-cultural effects to be included within the study of identity, how identity is not only shaped, but ultimately constructed discursively through the cultural environment of the individual - how individuals are culturally and discursively produced (van Meijl, 2010). As Benwell and Stokoe (2010) discuss, a 'discursive turn' occurred within identity studies, reshaping the field so that identity became both anti-essentialised and moved beyond the 'project of the self' approach to a sense of identities being socially, and thus discursively, produced. Like with emotions and masculinity, this move to discourse meant that identities were seen to be culturally and historically determined. In discursive psychology, language (discourse) is not considered as an externalisation of one's thoughts, memories, attitudes or motivations, but constitutive of them - drawing on the notion that people are both the products and also the producers of language (Billig, 1991). Thus the individual becomes a discursive construction, one that is (re)produced through the means of discourse. It is in this vein that the identity work of the young men participating in this study will be analysed, drawing on the discursive meaning-making resources they have available to construct their sense of self.

In the process of taking a discursive approach to identity, many researchers drew upon Foucauldian discourse analysis strategies involving broader knowledge schemes and genealogical work in order to understand how identities come to be constituted (Wetherell, 2010). At the other extreme, ethnomethodologists and conversation analysts look at the fine-grain aspects of identity - how identity is constructed moment to moment through talk (Benwell & Stokoe, 2010). Ultimately discursive approaches see identity as fragmented and fluctuating, being constantly (re)produced through discursive negotiation, contrasted with essentialist frameworks that render identity fixed and stable internal characteristics of a person (Benwell & Stokoe, 2006). The discursive approach to identity also allows for identity to be seen as a form of social practice. Identity practices involve drawing upon discursive identities that one has access to and making a practice out of representing them, therein forming the perceived 'identity' itself. Individual selves are narrated, categorised and evaluated relative to others within this constant 'practicing' of identity. Seeing identity as a form of practice acknowledges the agency of the individual, but also situates them within a socio-cultural discursive space that dictates their possibilities (Rodriguez, 2003). The viewing of identity as practice also allows for an overlap with the practice approach towards emotions and masculinity/sexuality, allowing for the three to be more easily discussed in tandem throughout the analysis of this thesis.

The analysis of the utilisation of wider discourses to construct identity gives researchers the ability to see how identity practices are historically produced and bound up within power structures (Wetherell, 2010). This is fairly obvious in the case of social category identities, which can be seen in terms of holding privileges or disadvantages depending on their racial, class, gender, or other dimension. However, the discursive resources in which one uses to practice one's identity can in and of themselves be means of empowering certain forms of knowledge and the institutions that benefit from it, à la Foucault's (1972) discussion of the power-knowledge nexus. The work of Nikolas Rose (1996; 1999) looks more specifically at how the psychological ('psy') industries have influenced modern culture in making individuals feel a need to constantly 'work' on themselves and engage in self-improvement practices. This process is done through employing 'techniques of the self' - psycho-discursive resources that allow individuals to engage in the "deciphering of the self for oneself" (Rose, 1999, p.245). However, these discursive practices also dictate to individuals the hermeneutics in which the self can be understood. Processes of 'understanding' oneself lead to a construction of oneself in a certain way, albeit one that reinforces the influence of the 'psy' industries and the discourses they perpetuate (Rose, 1996). Those who have access to these resources (largely through economic and educational means) are also privileged in their ability to be able to 're-construct' themselves in a way that is socially sanctioned, due to the influence of the modern 'psy' complex. Rose's (1996; 1999) work will be later discussed in this thesis in greater depth, particularly with relation to how it is reflected in the data.

The notion of 'intersectionality', was developed to explain how one can occupy multiple identities within an 'intersection' that differs from the experiences of those identity categories alone (Wetherell, 2010). Thus, for example, a gay Asian man not only has a different experience than a gay white man, but also his experience on this intersectional axis cannot be separated and understood entirely through its individual parts. This process of viewing identity in terms of social categories was heavily influenced by civil rights movements that galvanised marginal groups to fight against their oppression, and in the process formulated stronger senses of identity amongst group members. This 'identity politics' movement is born from historically 'othered' groups generating a shared subjectivity that has been utilised in the fight for their rights (Benwell & Stokoe, 2006). A particularly pertinent example of this is the concept of 'sexuality' and how it operates as an identity. As Patton (2010) discusses, the mobilisation of the gay rights movement helped transition homosexuality (as well as other non-heterosexual sexualities) from being perceived as a mere sexual deviance that individuals were affected by, to a personal identity category with political goals and a collective history. This shows how identities are beyond fixed traits or personal attributes, but are historically and socio-culturally situated constructs that are mobilising, unifying and subject to change.

Chapter 2: Methodological Framework

3.1 Aim of the Study

As Chapter 1 demonstrated, there is minimal literature or research on the relationship between masculinity and emotions (Holmes, 2015). The research reported in this thesis is designed to contribute to this small body of literature by focusing specifically on gay, bisexual and straight men's meaning making around emotion, their evaluations of different emotion identities and figures, exploring the ways in which they connect together emotion, masculinity and sexuality. This investigation of young, urban, and highly educated men is guided by Connell's model of hegemonic masculinity and explores its applicability to contemporary identity scenes.

As noted in the introduction, this research is based around three research questions:

1. What discourses of emotion do young, urban, university educated men draw upon in contemporary New Zealand society?

2. To what extent are traditional 'hegemonic' forms of masculinity still powerful and influential?

3. How do sexuality, masculinity and discourses of emotions intersect to create new frameworks of identity?

3.2 Sample, Recruitment and Ethics

Research Population:
The participation credentials for this study were that the men involved had to be between 18 and 30 years old and be New Zealand citizens. This was because I wanted to work with the generation often described as 'Millennials', as the up-and-coming vanguards of social change - looking at specifically how they are shaping and will continue to shape the social culture of masculinity. Participants needed to be New Zealand citizens due to the localised context of the study. I wanted to look specifically at masculinity in the context of New Zealand and thus required participants who considered themselves citizens of the country and who had lived in the country long enough to be able to reflect on the national culture of masculinity. Masculinity also has a particular place in New Zealand culture (Phillips, 1996) with its own unique idiosyncrasies, which will be interesting to study in and of itself. Recruiting within Auckland City, all my participants lived in an urban setting, with results potentially being different had I recruited a more rural sample. University education was not a stated requirement, but given the nature of the recruitment process, the participants all ultimately ended up having at least some level of tertiary education. A focus on university educated young men gives an insight into the perspectives of those likely to be in influential positions of social change.

Advertising:
In order to obtain participants for the study, two methods were employed. Firstly, advertisements (see Appendix 1) were both placed around the University of Auckland campus as well as being sent to organisations that would have potentially interested and eligible individuals who could take part in the study. Organisations that were sent the advertisement to distribute to their mailing list included a queer University club and a psychology student group. Snowballing also occurred, with those informed of the study passing details of it on to others they believed might be interested. Secondly, psychology students from the University of Auckland taking a stage two social psychology paper were given the opportunity to participate in the study in order to receive credits for the paper. Participating

in postgraduate research projects was compulsory for students taking this paper in order to receive these particular credit points towards their overall grade.

Sample:

Thirteen individuals were interviewed as part of this study, with four being recruited through the social psychology paper in order to obtain participation credits, and the remaining nine individuals being recruited through their direct response to the advertisements or from snowballing. Besides the students who received credit for their participation, participants were not compensated (financially or otherwise) for their participation in the study, participating out of interest in the nature of the study and as a personal contribution to academic research. A demographics questionnaire was sent to participants prior to their interview along with the participant information sheet. The questionnaire asked participants to fill out basic information about themselves that was relevant to the nature of the study, including their age, ethnic identity and level of education. Participants were also asked to state their sexual orientation, which was the main demographic factor that the study was interested in. The study's participants all had some degree of tertiary education, with most participants being part-way through their undergraduate degrees. Participants came from a broad range of ethnic backgrounds, reflecting the diverse, multi-cultural nature of contemporary Auckland. Six of the participants identified as gay/homosexual, five identified as straight/heterosexual, and two identified as bisexual. As part of the demographics questionnaire, participants were asked to give themselves a pseudonym in order to protect their privacy. All participants in this study are referred to by their pseudonyms. Table One below outlines the basic demographics of the participants in the study:

Table One: Demographics of Participants

Name:	Age:	Sexual Orientation:	Ethnicity:	Education Background:
Liam	23	Gay	NZ European	Bachelors Degree (incomplete)
Dan	21	Gay	NZ European	Undergraduate Student
Josh	29	Straight	NZ European	Undergraduate Student
Jordan	22	Gay	Coloured South African	Undergraduate Student
Leo	24	Straight	Samoan/NZ European	Masters Student
Alan	21	Gay	Chinese/Vietnamese	Undergraduate Student
Jake	23	Gay	Afghani	Bachelors Graduate
Nicholas	24	Bisexual	Singaporean Chinese	Undergraduate Student
Nathan	19	Bisexual	American European	Undergraduate Student
Geoffrey	23	Straight	NZ European	Undergraduate Student
Ash	22	Straight	NZ European	Undergraduate Student
Harry	19	Straight	Vietnamese	Undergraduate Student
Mohammed	25	Gay	Middle Eastern/Indian	Postgraduate Diploma Graduate

Ethics:

As is mandatory for all psychology research projects at the University of Auckland, this project required approval from an ethics board in order to begin the recruitment process. This process involved filling out a questionnaire that outlined the nature of the study and ensured no ethical violations were taking place within the context of the study. In adherence with the ethics board's recommendations, a participant information sheet (see Appendix 2) was sent to all participants that outlined the aims and process of the study and what the participants would be required to do as part of the study, as well as ensuring to the participants that confidentiality would be maintained and providing contact details for any concerns that participants may have.

3.3 Interview Schedule & Interview Process

As Chapter 1 argued, there are obvious problems with trying to analyse masculinity through quantitative methods of data collection (Wetherell & Edley, 2014). This study was designed as a piece of qualitative research, and I decided that loosely structured interviews would be the most fitting means to obtain data. In line with the discursive focus of this investigation, I wanted to utilise a method that investigates language in action. An interview seemed to be the most effective way of obtaining data that was most specific to the topics of focus, especially given its effectiveness in generating perceptions and understanding how individuals make meaning (Taylor & Bogdan, 1998). The interview setting is that it allows for information to be clarified, with one of the problems with research on masculinity through quantitative methods is that survey data has to be taken at face value - using an interview format allows us to access the 'why's of participants' responses - using probing and targeted questioning (Gaskell, 2000). This is important when researching a topic such as masculinity which is prone to subjective interpretation and can be highly varied in how it is understood and enacted. The interview format of this study also provided data that could be used for various purposes and further studies that range beyond the focus of this thesis.

Focus groups were considered as an option instead of interviews, but given the nature of the study, there were concerns about participants' willingness to express their opinions openly in such a setting, as well as their general comfort around talking about what may be sensitive topics around a group of strangers. Hierarchies and power dynamics are known to have negative impacts on participants in focus groups, causing certain participants to withhold discussion out of discomfort discussing them in the presence of those with more social privilege (Mansell, Bennett, Northway, Mead & Moseley, 2004). Given that this thesis studied the responses of gay, bisexual and straight men, the power dynamics and aspects of privilege around masculine capital may have made discussing certain topics - particularly sexuality - uncomfortable for participants. With one-on-one interviews with myself as the researcher, I ensured confidentiality with what was discussed and consistently worked on ensuring participants felt comfortable to express what they had to say. Thus I believe participants were under less pressure to restrain or manage their responses to the questions they were asked. Focus groups also commonly have issues with particular participants dominating the discussions, and whilst this can be managed, it may lead to shyer participants not being as open as if they would be if they were being interviewed solo (Adams, Khan, Raeside & White, 2007). Individual interviews ensured for me that my participants who may be shyer get as much opportunity to express what they have to say without having to be concerned with competing for airtime or being judged by others in what they say.

Naturally occurring data was another potential avenue for analysis, given that it is free from the pressures and influences of the interview setting (Bechhofer & Paterson, 2000). In the earlier stages of organising this research, I searched online through many forums relative to masculinity such as Reddit forums /r/MensRights and /r/gaybros, as well as general men's health and fitness forums. However, this method of data collection was not used as could not find content that was relevant enough to the topic of interest, and thus interviews geared specifically around the focus questions were used instead.

However, taking an interview-based approach to data collection, it is important to note the flaws of such a method, thus ensuring the limitations and potential pitfalls are made aware throughout the process, aiding its concision. The main threat to the reliability of data through interviews was that participants were not giving genuine answers that were reflective of how they may discursively construct topics outside of the particular interview setting. The research interview context is not a 'natural' exchange, and interviewees may falsify their responses if they are trying to save face and avoid coming across as unlikeable or uncooperative (Berg, 2009). Interviewees' goodwill may also become an obstacle, as they may provide answers that they believe the researcher wants to hear, instead of responding in a manner that they see as a 'genuine' reflection of their own opinion (Adams

et al., 2007). Indeed, participants may give responses that aim to match a particular self-image, engaging heavily within impression management (Gaskell, 2000). A particular facet of my research that concerned me with regard to this was straight men deliberately constructing gay men favourably purely due to concerns of appearing bigoted and homophobic. However, it was important to take into account that the aim of discursive research is not to find participants 'true' opinions, but rather to see how accounts are produced within the interview context. There is no neutral medium to maintaining information from individuals, and thus the best means of combatting this is through acknowledging shortcomings and engaging in reflexivity (Bott, 2010).

Another potential pitfall of the interview medium is that interviews may elicit negative affective responses within participants (Berg, 2009). This was certainly a concern within my research, especially for gay or bisexual participants discussing their sexuality. In response to this, I listed a series of counselling services in the participant information sheet that participants could contact should they have been at all distressed by the nature of the interview, informed them prior to the interview that they did not have to answer questions if they did not want to and could stop the interview at any time, and ensured that I was vigilant in how I worded follow-up questions and my responses to disclosure of personal information within the interview context. Lastly, given that the interview and interviewee typically occupy different social backgrounds to some extent, it is important for the interviewer to be made aware of the interviewee's social context, lest faux pas and misunderstandings occur (Adams et al., 2007). Because of this, I asked for all participants to fill out a demographics questionnaire before the interviews to ensure that I was made aware of the interviewee's social location. It is also important to note that as a gay interviewer interviewing straight men there were potential concerns that I had, including getting anti-gay responses that would have been unsettling for me. Although I did not disclose my sexual orientation to participants (although some were aware of it prior to the interview), my sexual orientation could have been assumed given the nature of the study. Also I could have had issues with the reliability of responses in this regard, particularly if they assumed I was gay and thought that I was attempting to elicit a certain response from them, which would influence the types of responses they will give (Bechhofer & Paterson, 2000).

The interviews were semi-structured - a list of questions was followed by the interviewer (see Appendix 3), but follow-up questions would be asked after these questions in order to encourage participants to explain themselves further and garner more information. This was in following of the guidelines of Bechhofer and Paterson (2000) who argue that semi-structured interviews are often easier for first-time interviewers like myself. The research questions existed to guide the interviews and to ensure that all interviews would have a degree of overlap in terms of their overall focus. However, the semi-structured approach allowed for further probing and targeted questioning, which meant the ability to gain a greater plethora of data, compared with questionnaires or surveys (Gaskell, 2000). Participants were asked a range of questions from the interview schedule, which were split into three sections: emotions, masculinity and sexuality. The interview was structured in such a way that the questions became more sensitive as the schedule progressed, ensuring that the more difficult questions were left until a rapport had been established between the interviewer and the participant (Berg, 2009). The topic of sexuality was thus left until last, being most likely to elicit strong responses - be it emotionally triggering responses from gay or bisexual participants, or potentially homophobic remarks from straight participants given the nature of the questions. The flexibility of the semi-standardised interview format allows for freedom to digress, wherein the interviewer can approach the interview more from the subject's positioning (Berg, 2009). For example, with questions around homosexuality, the conversation needed to be framed differently with gay or bisexual men compared with straight men, given their different experiences and thus knowledge on the topic.

Interviews are a special form of conversation, structured around specific objectives (Holstein & Gubrium, 1997). Unlike regular conversations, there is the specific purpose of the interview in that it is formatted so that the interviewer aims to obtain answers via questioning from the interviewee. Berg

(2009) discusses interviews in terms of dramaturgy - the idea that interviews are a kind of 'drama' being played out wherein the interviewer and interviewee adopt performative 'roles' of their respective positions within the interview context. It is the role of the interviewer that shapes the nature of the interview, and thus will ultimately influence the kind of interview data that is produced. Acknowledging this, as an interviewer, I ensured that I appeared to be friendly, agreeable and understanding towards the interviewees in order to ensure that they felt comfortable opening up to me. Both parties in the interview are 'active', not only the interviewee, and meaning itself is assembled through the encounter (Holstein & Gubrium, 1997). Indeed, the social world itself that interviews are a part of is not an unproblematic given - it is actively constructed by individuals, but under conditions not of their own making (Gaskell, 2000). This understanding lends itself to a discursive focus, that individuals - both interviewers and interviewees - are constantly relying upon the discourses they have access to in order to make meaning. In this vein, it is important to note Holstein and Gubrium's (1997) point that it is wrong to view interview subjects as "repositories of knowledge" or "treasuries of information awaiting excavation" (p.114). Instead, interviewees should be looked at as constructing knowledge through a collaborative process with the interviewer. Both parties exist within a discursive sphere and are situated within broader discourses. The interview process is thus one where the interviewer can with the help of the interviewee make sense of the discursive possibilities and ways of meaning-making that exist within the social field they share. Thus, given the discursive focus of sense-making this study takes, an interview focus is in many ways ideal for producing data that can be used to understand broader discourses in operation.

Participants were interviewed by the primary researcher in either the research supervisor's office or the researcher's office - both located on the university campus. Interview times with participants who were not partaking to obtain credits for their social psychology paper were arranged through correspondence between the interviewer and participant after the participant had read through the participant information sheet and had filled out and sent through their demographics questionnaire. For participants obtaining credits through their social psychology paper, interview times were pre-arranged on an online database and participants selected a suitable time to be interviewed. The participant information sheet was subsequently sent to them, but they filled out their demographics questionnaire in the interview room prior to the interview beginning. The interviews with participants ranged between just over half an hour in length and just over an hour and a quarter. The interviews began with participants filling out and signing an individual consent form that acknowledges their understanding and agreement to the process of the study, followed by the interviewer outlining to the participant the process of the interview and ensuring that they are aware that they can end the interview at any time or choose not to answer any of the questions with no questions asked. The interviews were recorded using a cellphone and were later transcribed by the primary researcher. Only the primary researcher and research supervisor had access to these documents in order to maintain participant confidentiality. Participants were given the option of receiving their transcripts in order to remove any content (with no questions asked) within two weeks of receiving the transcript. Only three participants asked for a copy of their transcript, with only one asking for one word to be changed due to an error in transcribing.

3.4 Data Organisation & Analysis:

Given the non-essentialist and discursive epistemology this study takes towards emotions, masculinity and identity, it is important that it also takes an appropriate approach towards the data analysis process, one that works in harmony with a discursive lens towards ontology. A critical constructionist and discursive psychological focus was chosen as the methodological approach towards the analysis of the data obtained from the interviews, ensuring that the analysis is kept in line with the theoretical approach of the study. A critical constructionist framework fixates itself not with ontology and attempting to understand the 'reality' of what it observes (Speer & Potter, 2002) but

instead acknowledges that what is perceived as 'reality' is embedded within and shaped by culture, history and society (Braun & Clarke, 2013). Here, discourse is the central focal point of observation, with discourse being the modality in which meanings are made, and information is understood psychologically and conveyed socially (Potter & Wetherell, 1987). Discursive psychology is more specifically interested in how talk reflects the 'reality' individuals come to perceive, and also comes to constitute the social world they operate within (Potter, 2005). In the case of this research, emotions, masculinity, sexuality and identity are all understood as being discursively constructed, and thus it is their discursive constitutions that is of interest in observation and analysis. The interest is not so much in whether what interviewees are saying is their 'real' opinion, but rather what discourses are drawn upon to construct their responses to the interview questions. Such an epistemology helps to overcome the pitfalls of the interview setting, acknowledging the responses are produced in a particular context (an interview) and are thus in certain ways endemic to such a setting. However, data can still be utilised to understand the broader discourses being drawn upon in the interview setting, being centralised around how meaning is made through social interaction in a shared discursive environment.

In terms of the analysis in practice, there is not a specific pathway one can take when engaging in discursive analysis, but instead one can engage in a range of qualitative analysis methods that observe patterns of meaning within texts and the significance and impacts of these ways of making meaning (Braun & Clarke, 2013). The constructionist approach of discursive psychology observes how people's meaning-making creates the social world through individuals' discursive versions of reality (Potter, 2005), which is what this study aims to observe. The tools used by both the interviewer and the interviewee to make meaning are born out of the discursive field (Speer & Potter, 2002) and so what is being observed is not so much the individuals' psyches themselves but the ways in which they construct their realities through the discursive possibilities they have available to them. Thus participants can be seen to be reflective of the society around them in that they are drawing on the shared discursive resources in their own way to make meaning of their lived world. Language thus becomes the topic of focus, rather than merely being understood as a resource that individuals use to express themselves (Edley, 2001). The language used by participants thus becomes the site of focus for the research, and herein patterns within the interview data are found and subsequently analysed to provide an understanding of the individual's construction of their reality (Taylor, 2001). In line with work by Edley and Wetherell (1997), this study takes the 'middle ground' approach towards discourse analysis between the 'fine-grain' conversational analysis approach and the broader, more Foucauldian influenced approach. Fine-grain approaches look specifically at the nature of discourse in practical operation, analysing the minute elements of conversation to grasp the ramifications of every nuance and utterance. Conversely, broader approaches look at discourse in terms of the wider power structures they are a part of - often utilising social theory to understand how text or talk can be located within these wider structures. Taking an approach that incorporates elements of both, the aim of this research is to understand how discursive constructions of the focus areas such as emotions and masculinity are constructed in a conversational, casual basis - but also how these discourses are reflective and potentially (re)constructive of wider discourses of power.

Three key analytic concepts that will be utilised in the analysis of the data are the 'interpretative repertoire' (Potter & Wetherell, 1987), 'subject position' (Davies and Harré, 1990) and 'figure' (Ahmed, 2004). The interpretative repertoire as a concept was developed in social psychology by Potter and Wetherell (1987), and refers to relatively coherent and intelligible 'packages' of cultural knowledge, including figures of speech, assumptions and metaphors. They are taken-for-granted aspects of shared understandings within a particular context, typified by their familiarity which enables their intelligibility (Seymour-Smith, Wetherell & Phoenix, 2002). They form the "building blocks of conversation" (Edley, 2001, p.198) for discursive analysis, and are key to note within close-reading of a text, being a locally constituted site of making meaning. The subject position is another analytic concept that is highly useful in discursive analysis. One's subject position essentially refers to the

location of an individual relative to discursive scenarios, be it conversations, narratives or interactions (Davies & Harré, 1990). Individuals are 'positioned' in certain ways given the nature of interactions, and therein become produced as 'subjects' who have certain social (and indeed political) standpoints (Edley, 2001). One's subject positioning could be seen to be their discursive sense of self, and from here their discursive possibilities are determined. There is an interaction between subject positions and interpretative repertoires, with the latter being a means of producing the former within a wider ideological context (Edley, 2001). An individual's identity herein comes to be produced within the ways in which they draw upon discourses and repertoires born from their subject positionings, shaping not only their self-understanding but who they are within the social world. The final core analytic concept being used in the data analysis of this study is Sara Ahmed's (2004) constitution of the 'figure'. Figures operate as culturally familiar effigies that are representations of groups of people, representations to which individuals tend to position themselves towards or away from. Ahmed's focus, in particular, is on what she deems 'sticky figures' - ones that have emotions 'stuck' to them, such as asylum seekers or terrorists, herein showcasing how emotion becomes a facet of politics. However, this notion of a figure can be used more broadly to understand social archetypes that individuals draw upon in order to make sense of themselves and others within their social environment.

Drawing on this methodology as outlined, interviews were recorded and subsequently transcribed into text form. Once all the interviews were transcribed, the data was organised in terms of patterns that were found throughout the interviews. Excerpts were organised under particular categories, reflecting themes that emerged that could be useful in terms of the discussion focus of the study. Themes included, but were not limited to: "Emotions constructed in terms of health/self-improvement", "Men as emotionally inept", "Needing to discipline one's emotions", "Invisibility of non-stereotypical gay men", "Desire to be more emotional" and "Men don't show joy/happiness". From here, particular excerpts were taken to be further analysed discursively. These excerpts were categorised separately. Excerpts on emotions were specifically categorised together, and make up their own chapter. Excerpts relating to masculinity, sexuality and identity were then split up and categorised around particular 'figures' that they discuss. The analysis takes place in the following chapter, wherein the data produced in the analysis is made sense of through a critical constructionist and discursive psychological framework.

Chapter 3: "It Doesn't Look Very Pretty" - Men and the Management of Emotions

This first analytic chapter centres around answering the first research question, focusing on the discourses of emotion the men participating in the study draw upon. Throughout the interviews, distinct formulations of emotion emerged that typify the ways in which emotion was constructed by the participants. These descriptions can be best understood as Potter and Wetherell's (1987) term 'interpretative repertoires' - as previously discussed in Chapter 2. The first prominent interpretative repertoire found in the data was a construction of emotion as being a wild and unruly natural force. Such a construction is utilised in the following excerpt from the interview with Nathan, discussing the ease with which he can express the emotion of anger:

<u>Extract One:</u>

```
Nathan: That's pretty easy to express 'cause it just kinda comes out if
you're so angry. You don't even think about the way you do it, til
afterwards, then necessarily feel pretty bad about it, yeah.
```

*Int: Is that something.. another emotion you try and hold back or restrain,
would you say?*

```
Nathan: Sometimes, but not as much. I try and restrain it when I'm mad at
other people, because otherwise if I get angry at them it doesn't look very
pretty, you know? Yeah, you don't wanna be hurtful, but it's easy for it to
leak out, you know?
```

Here Nathan describes the expression of anger as a force that he has limited control over, something that "just kinda comes out" in a moment where there is a perceived loss of agency - as he puts it: "you don't even think about the way you do it, til afterwards". The construct of anger here from Nathan's perspective implies that anger is expressed in a way that lacks personal agency, that it isn't 'performed' in a way wherein one is consciously thinking about how one is conducting oneself. Such a statement implies there is a kind of 'naturalness' to this anger, wherein the mediating 'individual' is not present to manage the emotion "til afterwards". Nathan goes on to discuss the guilt he feels post-anger. There is a sense of this expression of anger being something he is held accountable for, and yet somewhat not responsible for. He describes it as something he has limited agency with in terms of restraining it - that his intention is to restrain the emotional expression, yet it is something that is "easy … to leak out". Here, Nathan develops a repertoire of emotion that it operates as though it were a wild and natural force beyond his personal control. Anger, in this instance, appears to have a 'mind of its own' - it acts regardless of the wishes of the individual. Another example of this repertoire of emotion comes up in the interview with Dan, whilst discussing crying in front of his lecturer due to receiving a bad grade:

<u>Extract Two:</u>

```
Dan: ...and when I was crying I was trying to not cry, like to me like I
didn't want to cry in front of him, both because it's like silly and
because it was embarrassing."
```

Int: So you weren't like trying to put on crying to make him..?

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Dan: It was a stress-induced cry that I just could not stop. I was like to
my body "please stop crying". I tried really hard.
```

Here, Dan describes the conflict between his intentions and his body - that he did not want to cry in front of his lecturer because it was "silly" and "embarrassing" of him. He describes the crying as being "stress-induced", implying that the buildup of stress he had experienced around the assignment and the subsequent poor grade led to an emotional outburst that not only lacked volition, but was also unwanted. He then creates an interesting positional split between himself and his body, describing the scenario as though he was engaging in a dialectical dialogue with his body, telling it to "please stop crying". Here, the personal self and the emotional body are dichotomised as oppositional forces, acting against the interests of one-another. A disciplinary nexus is constructed between emotions and the individual, where both attempt to take control. In this vein both Dan and Nathan utilise a second repertoire of emotion - that emotion is reflective of one's identity and a sense of morality. Though emotion is constructed by both to be something that is uncontrollable (or at least very difficult to control) its expression nonetheless is reflective of the way in which they are viewed by others. In Dan's words, it is "embarrassing", in Nathan's: "it doesn't look very pretty", something he feels "pretty bad about" afterwards - both suggesting that these emotions present to others an undesirable sense of self. Both participants showcase here a third repertoire of emotion - that because emotions are reflective of oneself, they need to be controlled and restrained. The individuals are in a difficult predicament wherein they are at the mercy of emotions that others will see them unfavourably for, and yet the expectation to control these emotions still remains. This suggests that emotions are seen by them to be both involuntary reactions to circumstances, but also heavily involved in the disciplinary responses to socially unacceptable emotional expression that one fails to control. The participants thus see themselves as operating in a complex field wherein emotions are seen to be both recalcitrant and regulatory, making successful navigation to maintain one's respectable sense of identity a challenging task.

Another noteworthy interpretative repertoire found throughout the data reflects more contemporary therapeutic discourses that construct emotion as something that one can 'work with' in order to mitigate the perceived harmful effects of the emotion. This category draws upon discourses that are more widely accepted and utilised in modern psychological practice, including techniques such as mindfulness that involve observing and becoming more aware of one's emotions as a means of dealing with them (Shapiro & Carlson, 2009). This repertoire of 'emotional self-work', and the previously discussed naturalistic repertoire of emotion are used in tandem in the following quote from Jake, a performing arts school graduate, when asked whether emotions were something he regularly thought about:

Extract Three:

```
Jake: Yes - and then aside from an actor, I think I am always just checking
in with my emotions because I don't really want to push anything down,
because I did a bit of that for an amount of time, and it all came up, and
I had to deal with it so I sorta decided from now on - make sure you check
in with yourself, if there's anything you're not, you know, addressing,
just sit down and let yourself deal with it, or if you're, you know, hurt -
if someone's just upset you or something, just let yourself be upset, et
cetera, et cetera. So yes I'm very aware.
```

Here Jake also draws upon a repertoire of emotions in which they are rendered ultimately uncontrollable, that they were something that he would "push… down" but "all came up" eventually, leaving him having to "deal with it". While not overly descriptive of his methods of 'dealing' with his emotions, Jake does explain that the need to "check in with yourself" regarding things that he is not

"addressing". Such a statement implies an internal world wherein emotional issues exist latently, and that in order to mitigate these problematic emotions, one must confront them. We see this solution in the line "if someone's just upset you, just let yourself be upset", which appears to be suggesting an approach wherein emotions are confronted and felt, as opposed to "push[ed] ... down". This is clarified in the use of "aware" as Jake's self-description in the last line - he is someone who is "aware" of his emotions and thus can deal with them appropriately. Two repertoires of emotion appear to be in play here from Jake's interview. Firstly, emotions are a tool for both self-awareness and also self-improvement. The language that Jake utilises, particularly his construction of himself as "very aware" and his decision to "make sure you check in with yourself" suggests that he values his self-understanding relative to his emotions. This lends itself to the second repertoire of emotions he draws upon - that it is healthy and beneficial to express what is felt and not repress his emotions. Emotion here is constructed as something that can be reflected upon, and through this process eliminated or transmuted, essentially 'solving' the emotional problem. Such statements are heavily reflective of contemporary views of emotion born from therapeutic discourses, particularly the self-help industry, and how emotions should be dealt with (Illouz, 2008). It is interesting that in Jake's excerpt, emotions are constructed both as something 'natural' that can build up and burst out, and yet contradictorily have the possibility of being fairly malleable psychic forces that can be dealt with using personal agency and the right methodological toolkit. In the following extract, Leo offers a rather different approach as to how he deals with his emotions:

Extract Four:

```
Leo: No I think.. yeah I think reflecting on them [emotions] internally is
important to control them. So, you know, for example, getting in the way of
my productivity or in my relationships, especially with my girlfriend, like
things get emotional in relationships and yeah I think about them so I can,
not extinguish them but try to express them in a way that's not gonna hurt
the relationship or do something stupid.
```

Here Leo explains the importance of "reflecting on [emotions] internally", but he describes this process as being for the purpose of controlling them, as opposed to feeling them or being made aware of them. Leo draws on a repertoire of emotion that creates a seeming dichotomy between rationality/practicality and emotionality/impracticality, explaining how emotions may get "in the way of my productivity". This notion is extended to that of Leo's relationships as well, and how emotions may also be burdensome in romantic relationships. This dichotomisation between the rational and the emotional draws on discourse that emerged in the nineteenth century splitting the rational from the emotional, bringing new technologies of managing one's emotions through the power of one's logic (Reddy, 2001). What is interesting, however, is that Leo does not wish to "extinguish" his emotions. Instead, he must think about emotions (in a reflective way) which will give him the capacity to "express them in a way that's not gonna hurt the relationship or do something stupid". Emotions are thus constructed by Leo as something that can be controlled through the process of reflection and therein transmuted into a form of expression that is more in his own interests. Similar to Jake, Leo discusses the necessity of reflecting on emotions, but he instead draws upon similar repertoires to Nathan and Dan in that he sees emotional expression as reflective of identity (such as in the example of his relationships) and thus he needs to attempt to control his emotions in order to save face. Participants also used the repertoire of emotional self-work to construct their personal identity, as well as a personal narrative. This can be seen in an excerpt by Liam, a 23 year old gay male:

Extract Five:

```
Liam: Yeah, like I'm.. I'm on the journey perhaps of being, becoming more
emotionally aware.. emotionally conscious, so yeah, certainly, going
```

uphill, and perhaps maybe five years ago I probably would have said I
wouldn't be as emotionally connected, but.. but yeah, that question is are
you an emotional person as in, are you in the throws of your emotions all
the time, but like, yeah.. I'd.. if I.. I would say yes in terms of
thinking about my emotions being *inaudible* and stuff, and trying to
understand them.

Int: So they're something you're sorta like working on, and want to be more
like in touch with emotions..

Liam: Yeah, yeah, well it's being able to, sit with them or, or just see
them and deal with them, so you can, yeah, be as productive as you can I
guess. But yeah, yeah.

Liam's excerpt provides an interesting fusion between the interpretative repertoires presented by Jake
earlier and those presented by Leo. He combines a similar style of 'dealing' with emotions to that of
Jake - the notion of "sit[ting] with them" and "trying to understand them", but also emphasises the
need for productivity, like Leo, with this being the apparent goal of one becoming "more emotionally
aware". Liam generates a narrative of how in the past he would have been less "emotionally
connected", but has become someone who is more "emotionally conscious". The language he uses
not only is born out of contemporary psychological therapy, but could also be attributed to self-help or
New Age spirituality (Illouz, 2008).

Here we see an example of how Liam generates an identity relative not only to his relationship with
his emotions, but to his emotional practices. Interpretative repertoires often come with subject
positionings, and through employing them, one takes on a particular identity (Potter & Wetherell,
1987). Williams (2000) discusses the modern function of identity as both a 'sociocultural
accomplishment' and a 'subjective achievement' that one must both accomplish performing a social
identity to the greatest extent, whilst also internally 'know' oneself. In the case of Liam, his 'emotional
awareness' may not a strong social identity, given its difficulty to perform in a contemporary social
field, but is nonetheless one that is rooted in the sociocultural discourses he has access to and is
internalised into a personal identity, that which we see him frame himself as trying to accomplish.
Rose's (1996; 1999) works showcase how individuals have taken on psychological discourses as a
means of 'working on' themselves - a process of perpetual self-improvement that is highly rooted in
contemporary individualistic and capitalistic culture. Liam's aspiration towards achieving 'emotional
awareness' is highly reflective of Rose's (1996; 1999) discussion of how the 'psy' industries have
trained individuals to take the role of one's own psychologist and employ 'techniques of the self' in
order to perform this 'self-work'. This relatively contemporary new ideal is certainly not something that
would previously have been aspired towards by men relative to their own emotions but showcases a
recent change in discourses of an idealised self and the psychologisation of modern culture.

In essence, throughout these extracts, we see a seemingly apparent contradiction between the
constructed nature of emotion. The first three excerpts show emotions as essentialised forces that
'come out' often in ways that lack agency. It is interesting that the term 'emotion' is immediately
associated by participants with negative emotions, and thus the discussion becomes one of how to
deal with them given their construction as explosive forces that one can be at the mercy of. These
interpretative repertoires of emotion were the status quo for all the participants in the research, with

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the discussions on emotions centering around the difficulty of managing these unruly emotional forces in the face of social expectation. Many participants described having to control emotions and the struggle of having to do so, utilising similar repertoires of emotion to Nathan and Dan, whilst others discussed emotions as something that one needs to 'sit with', address and reflect upon - à la Jake and Liam - and through such practices emotions are transmuted from unruly forces into malleable tools. Not only this, but through this process it appears that Jake and Liam are formulating a kind of identity through their emotional 'self-work'. This identity is one situated within modern psychological discourse and reflects a new form of self-conceptualisation that was previously inaccessible to men. How this relates to men's masculine identities will be discussed in the following chapter.

Chapter 4: Strong, Silent and Emotional - Navigating Modern Masculinity

In this chapter, I turn to examine the ways in which masculinity is conveyed by the participants within the interview context. This chapter continues the discussion of the previous chapter on emotions, showing how emotions are located within discourses of masculinity throughout the interviews with the participants. This section aims to answer the second research question, looking at whether traditional 'hegemonic' forms of masculinity are still powerful and influential, or whether there are signs of change in the power dynamics of masculine culture. To frame the analysis in this chapter and the following chapter, I draw upon Ahmed's (2004) notion of 'figures' - cultural shorthands representing specific types or groups of people, discussed earlier in Chapter 2. The figures discussed in this chapter are both reflective of traditional 'hegemonic' masculinity and seemingly subversive of this form of masculinity. These figures, and the ways in which the participants discursively position themselves regarding them, give an insight into the complex nature of modern masculinity and the relationships that modern young men have with the discourses of masculinity that they are subject to.

4.1 - The Rugby Playing 'Kiwi Bloke'

The idea of what it traditionally means to be a 'man' in New Zealand came up in the discussions with participants. Herein, participants outlined figures of traditional New Zealand masculinity - specifically the 'rugby player' and the 'Kiwi bloke', and how such figures are seen as the national representative of masculinity. We see this discussed in the following extract from Jordan, a 22 year old student who identifies as gay:

Extract Six:

Int: *But do you feel like in New Zealand there's certain rules about expressing emotions that you need to engage in in order to keep your masculinity?*

Jordan: Unspoken rules. Yeah.

Int: *What would you say that they are?*

Jordan: One - you can't cry, you can't complain about anything. You kind of, I dunno, it's more the expression of masculinity is dictated to be in a certain way which is kind of in form with rugby players and the All Blacks, and it like this degree of humility which in turn serves your greatness. I dunno, Richie McCaw, when I look at him, he doesn't really have a lot of emotion, he's very straight faced. Whoever the new coach is, I don't even know his name, he really has no emotion, no variation in his tone of voice or anything.

In this extract, Jordan uses specific individual figures - former All Blacks captain Richie McCaw and coach Steve Hansen - as exemplars of typical New Zealand masculinity. These two individuals are representative of the "unspoken rules" around masculinity that exist within New Zealand society, rules that dictate that to be masculine one "can't cry" and "can't complain about anything". Masculinity in New Zealand, as Jordan puts it, is "dictated to be in a certain way which is kind of in form with rugby players and the All Blacks" - hence his utilisation of Richie McCaw and Steve Hansen as exemplary figures of Kiwi masculinity. The two individuals' lack of emotionality is made a particular example of by

Jordan, with McCaw being described as "straight faced" and Hansen as having "no emotion" and "no variation in his tone of voice".

Rugby players then, All Blacks in particular, appear to be the most accurate representation of the "unspoken" rules of masculinity in New Zealand, at least from Jordan's perspective. The figure of the rugby player is thus seen as an influential exemplar of masculinity, with key All Black figures such as McCaw and Hansen being epitomisations of how to 'do' masculinity correctly, which involves not crying or complaining, and not expressing emotion. The rugby player figure overlaps with that of the 'Kiwi bloke' (Park, 2000) - a quintessential New Zealand man, who as Law, Campbell and Schick (1999, p.23) write, has a "mythological status" in New Zealand society. In line with hegemonic masculinity as outlined by Connell (2005), the Kiwi bloke figure is the pinnacle of exemplary masculinity within his socio-cultural context, and all other masculinities are subordinate to him. Lack of emotionality is part of the social capital that the Kiwi bloke holds that reinforces him as traditionally masculine and being "straight faced" maintains the "unspoken rules" behind his 'strong and silent' front. But what of those who in this context fail to live up to the ideals embodied by the quintessential 'Kiwi bloke'? The following extract from Jordan explains the consequences of this:

Extract Seven:

Int: *So there's a cultural tendency to associate male emotionality with homosexuality, do you think this is still quite apparent in modern society?*

Jordan: In New Zealand, yeah, yeah.

Int: *Why do you think it's the case?*

Jordan: 'Cause it's counter to the culture, yeah. I feel like if you do, like I dunno if you do cry or something and it's not for a sports game then they label you a pussy. If you, I dunno.. they throw around words that are quite hurtful as well like.. but.. it's kind of the concrete pole kind of thing, you know the, you want to appear to be a certain way even if on the inside you're dying, yeah.

When asked whether he believed that there was an associated link between male emotionality and homosexuality in "modern society", Jordan immediately responds with contextualising the discussion to being centred around a New Zealand context. Asked as to why he thinks this link is made, he replies with "'cause it's counter to the culture". Here we see a significant formulation - that homosexuality and male emotionality are constructed as antithetical to New Zealand culture. Not only are these two facets of what would render a man subordinate under the hierarchy of hegemonic masculinity, these are also characteristics that run "counter" to New Zealand-ness is constructed as being - suggesting a strong conjunction between hegemonic masculinity and New Zealand national identity. Not only is masculinity highly idealised in New Zealand "in form with rugby players and the All Blacks" (see Extract Six), it is also understood as being representative of what New Zealand culture is as a whole. Thus, in this line of thought, to be an emotional man or to be gay (being socially correlated in themselves), one is rendered what could be deemed 'un-Kiwi' - an individual who is contrary to the national order and what it means to be included within New Zealand society. Brady's (2012) article on what she deems the 'transgendered Kiwi' showcases how New Zealand identity is defined as so exclusively masculine that even New Zealand femininity becomes a form of 'misperformed masculinity' - herein creating a kind of 'transgendering' in order to maintain the correlation between the masculine and the identity as a 'Kiwi'. Thus, to be gendered anything other than what is deemed masculine, especially as a man, is to be out of line with what it means to be included in New Zealand society. We see this as Jordan continues to discuss being labelled a "pussy"

for crying at something other than a sports game - which is an exception given due to sports again being an integral part of both traditional masculinity and New Zealand culture, particularly rugby (Phillips, 1996). To "throw around words that are quite hurtful" such as "pussy" is to thus render an individual as not only subordinate in the hierarchy of masculinity, but to exclude them from being a part of overall New Zealand culture - represented by the figure of the 'Kiwi bloke'.

4.2 The 'Bad Alpha Male'

In line with the 'Kiwi bloke' figure, another prominent figure emerging from the data that could be seen as representative of traditional hegemonic masculinity is the figure of the 'alpha male'. One of the interview questions asked participants to define an alpha male and then discuss its appeal and the kinds of emotions they think an alpha male could express whilst still being considered masculine. This figure was one that was constructed in polarised ways by participants, however, with some imbuing him with positive traits and suggesting he occupied a position they aspired towards, whilst others viewed him as a domineering and problematic figure that had no allure whatsoever. We see an example of a participant positioning the alpha male in an attractive position in the following extract from the interview with Nathan:

<u>Extract Eight:</u>

Int: *OK yeah. And how would you define an alpha male?*

Nathan: Oh.. boisterous is a good one. Demanding.. in terms of emotions, or what?

Int: *Just in terms of what.. what do you like.. when you think of an alpha male, what do you.. what kind of comes to mind basically?*

Nathan: Strong.. I don't know. Almost like looking down at others a little, yeah like an authority figure.

Int: *And would you say that being an alpha male is an appealing thing to be?*

Nathan: Yes.

Int: *For you even, would you say?*

Nathan: Yes. If I could, I don't think I'm that kind of person, but, you know, if it was a thing that was obtainable to me, yep, I mean, definitely gains you respect, which is good. Yeah, people tend to listen to them.

Int: *Yeah, and what else about them is like appealing would you say?*

Nathan: People find them attractive, generally. Yeah, just confidence.

Int: *Would you say at all you aspire to be like that, in some ways, or..?*

Nathan: I did once, not so much anymore.

Nathan's construction of an alpha male and his relationship with the figure is an intriguing one. Nathan construes an alpha male to be someone who is "boisterous", "demanding" and one who is "looking down at others a little", highly suggestive of traditional 'hegemonic' masculinity as discussed by Connell (1987; 2005). Despite using these negative terms, however, when asked if being an alpha male was an appealing thing to be for him, he states that it is. In terms of aspiring to be an alpha male, he replies "I did once, not so much anymore". Nathan admits that he doesn't "think I'm that kind of person" - that alpha male status is not obtainable to him. Nathan's construction suggests the alpha male holds a particular kind of cultural capital, which can be understood through drawing upon Bourdieu's (1977) utilisation of the term. This 'masculine capital' held by the alpha male appears to interlink with his successful performance of hegemonic masculinity and privileges him above other men in his attractiveness and respect from others. Nathan, it seems, has given up on his dream of becoming an alpha male because he has realised that the position of an alpha male is one that is not obtainable with the masculine capital he has. Yet not all participants had the same regard for the alpha male, as we see in the following extract from the interview with Geoffrey, a straight 23 year old student:

Extract Nine:

Int: *And would you say that being an alpha male is an appealing thing to be?*

Geoffrey: I would say to some people yes, I think it's another one that's less.. it's becoming less appealing through recent years, because it's been shown, like some people are beginning to see alpha males as kinda dicks, like picking on people and things like that, so it's.. I'd say the appeal's gone down less, but I'd still think that being an alpha male is still probably the most appealing way to be, at least as far as men looking to attract women go, in the male side of thinking, I'd say.

In this extract, we see a clear distancing of Geoffrey's personal positioning from those who find the alpha male figure to be one of aspiration. He acknowledges that there is an appeal in alpha male status "to some people" but is one that is "becoming less appealing through recent years", suggesting a contemporary shift in the appeal of an alpha male. He goes on to say that some people now view alpha males as "kinda dicks" due to "picking on people and things like that" - arguing that their unkindness and abuse of power has made such figures unappealing. This contrasts Nathan's construction of an alpha male and his positioning towards the figure, wherein despite the "demanding" nature and tendency to be "looking down at others" (see Extract Eight), he still argued that such a position was worth it for the social capital. However, Geoffrey does also note that there are benefits to being an alpha male "at least as far as men looking to attract women go", suggesting that the figure is still one that has high sexual capital, but also notes that this is "in the male side of thinking", and thus may simply be the belief of men that alpha males have such prowess, and not be something that is necessarily a consequence of being in such a position.

Geoffrey's last statement is one that is particularly crucial to investigate - he constructs the appeal of being an alpha male as stemming from the "male side of thinking", as opposed to an alpha male being a figure that is universally admired. Who then pertains to this "male" thinking is unclear, but it can be argued that it is men who endorse patriarchal discourses who are most likely to see the appeal in alpha male status, particularly with regards to prowess with women. Where then is the line drawn between men who see alpha males as "kinda dicks" and those who are in the "male side of thinking" who admire and aspire towards such a figure? Geoffrey's statement suggests a dichotomisation between the relationship that men have with the traditional alpha male as defined by my participants.

Some men, such as Nathan, see an appeal in the traditional alpha male, whereas others disagree. We see an example of the latter case in the following extract from the interview with Jordan:

<u>Extract Ten:</u>

Int: *Interesting. How would you define an alpha male?*

Jordan: Someone who tries to dominate every situation - physically, verbally belittle other people, yeah.

Int: *And would you say that it's an appealing thing to be?*

Jordan: No. I think it's the most unappealing thing to be, ever.

Int: *But do you think for some people it maybe is?*

Jordan: Yeah.

Int: *So just sort of depends on your kind of values system, yeah. What kind of emotions would you say an alpha male can express, if anything?*

Jordan: I dunno, I guess there is a particular attitude that we would perhaps like consider normal for them, and it's kind of that dominating, don't really care about other people's opinions and asserting on top of the others, like asserting your opinions as right. I dunno if that comes with any emotions, like, perhaps anger could be a factor or, I would say like a pretentious happiness. You know like once you are dominating like pretending you're happy. I dunno, I feel like they're mostly insecure really because they pretend to be something that they're not, it's like their aesthetic does not match what's going on in their head.

Int: *You don't think there's like a positive kind of alpha male you can be?*

Jordan: No.

Int: *OK.*

Jordan: They're all jokes.

Jordan constructs the alpha male figure in a similar vein to Nathan, yet does so with more forthright language: alpha males are individuals who "physically, verbally belittle other people" and try to "dominate every situation". The real disparity between the two participants' subject positionings towards the alpha male figure is seen though when Jordan is asked whether he sees any appeal in being an alpha male, to which he replies: "No. I think it's the most unappealing thing to be, ever". Jordan does not acknowledge that there may be potential benefits to being an alpha male in the way that Nathan does, instead articulating the lack of appeal that alpha males have to him. Not only this, but when asked whether he believes there is the possibility for a positive construal of an alpha male to exist he replies: "no", that "they're all jokes". It is interesting that both Jordan and Nathan are part of the LGBTQ community, yet have positioned themselves very differently towards the alpha male figure. This goes to show that identity politics are not always a clear predictor in terms of the attitudes individuals may espouse towards particular figures or ideologies. Instead, a more complex process of

operation occurs, dependent on the habitus of individuals and how they come to be positioned politically.

The other interesting facet of Jordan's extract here is how he constructs the alpha male figure with regards to their emotions and identity. People might consider it "normal" for them to be dominating - being inconsiderate of the opinions of others and asserting their own opinions as right. Jordan goes on to attribute further emotional qualities: he suggests anger, but also a "pretentious happiness" - one that he describes as being asserted when an alpha male is in a position of dominance. However, Jordan words it as being "pretending you're happy", as though the happiness expressed is an act to assert one's dominance, perhaps through showing pleasure and confidence in one's position of power. This leads into Jordan's discussion on alpha male identity - that it too is false in nature. Jordan argues that alpha males are "mostly insecure really because they pretend to be something that they're not", and that "their aesthetic does not match what's going on in their head". An alpha male, in Jordan's view, is someone putting on a façade - they are not really the 'alpha male' they present to the world, but simply manage to successfully perform alpha male-dom, albeit whilst being secretly insecure. "What's going on in their head" then is something quite different, yet, for Jordan, they are determined to present themselves in such a way as to gain the benefits of the status that successful enactment of the alpha male figure privileges them with. Herein we begin to see a suggestion that alpha males are not 'real' men in the sense that they are honestly expressing themselves. So what then is the 'reality' hiding behind these men's hypermasculine façades?

4.3 Reflecting and Subverting Traditional Hegemonic Masculinity

Through the interviews, there were clear signs of constructions of a traditional masculinity in line with Connell's hegemonic masculinity - represented by figures such as the 'alpha male', 'Kiwi bloke' and 'rugby player', as well as ambivalence and resistance to such figures and the form of masculinity they represent. So where do the responses from the participants in this study leave the hegemony of traditional masculinity as outlined by Connell? Is there then evidence to suggest that there is a kind of change occurring amongst men regarding the status quo of masculinity, at least within the younger, university-educated New Zealand population that this study observed? What figures might be hegemonic for this group?

<u>Extract Eleven:</u>

Int: *And that sort of moves on to the next section looking at masculinity and emotions - so there's the stereotype that Kiwi men are supposed to be strong, silent and emotionless, do you think that there's truth to that stereotype?*

Nicholas: No, well perhaps, in terms of the older generation, so we're speaking.. this younger generation is people of the upper age limit of 35, so about 15 to 35 are quite.. more open, more allowed to be emotional because we've sort of having the image of rebelling against the higher ones, but as you go past the age limit of 35, you are expected to settle down and become a strong, silent, supportive kind of character.

Here, Nicholas - a 24 year old bisexual psychology student - constructs an account of a generational split between men who are over 35, and the figure of the 'rebellious youngster' between 15 and 35 who is "allowed to be more emotional". It is interesting that he uses the word "allowed" to describe the emotionality of the younger generation of men, suggesting a kind of cultural permissibility in which the men are not restrained by their socio-cultural environment in terms of their emotional expression. The

next interesting factor in Nicholas's account is that he constructs the younger generation as having an "image of rebelling against the higher ones" - that their emotional expression is, in fact, an act of rebellion against the norms of masculinity as imposed by the older generation. Thus this 'allowance' of emotional expression is one simply of their peer environment, not endowed by the older generations which are seen to be by Nicholas as the ones who are superimposing a restriction on men's emotionality. These individuals "past the age limit of 35" are ones who are "expected to settle down and become a strong, silent, supportive kind of character". Here, the figure of the 'strong and silent Kiwi man' comes into play - men of this generation are supposed to take on an exemplary form of masculinity that is centralised around a lack of emotionality: being 'strong' means not showing the perceived weakness that is correlated with emotions, and 'silent' reflecting the lack of expression altogether. There appears to be a fairly clear-cut split here regarding the discourses of masculinity endorsed by different generations, which clearly involves a degree of resistance on the part of the younger generation. The ramifications of this conflicting generational divide is discussed in the following extract by Leo:

Extract Twelve:

Leo: I mean, I'm a University student and I've been here, you know, for some time, and so I guess the kind of people that I'm exposed to here, you know, they're different in that they're quite like quote unquote 'progressive', but what always shocks me is that when I do meet guys that I would describe as blokey blokes, how truly unemotional they are, and I describe it as almost like, not poisonous but, yeah it's.. I'd say it's a failing to be as stoic as some of these men are. I mean, I used to have a flatmate once and he was always talking about his father and father's business and so on and so forth, and one time his father actually came over to visit, and his dad.. 'cause he was dropping off some.. a part of his, like for my flatmate's car, and he got out and he said "hey dad", and his dad was like, hadn't seen his dad for like, you know, months *mutters*, "yep alright, yep", and then *pssht* and drove off. Which was to me like, I don't understand that, I think, yeah.. especially being able to project warmth and security and love for your children, so yeah, I dunno. But I have.. I have experienced.. I have met like quite a few Kiwi men who seem to have that problem, yeah, which is unfortunate in my view.

Int: *So you think especially the fact that they can't even be sort of loving parents, or loving partners because they're so stoic..*

Leo: Yeah if you're stoic all the time, I feel, yeah if you're stoic like that then what it forces.. what it might force your children to do is kind of read between the lines and second-guess how your parents feel about you, and one thing that parents should have, at least in my opinion, regardless of whether they're men or women, should be like unconditional love.

In this narrative focusing on his friend's unemotional father, Leo contrasts his own views (and that of his 'progressive' University environment) with that of the behaviour of an individual he deems to be a "blokey bloke". For Leo, he is shocked at "how truly unemotional they are", deeming it to be "a failing to be as stoic as some of these men are". His wording here is very noteworthy - especially his use of the term "failing". Under Connell's model of hegemonic masculinity, a lack of emotional expression would be deemed a 'success', with the 'failing' being the inability to control and eliminate one's emotions, yet here Leo flips this discourse on its head and deems the prized unemotionality of the "blokey blokes" to be a 'failing' in itself. The 'strong and silent' nature of his flatmate's father is

showcased in the anecdote - someone who has few words and little emotional expression towards his son. For Leo, as he puts it: "I don't understand that" - it is not something that someone of his generation and 'progressive' background can see merit in, or relate to. Yet, he states, he has encountered a fair amount of Kiwi men who have this "problem", one he sees as "unfortunate". Leo creates a clear split between the viewpoint of someone like himself and a "blokey bloke" - and ultimately believes that they, despite their cultural capital, have got it wrong.

Leo gives a particular reason as to why it is a "problem" that individuals such as his former flatmate's father are a "failing" with a "problem" in his view. Their lack of emotional expression means they lack the ability to "project warmth and security and love for their children". While they may have masculine capital under the hierarchy of traditional masculinity, they ultimately fail at a key facet of maleness and masculinity - fatherhood. As Leo goes on to explain: "if you're stoic all the time … what it might force your children to do is kind of read between the lines and second-guess how your parents feel about you". To him, this is the key "failing" of the stoic nature of the 'strong and silent' figure. He is one that cannot express, or perhaps even have, the "one thing that parents should have" - that being "unconditional love". This is something that Leo seems to see merit in, but appears that individuals such as his former flatmate's father do not, and thus is reflective of the generational split between the younger generation who are "allowed to be more emotional" and the "strong, silent, supportive character" of the older generation, as previously discussed by Nicholas in Extract Eleven. However, the endorsement of traditional discourses of masculinity over more "progressive" ones may not be as clear-cut between generations as is argued by Nicholas, as seen in the following anecdote from Josh regarding his peers:

Extract Thirteen:

Int: *But do you think that other people maybe have different attitudes, like around.. especially men getting sad, or do you think it's pretty OK..*

Josh: Oh yeah definitely, I'll never forget, it was like 10 years ago or something, but two different high school friends, one mate who's a big rugby dude but surprisingly emotional, especially for kind of like what his.. what you saw him as, you know, big rugby dude and then he'll like.. he'd like cry about stuff and you're like "wow", and back then, and this other mate who said.. we were kind of talking about it, and his other mate was like "yeah, I don't know what he's up to, he needs to just bury those emotions deep down like the rest of us do", and not like a joke, like serious, and I'm just like "whooooa, what the heck". So, I'm probably, yeah..

This anecdote that straight 29 year old Josh gives suggests a similar attitudinal dichotomy as that of Leo in Extract Twelve, only it is between Josh and one of his peers as opposed to someone of an older generation, suggesting that traditional discourses of masculinity are also being reproduced by younger generations of men. Yet Josh's anecdote is also interesting as it gives an example of an individual in his peer group who is both a "big rugby dude", representative of the figure of the quintessential 'rugby player' who in New Zealand is imbued with hegemonic status regarding his masculinity, and is also "surprisingly emotional". As Josh tells the story, both him and the "other mate" described in the anecdote take this 'emotional rugby dude' as a seeming oxymoron - how strange it is that one can be a figure of hypermasculine capital and yet subsequently also be willing to cry openly in front of others. For Josh's friend, this oxymoronic individual appears to be problematic - "he needs to just bury those emotions deep down like the rest of us do". In other words, he needs to conform to the expectations of traditional masculinity by not expressing his sadness through crying. Yet for Josh, his friend's statement criticising the rugby player's emotionality was seemingly troublesome - it was

something that he described his reaction as "whooooa, what the heck", shocked that his statement was "not like a joke, like serious".

Josh in this narrative is straddling two at first apparently contradictory discourses - recognition of the masculine status of men such as his "big rugby dude" friend, and yet also being concerned with his condemnation for being emotionally expressive - through crying in particular. While his friend seemed uncomfortable with someone who embodies the traditionally masculine 'rugby player' figure to show perceived signs of weakness through emotionality, Josh constructs himself as not having the same concern for a figure to also be expressive of his emotions. Josh instead shows himself to be shocked that his friend endorsed emotional repression to the degree that he did - describing it as something he would "never forget". Likewise, Leo in Extract Twelve constructed himself as being strongly affected by the lack of affection shown by his former flatmate's father towards his son. Given their heterosexual orientation, both Leo and Josh have a greater capacity to endorse more traditional masculine discourses than other participants in the study who were gay or bisexual, yet both construct themselves to be in positions where displays of traditional hegemonic forms of masculinity are shocking and therein critiqueable. Are these individuals then exemplars of the 'rebellious youngster' generation that are emerging to counter-act the more traditional discourses of masculinity perpetuated by their seniors? Is these individuals' disdain for such practices of masculinity indicating a shift in the contemporary construction of masculinity in New Zealand, as well as more globally?

4.4 The 'Good Alpha Male'

As previously discussed, the figure of an 'alpha male' is one that was very polarised by participants in the study. Not only was the figure split by participants in terms of its appeal or lack thereof, the 'alpha male' was also divided by participants into what they deemed to be a 'good' representation of what an 'alpha male' entails - showcasing their own personal ideals of masculinity - which is dichotomised against a 'bad alpha male', constructed more in-line with traditional hegemonic masculinity. The two sides of this figural alpha male is discussed in the following extract from the interview with gay 25 year old post-graduate diploma graduate Mohammed:

Extract Fourteen:

Int: *And how would you define an alpha male?*

Mohammed: I think who's successful in every field, whether it's sports or intellectual conversations or technological aspects, as well as emotions, because I think if a person is emotional and.. emotional and showing sympathy towards other people and other things, then he's a good man.

Int: *Would you say that being an alpha male is an appealing thing to be?*

Mohammed: Yes.

Int: *Do you think that your idea of an alpha male is similar to what society expects of an alpha male, or do you think it's quite..?*

Mohammed: No I don't think so.

Int: *What do you think society wants?*

Mohammed: Society's.. I think society looks at alpha male as this male who's got like a Greek god body and a rough lifestyle with.. who's not scared of anything, and having.. only having happiness and anger and surprise as emotions, and not sadness at all.

Earlier we saw how the alpha male figure was dichotomised by participants as both a desirable and undesirable position in the hierarchy of masculinity. Constructed as "boisterous", "dominating" (see Extract Eight) and as "kinda dicks" (see Extract Nine), alpha males were nonetheless shown to have appeal in their authority status and ability to attract women. But in Mohammed's interview extract above, the alpha male is dichotomised in a different way - in terms of how society constructs the alpha male figure, versus how Mohammed himself sees an alpha male to be. Essentially, Mohammed creates a split between the 'good alpha male' he believes is an appealing thing to be, and the 'bad alpha male' that is produced by society. Not only does Mohammed see the alpha male figure on his terms as being one who is "successful in every field" - suggesting a more typified model of an alpha male whose masculinity is defined through his accomplishments, but also someone who is "emotional" and shows "sympathy towards other people and other things". This latter characteristic brings in the emerging discourses of the expectation for men to now be 'in touch' with their emotions (Illouz, 2008), as well as having strong sympathetic feelings towards others. This alpha male figure of Mohammed's construction is a "good man", representative of a form of masculinity that involves countering traditional masculine discourses through open emotional expression, as well as feeling emotions towards others in the form of sympathy.

On the other hand, Mohammed notes that he sees the wider society he lives in to have a very different idea of what an alpha male figure entails. Society, Mohammed argues, expects an alpha male to have a "Greek god body" and live a "rough lifestyle" - herein drawing upon the discourse of the importance of physicality in male identity and the idealisation of a muscular physique, as well as the figure of a 'bad boy' who lives a lifestyle that likely involves risk-taking and disregard for one's physical health. This latter discourse runs contrary to the more contemporary discourse of the need to be emotionally expressive, which is focused on maintaining an individual's health - encouraging a 'healthy lifestyle' as opposed to a "rough one" (Illouz, 2008). This point of using physical and mental health and wellbeing to contrast society's 'alpha male' with the "good man" that Mohammed sees appeal in is continued further as he states that the societally constructed alpha male is someone who is "not scared of anything" and "not [feeling] sadness at all". A man being "not scared of anything" presumes the discourse of idealising risk-taking among men, which has been linked to poor health rates in the male population, heavily born out of discourses of masculinity that encourage recklessness amongst men (Lee & Owens, 2002). In terms of mental health, we see this societally sanctioned alpha male figure constructed as having a limited amount of emotions he can express - with the emotion of sadness, one that under traditional masculine discourses showcases personal weakness (Connell, 2005), being one that is never shown. In this discursive field society perpetuates a certain ideal of masculinity. Due to the masculine capital that comes from this traditional alpha male figure, it is likely that this will be aspired towards unless the individual does not wish to gain personal capital through masculinity or has access to alternative or subversive discourses that suggest a different construction of what exactly it means to be a 'man'. Such a process is discussed in the following extract from Liam's interview:

<u>Extract Fifteen:</u>

Int: *Sort of on that note, how would you define an alpha male?*

Liam: I would or the society.. I think society would?

Int: *Both I guess.*

Liam: Sure, yeah. I would tie it to leadership maybe - I can't help not bringing in the things I think are good leaders, so but probably not what everyone else thinks, I think the most important thing would be a listener, but other people probably wouldn't associate an alpha male with a good listener. Yeah an alpha male would be a good leader, so whatever like a leader entails - available to listen to your delegation, like, see the bigger picture, you know that. But society probably thinks an alpha male is like a dominant man who.. well it's all about him, yeah.

Int: *And would you say that being an alpha male is an appealing thing to be?*

Liam: No. The one I described? Yeah, no otherwise it sounds awful, it sounds very unfulfilling.

Int: *But do you think a lot of guys still aspire to that, do you think it's quite a desirable thing to be for a lot of guys? Do you think society rewards that as well?*
Liam: I don't really know these people, so I'm gonna say yes, 'cause I gather they're out there, and it seems like they're out there, yeah.. I'm probably an outlier in this whole study. Yeah they probably do reward it. It probably comes down to.. people who probably have those values, probably had a tough upbringing in terms of socio-economics.. probably saw that at school and stuff, people who aspired to try and have some kind of identity, to try and have some kind of belonging, all those ways to get them because an alpha male.. I guess people most out there.. supposed to look up to them, see them as a strong figure, so that's certain things people would want to aspire to, people would look up to you, people would be known. Yeah 'cause an alpha male I guess is someone who's known by everyone as well, not someone who's discreet in the corner.

Int: *And what kind of emotions do you think an alpha male can express and still be considered an alpha male, especially the societal definition of an alpha male, yeah?*

Liam: Yeah, yeah. They can probably express most things at everyone else but himself, maybe. It'd be seen as weird to be angry at yourself, to be.. to feel sorry for yourself maybe, might be seen as a vulnerability. But.. you can't really be seen to be empathetic, just for some reason that'd be weakness.

In Liam's extract, we see the same dichotomisation of his own definition of an alpha male and that of society's occur, except in Liam's case it is instigated by himself and not the interviewer - done so immediately as the question of defining an alpha male is asked. For Liam, an alpha male position is

one that is linked to "leadership" and being a "good listener" - but he notes immediately after these points that this is "probably not what everyone else thinks". He is clearly aware of the difference between his own construct of the alpha male figure and that of the society around him, to which he sees as being a "dominant man who.. well it's all about him". Liam goes on to argue that despite society's valorising of its perception of an alpha male, it is a position that he finds to be "awful" and "very unfulfilling". He continues, explaining why it is in his opinion that such an "unfulfilling" position may nonetheless be aspired towards by many men - such men are those who have "probably had a tough upbringing in terms of socio-economics" and due to this "aspired to try and have some kind of identity". Essentially, he constructs these men as being in an environment where this kind of 'alpha male' figure was perhaps one of the few modalities of status they had accessible to them in terms of their socio-discursive position, and adopting such an identity would mean others would see them as a "strong figure" who is "known by everyone". He herein shows what he believes the appeal of the socially dictated alpha male role to those who aspire towards it.

However, the "awful" and "unfulfilling" aspect of such a position is later explained. The alpha male, Liam argues, can "probably express most things at everyone else but himself" - he cannot be angry at himself or feel sorry for himself, as this might be seen as a "vulnerability". In essence, an alpha male is constructed as someone who cannot challenge his image of himself, and thus cannot be self-reflective - he cannot use his emotions as a form of 'self-work' as outlined by Rose (1996; 1999) and Williams (2000), and is thus incapable of gaining the benefits of the personal development that comes through such processes. Also, an alpha male in this conception "can't really be seen to be empathetic" as this would be a sign of "weakness". Whilst Mohammed in his personal, positive construal of an alpha male stated that sympathy for others was part of what made an alpha male a "good man" (see Extract Fourteen), in this societally constructed form of an alpha male as constructed by Liam, to care for others makes one weak. It is interesting that Mohammed and Liam, both gay men, have a personalised ideal of what the 'alpha male' figure represents. It is possible that the alpha male figures they constructed are reminiscent of their own aspirations in terms of the kind of man they are, or would like to become. In such a case, these men have reinterpreted a conventional figure from their perceived social construction of him and turned it into something that is more in line with the ideals that they have themselves.

4.5 The 'Emotional Man'

Participants in the study gave descriptions as to what a positive figure of male emotionality looks like, a figure I have labelled as the 'emotional man'. This figure represents a divergence in the typical hegemonic model of masculinity that is in-line with the traditional masculine hierarchy and the factors that determine one's masculine status. The 'emotional man' may often be represented by discourses of masculinity reminiscent of traditional forms, but also incorporates 'psy' discourses pertaining to the emerging value of emotional and self-awareness. In order for this new form of masculinity to be validated in its constitution, it must be carefully constructed - especially as emotionality runs counter to traditional representations of masculinity. We see this process in action in the following extract from Geoffrey:

Extract Sixteen:

Int: *And do you think that the relationship between maintaining one's masculinity and expressing emotions is changing?*

Geoffrey: Yes, I would say it's definitely changing.

Int: *In what ways?*

Geoffrey: Just that.. there's definitely been a push to show that if men care about something and feel sadness, and as long as they kinda like own those feelings, that's now becoming a sign of masculinity I think, as long as they can like show "yes these are my feelings", if someone's like "that's not very masculine", they're like "yes it is". As long as they can own whatever emotions they show off, that's like becoming a sign of masculinity now.

Here Geoffrey describes the "push" that is occurring that is causing a shift in the conventions of male emotional expression. Men in contemporary society now have the ability to show that they "care about something" and can "feel sadness", but for it to be a "sign of masculinity" it is a prerequisite that they "own those feelings". Ownership of the feelings is thus the means to which once considered feminine emotions can become masculinised by men - meaning also that challenges to their masculinity due to their emotional expression can be mitigated. Herein we see an example of a shift in the operational process of the discourses of masculinity: something that was once considered unmasculine has become masculinised as long as it is done in a particular way. Men can now be freer to express their emotions "as long as they can own whatever emotions they show off". Geoffrey gives an example in a dialectic - with one person telling an individual "that's not very masculine" regarding their emotional expression, with the individual replying "yes it is". It is clear here that under this paradigm, what is most important is that an individual defends his emotional expression as masculine, even if it is not seen to be such under traditional masculine discourses. This is apparently the modus operandi of a man 'owning' his emotions - he must construct his emotional expression as being a masculine performance in the face of criticism of them being otherwise.

Geoffrey's extract here gives an indication as to how it is that modern men such as himself are becoming more emotionally expressive in the face of still strongly implemented discourses of traditional masculinity. To be an 'emotional man' is not to buy out of the discourses of masculinity, but to attempt to redefine them. It appears that Geoffrey has confidence in his ability to live up to the figural 'emotional man' through 'owning' his emotions. Not all participants in the study expressed a certainty in this new emotional paradigm for men, however, as there was a sense of being torn between the benefits and losses of both the traditional and emerging discourses of male emotionality. This is seen in the following extract from the interview with Leo, being asked about whether he relates to the 'strong and silent' male stereotype:

Extract Seventeen:

Leo: Sometimes I feel like, yeah I mean it's almost me being emotional being.. and saying that I'm OK with being emotional is.. is sort of a cop-out and actually really in some sense maybe it is that I'm just too weak to.. or too like, I'm not strong enough of character to be able to suppress emotions like that and just, you know, get it done and.. and do whatever, like have that practical kind of mindset.

…

Leo: Yeah I think in some ways that's great, but in some ways it's like, I think with trying to.. trying to get men out of their shells, it's

important not to abandon some of the aspects of traditional masculinity
that were actually kind of useful, and some of those are, and sometimes it
makes sense to kind of suppress your emotions. So it's not.. like I don't..
if I were to see.. which I see, which I guess I feel sometimes where you
get like, you're more sensitive to things, I see as inconsequential and
like, I feel like in some ways contemporary men are kind of moving in that
direction, I'm not sure if I think that's entirely the best thing, although
I guess it's better than being all stoic and terrible parents.

In this extract, Leo is attempting to navigate his positioning within the traditional masculine discourse
and the ways in which contemporary men are changing these discourses relative to emotional
expression. Here he shows a belief he somewhat holds that he cannot live up to the expectations of
traditional masculinity regarding its expectation that one has control and can "suppress" his emotions.
Because of this, he expresses his concern that his comfortability with his emotional expression is
really just a "cop-out" - that he is only adopting this contemporary paradigm because he is "too weak"
to live up to the traditional masculine expectations. Under this framework, this suggests then that the
entire generation of men who are supposedly part of this new movement of embracing male
emotional expression are also "weak", and this movement is perhaps a by-product of the fact that
modern men are becoming increasingly less able to have the ability to be "strong enough of
character" to suppress their emotions.

He continues in the next paragraph to explain his perception on the complications of this shift in male
emotionality - that "in some ways that's great" but that he also feels "it's important not to abandon
some of the aspects of traditional masculinity that were actually kind of useful". These statements
suggest that while Leo sees merit in a shift for society to accommodate male emotionality more so, it
has the potential to distance itself too far from traditional masculinity, which has merits in itself. As he
puts it "sometimes it makes sense to kind of suppress your emotions". Leo also argues becoming
"more sensitive to things" as "inconsequential" - that it ultimately has little benefit to the men,
especially compared with the benefits of suppressing one's emotions. However, he finishes by noting
that "I guess it's better than being all stoic and terrible parents". Despite his conflicting thoughts
around the shift in male emotionality around him, Leo ultimately argues that the change is better than
the consequences of the traditional "stoic" model. The example of being "terrible parents" relates to
his anecdote in Extract Twelve wherein Leo explained how his former flatmate's father's embodiment
'strong and silent' figure was a "failing" in his eyes as it meant he could not show unconditional love
for his son. Whilst Leo does argue for the merit in this shift in the discourses of masculinity around
him, he nonetheless expresses concern for the change to be too radically oppositional from traditional
masculinity. This shows that for the young New Zealand men of this study like Leo, the shifts in
masculinity that are occurring are not ones that are straightforward paradigm shifts, but discursive
movements in which they must navigate the positioning of themselves relative to, attempting to avoid
the consequences of being too unemotional or too sensitive. In the following extract, Jake attempts to
reinvent masculinity in a different manner, epitomising emotionality as a masculine ideal:

<u>Extract Eighteen:</u>

Int: *And do you believe that certain emotions are feminine and other
emotions are masculine?*

Jake: I believe certain emotions are considered feminine, but yeah, no, I
don't believe that they are. For example, seeing a big strong man like Ben
[pseudonym] cry gives me an emotional boner, like, like watching him cry
was potentially the manliest thing I've ever seen him do.

Jake begins his answer with showcasing how he believes that the gendered nature of emotions is socially constructed - "certain emotions are considered feminine", but he doesn't "believe that they are". He takes on a perspective of gender anti-essentialism, that gender is not something inherent to emotions, but something that society 'considers' representative regarding particular emotions. However, he contradicts the epistemological approach he uses in the following sentence whilst ironically attempting to explain his anti-essential take on the nature of emotions. He draws upon his friend Ben as a figure of quintessential masculinity, a "big strong man" who he previously gave an anecdote around how he had become more emotionally expressive through personal challenges. For Jake, watching Ben cry was "potentially the manliest thing I've ever seen him do". Jake herein attempts to subvert gender norms through constructing Ben's crying as the most 'manly' thing Jake had ever seen him do. However, in using masculinity to (re)construct Ben's crying, he ultimately essentialises the gendered nature of emotion, albeit in a way that is contradictory to conventional gender norms.

Herein we see the major issue of the way in which participants attempted to construct a kind of new way of subverting gender norms that are aimed at critiquing the traditional discourses of masculinity that prevent men from freely expressing their emotions. By attempting to redefine gender norms, even if it involves transmuting what was once 'feminine' into the realms of the 'masculine', one nonetheless ends up reproducing facets of the gender binary that maintain the overall structural power dynamic of the gender hierarchy. In this instance, this statement by Jake still valorises what it means to be a 'man', which runs the risk of reproducing discourses that marginalise male femininity that in turn lead to the stigmatisation of gay men such as Jake himself. Thus while Jake sees immense appeal in Ben's emotionality, it is not without consequence. Yet the appeal of this new 'emotional man' is clearly outlined here by Jake, with Ben's emotional expression being something that gives Jake an "emotional boner". This phrase equates emotional appeal with sex appeal - a display of emotionality that arouses others emotionally. This showcases how not only is the capital of male emotionality one that is valued as a personal accomplishment, but also one that renders a man more attractive to others in an increasingly psychologised society.

Chapter 5: Straight Men, Gay Men, and 'Straight-Acting' Gay Men

A core facet of the study was looking at sexuality and its relationship with contemporary discourses of masculinity. As Connell (2005) discusses, male homosexuality has traditionally occupied a subordinate positioning in the hierarchy of masculinity - with one's sexuality being a clear signifier in terms of one's masculine privilege. However, in the wake of LGBTQ rights and changes in gay representation, this may no longer be so clear-cut. Sexuality complicates the discussion on masculinity, especially in the correlation between homosexuality and male emotionality alongside the shifts in modern society towards a valuing of greater emotional expression. This chapter aims to answer the third research question, on how sexuality, masculinity and discourses of emotion intersect to create new frameworks of identity.

5.1 The 'Gay Man' as a Vanguard of New Emotional Capital

The general figure of a 'gay man' is one that was discussed throughout the interviews, with participants' constructs on what it means to be gay and how gay men are represented being discussed at length. An interesting facet to the figure of a 'gay man' that emerged throughout the data was is his imbuement with emotional capital. Given the earlier discussion around how emotional capital is a seemingly increasingly valued form of capital for modern men, this suggests potential shifts in the kind of social positioning gay men have. We see the gay male figure is endowed as an 'expert' in emotional expression in the following excerpt by Alan, a 21 year old gay psychology student, discussing the societal link between male emotionality and homosexuality:

Extract Nineteen:

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Alan: Yes, I think it would be.. yeah associating emotionality with
homosexuality, yes. Like I feel like there's no.. like if you're homosexual
you feel no barriers to being emotional, so I would say yes, yeah.

...

Alan: So.. so gay men being more emotional than straight men if that's a
good thing or not.. well, I want it to be open to everyone, so like I think
gay people will be more leaders in the whole like getting in touch with
your own emotions and stuff, so they can set the way and be the example,
yeah.
```

Here, the gay man ("homosexual", but implied that he refers to gay men specifically) is said to "feel no barriers to being emotional" - he is not limited by the emotional restrictions that befall the straight male population. Alan describes these "barriers" as something felt, but not in the case of gay men as presumably they have been broken down. Thus these barriers that prevent emotional expression are ultimately internal forces that through self-work have been eliminated. Alan's statement may also be constructing gay culture as more accepting of emotional expression, given that gay men are already stereotyped as being emotional (Connell, 2005).

The next excerpt by Alan constructs gay men (part of 'gay people') as being "leaders in the whole like getting in touch with your own emotions" - therein exerting the capital they have in this respect. They have something the wider straight (male) population do not, and through this can "set the way and be the example". In this framework, the gay male figure is one who is an expert in emotional expression,

and has power in the fact that he can be an "example" to others with less emotional capital of how to be more emotionally expressive. The notion of a gay man as an 'expert' is not an uncommon one - as Sender (2006) discusses in her analysis of the TV programme 'Queer Eye for the Straight Guy', which showcases gay men as exemplars of upper-middle class refinement, despite their marginalised minority status. Such an example shows how marginal groups becoming 'model minorities' does not necessarily rid the group of stigma and marginalisation, especially when facets of a group's identity are still constructed as problematic by the majority. Thus to presume that gay men having emotional capital therein mitigates the lack of capital they may have in a traditional hierarchy of masculinity is invalid. However, to say that there is not a link between emotional capital and masculine capital in this new affective economy would also be unwarranted, as seen in the following except from the interview with Liam, discussing the disparity between gay men and straight men in terms of their emotional capital:

Extract Twenty:

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Liam: ...gay men are probably more emotionally intelligent than straight
men, perhaps because they've had to be because they've probably.. well men
don't have to do the same thing to masculinity, but a lot of internalised
homophobia and stuff, so you'd hope that when they come out they'd break
through that and work through some barriers and so they kind of have some
emotional intelligence - that's what they've kind of brought to the 'being
a man'.
```

In Liam's excerpt here we see the coming-out process for gay men constructed as involving a lot of 'self-work', which ultimately leads them to have more "emotional intelligence" than their straight counterparts. Becoming more emotionally intelligent is something that gay men have "had to be" - a skill acquired out of necessity due to environmental pressures. Liam argues that 'coming out' as gay is actually a form of 'self-work'. The gay man has to "break through" internalised homophobia that acts as "barriers" to them, the process by which brings about emotional intelligence. The word "barriers" is used by Liam as it was by Alan in Extract Nineteen to denote forces that restrict an individual's emotional expression. Liam constructs the gay male figure as one who has gone through a struggle and has come out the other side as a more emotionally intelligent individual. By referencing internalised homophobia as opposed to external homophobic prejudice, Liam centres the discussion within the inner workings of the gay man. It is his internal work that has lead to the development of his emotional intelligence, as opposed to overcoming the challenges of the homophobic external world.

However, this emotional capital they have accrued does not only give them capital solely within a framework of a psychologised society, the asset of emotional intelligence is also something that is part of the redefinition of masculinity - it is what gay men have "brought to the 'being a man'". Emotional capital thus becomes exchangeable as a form of masculine capital within this new affective economy, and it is something that gay men have been incremental in bringing about. In essence, this statement by Liam is suggesting that what was once constructed as definitive of what is not masculine has reverted into a masculine quality under a seemingly new paradigm. This viewpoint of gay men having greater social capital was also not one simply shared by gay men. As the following excerpt by 19 year old straight student Harry shows, the perception of gay men's capital extends beyond simply their perceived emotional intelligence:

```
Harry: ...and some other gay people, when they really show emotion, then I
guess good on them because they're actually brave enough to show it, like
something not even a man, like a straight man can't do, yeah. So they're
kind of would be considered more masculine than straight people.
```

Relating this statement to Alan's locating of the gay male figure as an 'expert' in Extract Nineteen, we see something that goes beyond the tokenistic capital of a minority group within a certain field. Harry describes the bravery of gay men to express their emotions as something "a straight man can't do" in a typical sense. This bravery to openly express his emotions, despite the potential backlash for being a man who does so, is something that ultimately makes the gay man "considered more masculine than straight people" in Harry's argument. To say that this is an overarching viewpoint of the wider society would be overly assumptive, but nonetheless it showcases a viewpoint that was shared by many of the other straight men within the participant pool who also constructed gay men as being able to successfully gain masculine status. Here, gay male emotional expression is constructed as a form of masculine capital, which in this instance is endowed by a straight male, who traditionally hold the hegemonic power of being able to influence the definition of masculinity (Connell, 2005). However, where this becomes problematic is that it is centred around the notion of 'bravery' and its significance in being a defining trait of performing traditional masculinity (Connell, 2005). While the gay man may be seen to be more masculine because of his bravery to express his emotions, he is nonetheless glorified in a framework that is still largely responsible for his marginalisation. The masculinity that makes it difficult for a gay man to express his emotions is becoming the same one that rewards him for having the bravery to do so, albeit in different socio-discursive forms.

5.2 'Stereotypical' and 'Non-Stereotypical' Gay Men

What exactly the figure of a 'gay man' entails was one that was discussed by participants, particularly with regard to what kind of stereotype was representative of the gay male community. Participants were asked about the stereotypes of gay men being less masculine and more emotional than straight men, and how they felt about this. This often lead to an explanation of the differences that exist within the gay community and what the implications of these differences are. We see an example of this in the following extract from Alan's interview, discussing the stereotype that gay men are less masculine compared with straight men:

Extract Twenty-Two:

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Alan: That stereotype exists.. so the first idea, first thing I'd think is
that the gays who are not stereotypical, even not stereotypical or
masculine, they're not being visible, they're not being out, so there's not
a chance to like disprove the stereotype, and the second one is the
feminine gays are more vocal and more out, so then, that's the example
that's more obvious to the non-gay people, so obviously that stereotype is
gonna generalise. So basically, yeah. I think on the majority part it's
just masculine or straight-conforming or non-stereotypical people not being
vocal and not being visible and not being out, that's the main reason why
that stereotype's not being weakened any time soon.
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In this extract we see Alan's perspective on the stereotype that gay men are less masculine compared with their straight counterparts, creating a clear contrast between the 'stereotypical' "feminine gays" and the "masculine", "straight-conforming", "non-stereotypical" gay men. The difference between the two, in Alan's words, is that the "non-stereotypical" gay men are "not being visible" and "not being out" so "there's not a chance to like disprove the stereotype", whereas the 'stereotypical' gay men are "more vocal and more out". Following Alan's argument, because "non-stereotypical" gay men can blend into heteronormative society as they are "straight-conforming" (or 'straight acting', a term Burke (2016) discusses) they are thus not perceived to be representative of what is 'gay'. Such a figure is akin to the privileged 'very straight gay' discussed by Connell (1992). On the other hand, 'stereotypical' "feminine gays" are constructed as "the example that's more obvious to the non-gay people" - the gay 'other' that heteromasculinity is constructed against - and so "that stereotype is gonna generalise", in other words, what is truly seen as 'gay' can only truly be seen as 'other', with traditional discourses of masculinity defining male homosexuality as oppositional to masculinity. By their very nature, "straight-conforming" gay men are not being "visible", "vocal" and "out" in the same way that their more feminine counterparts are, and thus within this paradigm the gay male community as a whole becomes represented by the 'stereotypical' figure. This extract involves a dichotomising of two figures - the feminine 'stereotypical' gay men and the masculine 'non-stereotypical' gay men. Within this split, it is shown how the gay community is not unified in terms of who is represented as 'gay' - the consequences of this are discussed in the following extract from Liam's interview, in which he is discussing whether gay men need to adhere to the same codes of masculinity as straight men in New Zealand:

Extract Twenty-Three:

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Liam: Well, I think I just wanna fit in, not to be marginalised, trying to
marginalise yourself the least amounts, so doing that allows you to have
more connection because you can be part of things as opposed to.. even in
your office space people might be like "oh you", you'll be fine and nice to
them in the office but if you're masculine as well you might be invited to
the party as well, kinda thing.
```

In this extract, Liam discusses the accessibility of masculine capital that gay men now have, and the disparities faced by 'stereotypical' gay men compared with 'non-stereotypical' gay men. For Liam, gay men do have to adhere to the same codes of masculinity as straight men in New Zealand if they want to "fit in" and not be "marginalised", which appears to be the aspiration for Liam. At first it appears that this adherence to traditional masculinity is done as a kind of protective racket for gay men, whose open displays of their sexuality may lead to them facing discrimination. Liam's wording: "trying to marginalise yourself the least amounts" suggests that prevention of marginalisation is a kind of self-work - that one must endeavour to not marginalise oneself through adhering to masculine norms. However, we see Liam argue that this process of 'fitting in' to masculine norms not only prevents gay men from being marginalised by others, it also gives them social capital related to their successful performance of masculinity. As Liam states: "doing that allows you to have more connection because you can be a part of things" - constructing the 'non-stereotypical' gay figure as one that is more included in the heteromasculine world. In locations such as an office space, the example given by Liam, gay men who fail to live up to masculine norms will be the "oh you"s - individuals who presumably heterosexual others will be "fine and nice to", suggesting that marginalisation is not

necessarily a given for more 'stereotypical' gay men and sexuality alone is not grounds enough to be ostracised. However, he states that "if you're masculine as well, you might be invited to the party as well", which herein shows the privilege and capital being constructed within the embodiment of the masculine 'non-stereotypical' gay male figure position. Such individuals, Liam argues, are included in the "party" of the hetero-dominant office space - they are treated as part of the group, with their sexual orientation not being problematised because of their successful masculine performance. Thus we see that privilege for gay men, going by Liam's account, is dependent on whether one fits the 'stereotypical' or 'non-stereotypical' figure mold - to be akin to the figure that represents the gay male community is one that could lead to marginalisation, whereas a 'non-streotypical' figure positioning leads to inclusion amongst heterosexual peers. One's homosexuality is thus not the factor in question from the gaze of the straight others, but the degree to which one diverges from the norms of masculinity.

5.3 The Inadequate 'Straight Man'?

Extract Twenty-Four:

Int: *And there's also the stereotype that gay men are less masculine than straight men, do you think there's any truth to that?*

Geoffrey: No, I've seen dudes who'd kick the crap out of me without breaking a sweat who are gay so no I don't think there's any truth.. they're big muscly dudes who are like "urrrrghhhhh".

The above excerpt from the interview with Geoffrey showcases a formulation found throughout the data of gay men as not only being capable of successfully gaining masculine capital but also being deemed more masculine than their straight counterparts - here exemplified by the example given of gay men who have greater physical strength than a straight man such as Geoffrey. What is perhaps most interesting about this is Geoffrey's willingness to admit the existence of gay men who are physically stronger than himself and thus more masculine under traditional discourses of masculinity. These are "big muscly dudes", gay men who can "kick the crap out of [him] without breaking a sweat". Geoffrey's formulation here of such a potential contradicts traditional masculine discourses that always position gay masculinities as subordinate forms. Here, Geoffrey essentially includes gay men within the realms of hypermasculinity by explaining that they can physically dominate a straight man such as himself. The gay figure, in his masculine and 'non-stereotypical' form, is thus one that is not only on par with heterosexual men but also has the potential to be considered more masculine than straight men by the straight men themselves. Geoffrey's statement can thus be conflated with that of Harry's in Extract Twenty-One regarding gay men holding greater masculine capital compared to straight men, but instead through a more traditional masculine medium - physical strength - as opposed to the more subversive idea of masculinity through the bravery of emotional expression.

Is this an example of traditional, hierarchical hegemonic masculinity transforming into a more egalitarian form that is not exclusionary of gay men, reminiscent of Anderson's (2009) 'inclusive masculinity'? If so - how does this relate to the emerging value of emotional capital and self-awareness that is impacting contemporary men in modern society, with gay men seen to be 'experts'

in this arena? With adopting a more traditional masculinity seemingly more accessible now than ever for gay men, it would be assumed that it would be argued that gay men would be more inclined to take this route in order to obtain the social benefits of such a gender performance. However, as the following extract from Alan shows, there can be a reluctance for gay men to position themselves as more aligned with their straight peers, especially when the leverage of perceived emotional capital allows gay men the ability to have a certain form of status compared with straight men:

Extract Twenty-Five:

Int: *And how do you feel about the idea that men aren't at good at expressing their emotions, particularly in romantic relationships?*

Alan: Well I can agree to that stereotype, like I think straight guys are socially retarded, emotionally retarded quite bluntly, but.. in a political correct manner they just need to develop a bit more with their inner self, yep. So, for some reason I feel like that stereotype is there, like I feel like it can be true. Like I don't see any emotional movements within the straight community any time soon, like I think the people who are.. the straight guys who are in tune with their emotions, their inner self, they're a minority within the straight subculture, so that's what I think.

This extract of Alan's interview turns upside-down the conventional power dynamics of sexuality. Alan bluntly describes straight men as "socially retarded" and "emotionally retarded" - indicating their lack of emotional expertise. Straight guys' lack of emotionality, which under a traditional model of masculinity would be seen to be a successful accomplishment, is constructed here by Alan as an indication of a kind of 'retardation' - a personal deficit that the 'straight guy' figure embodies, and to combat this must "develop a bit more with their inner self". Such language here gives us a key to the kind of discourses that Alan is drawing upon. The notion of an "inner self" iterates the interpretative repertoire of emotions being a tool for self-work and therein suggests that there is a kind of 'self' one must become more acquainted with in order to develop a greater capacity for emotional expression. Compare this with Alan's earlier statement in Extract Nineteen wherein he constructs gay men as "leaders" of emotional expression, having "no barriers". Straight men, on the other hand, are argued by Alan to ultimately lack the willingness to even develop in this regard - as Alan does not see "any emotional movements in the straight community any time soon". For Alan, the benefits of emotional capital appear to be something that the "straight community" has not really caught on to yet, and "straight guys who are in tune with their emotions" are "a minority within the straight subculture".

Alan's discursive capacity to construct straight guys bluntly as being "emotionally retarded" reflects an intersectional complexity that appears to exist in this nexus of masculinity and emotionality. Whilst straight men may hold a hegemonic position in the realm of masculinity, it is gay men that are the bastion of male emotional capital. Straight men with 'emotional awareness' are the "minority" in this latter field, rendering their status to being that of gay men in a heteronormative society. However, the participants of this study - both gay/bisexual and straight - constructed themselves as largely against the traditional 'strong and silent' approach to emotions, in favour of being more expressive and open à la the emerging 'psy' culture discussed by Rose (1996; 1999). In this new social economy where emotional wellbeing and internal 'self-knowing' are important aspects of capital, a gay man such as Alan who positions himself as having a fair amount of such capital can thus have the ability to utilise

this leverage to construct himself in a more empowered (and perhaps even oppressive) way regarding those who otherwise could demean him due to his sexual orientation. Herein we see how emerging 'psy' discourses privilege individuals differently than those of hegemonic masculinity, which is especially pertinent when looking at the dichotomisation of straight men and gay men. The gay man as a figural construct, as discussed throughout this chapter, is rendered more emotional by society - which under Connell's (1987; 2005) framework of hegemonic masculinity places him in a subordinate position in the gender hierarchy. However, this 'emotional awareness' that is tied in with the perception of one being more emotional, under the growing discourses that value both the perceived healthiness of emotional expression and utilising emotions as a means to 'know thyself', would therein put the gay male figure in a position of accomplishment and expertise. Alan's construction of straight men as "emotionally retarded" is thus thought-provoking in the way in which he has the social leverage to do so. Contrastly, in Extract Twenty-Four, Geoffrey was happy to admit to gay men having greater masculine capital than himself, and thus positions the gay male figure in greater concordance with the straight male whereas previously under normative discourses of masculinity the two would be dichotomised (Connell, 2005). However, Alan in Extract Twenty-Five constructs a dichotomisation between the straight and gay male figures, but reproduces it in a different way - through aligning gay men such as himself in greater accordance with the new discourses of emotional and 'psy' capital through the rendering of straight men as being emotionally and introspectively incompetent.

This shows how new discourses that determine one's capital allow greater opportunities for social leverage for previously disadvantaged groups, shifting and complicating power dynamics and producing new ways of being for individuals.

5.4 The 'Humane Human'

Extract Twenty-Six:

Int: *But do you think in society that the relationship between maintaining one's masculinity and expressing emotions is changing?*

Jake: Yes I do, definitely. Like there's a huge, a much bigger awareness to the existence of homosexuals and there's a lot of work still to be done but, I believe it's just getting easier and easier to just make friends with anybody. I mean, this is just one person saying that though, and I have just gone to drama school where straight men who are maybe into singing and dancing were thrown into a pool of people, including a lot of homosexuals, and in order to get along with people and work very physically and emotionally alongside others, and on top of others and below others, you had to learn to like each other, so, you know, perhaps I would have a different answer if I had just, you know, studied law or something like that. But I have been witness to a lot of straight men really opening themselves up to themselves, to women, to gay men, and it not really mattering what labels we use to define ourselves, it more just being that we are all people, and we're all just living life.

What is perhaps most interesting about this extract from Jake is that he shifts the focus of the question far from its original aim - to look at the relationship between masculinity and emotional expression - and turns it into a focus on contemporary acceptance of homosexuals. This extract combines many 'figures' and the ways in which Jake sees them operate. Jake immediately equates

the shift in masculine norms regarding emotional expression with the "much bigger awareness to the existence of homosexuals" - as though the two go in tandem. This does make sense, however, with participants constructing gay men as exemplars of male emotionality. He then gives an example of the straight men who at drama school were "thrown into a pool of people, including a lot of homosexuals" and there had to navigate the physical and emotional labour that was involved in that environment regarding interaction and working with 'different' others. The consequence of this, Jake continues, was that he found "a lot of straight men really opening themselves up to themselves", as well as to women and gay men. Whist it makes sense that such an environment would cause straight men to open up more so to women and gay men, the way Jake frames his answer suggests that being in this perhaps more 'diverse' environment also lead the straight men to open "themselves up to themselves".

Jake can be understood here to use the figural 'straight man' as an exemplar of the traditional form of masculinity, and tells the narrative of how his necessary co-operation with women, and "homosexual" men in particular - the emotional 'others' who do not live up to the hegemonic demands of masculinity - in such a liberal drama school environment, ultimately leads to men to "opening themselves up to themselves". It is through this exposure to an environment with "a lot of homosexuals" that allows straight men to accomplish the 'subjective achievement' of self-awareness as discussed by Williams (2000). Gay men, as vanguards of male emotional expression, can thus have an influence over straight men that allows them to become more 'open' - both with the breadth of diversity of their social sphere and with themselves as 'human' subjects. The notion of personhood, in particular, comes into play within the last sentence - the "not really mattering what labels we use to define ourselves" and "that we are all people, and we're all just living life". Here Jake constructs a kind of 'common humanity' between the figures he refers to in his anecdote - something that the 'straight man' realises through contact with seemingly different, more emotional 'others' - that being women and gay men. The concept of being a 'human' emerges in the following extract from Harry's interview:

Extract Twenty-Seven:

Int: *Do you think that there's certain things that, like expressions of emotions that would lead people to think that you were gay, like if you were maybe too sad or too..?*

Harry: Well, it's also.. it doesn't actually depend on what kind of situation like.. like for example, if your best friend died, your dog died, then of course you're going to be sad! If you're gonna say "oh you're gay!" then they can ask themselves well "so you're gay when your loved one dies?", you know?

Int: *Yeah, it's kind of stupid, yeah.*

Harry: Yeah, they're just so stupid when they think that someone being sad means they're gay - that's not right, unless you're saying.. you're calling yourself a non-human creature, then otherwise just don't talk about it.

In this extract, Harry discusses what he sees to be the absurdity of men receiving persecution for expressing their sadness. Facing the death of one's best friend or dog, the examples that Harry gives, he states "of course you're going to be sad" - that sadness is a 'natural' reaction to such a happening. For a persecutor to say "oh you're gay" in response to the grieving man's sadness, Harry counters this with suggesting they ask themselves "so you're gay when your loved one dies?" - that the sadness is so inherent to the nature of the situation that they may as well simply accuse the individual of homosexuality based upon their being a victim of unfortunate circumstance. Harry, a straight man,

attempts to counter here the accusatory usage of the term 'gay' which is used to demean men for being emotional and effeminate. For Harry, it is "stupid" that male expressions of sadness becomes equated with the gay male figure, implying that this should not be assumed when a man expresses his grief. His viewpoint marks a new paradigm where the accusation of homosexuality for male emotionality is rendered ridiculous.

For individuals to equate a man's sadness with being gay, one must be willing to admit that in this instance they are being a "non-human creature". To be unsympathetic of others' emotions is to be "non-human". Here, Harry constructs emotions relative to 'humanity' - to be emotional is to be "human". But what exactly does it mean to be "human" in this particular context of emotion? The notion of emotions as "human" is again made by Alan in the following extract, discussing how he relates to the 'strong and silent' stereotype:

Extract Twenty-Eight:

Int: *And do you feel like you relate to that stereotype at all, or..?*

Alan: I felt like I need to conform to it, like OK I need to be in control of my emotions, but now what I learnt by experience is like, no, emotions are part of being human now and like part of being healthy, so, you know...

Alan gives here a kind of narrative in which he acknowledges his transition from needing to "conform" to the traditional 'strong and silent' figure of masculinity through being "in control of [his] emotions", to embracing his emotions. Emotions, he has come to understand, are "part of being human" and "part of being healthy". The implications of constructing emotions as "human" and "healthy" are particularly important to discuss. Constructing emotions as "part of being healthy" relates to the earlier discussions in Chapter 3 on emotions - that given emotions' perception as wild and 'natural' forces participants, it is healthier to let them be expressed as opposed to bottling them up. Emotions thus become a "part" of one's overall health - they need to be expressed in the 'right' ways using particular technologies of psychological practice to ensure they do not compromise one's mental well-being. This also draws upon the repertoire of emotions as a form of 'self-work' - with the ideal of 'knowing oneself' becoming part of modern discourses of health and wellbeing in a 'psy' focused society. This extract outlines a shift in Alan's discursive practice - he once felt the pressure to conform to a discourse that emphasised emotional control and a 'strong and silent' front, but through his "experience" discovered an alternative framework where he has come to embrace his emotions as part of his well-being and 'human-ness'.

The notion of emotions as "human" as constructed by the participants is more difficult to understand in terms of its wider implications. In creating this association, it can be assumed that Alan is referring to the universality of emotions amongst human beings - they are something that we all 'have' and experience, even if we deny and resist them. Drawing on Harry's statements in Extract Twenty-Seven, to not have emotions is to be rendered a "non-human creature". Herein, human beings are 'emotional beings', and to be a human being is to be a 'humane human' - someone who ultimately has sympathy and empathy for others and is 'in touch' with their emotions. But what of those who are not living up to these emotional ideals - they are human and yet nonetheless not considered 'human' under this frame of discourse. Ironically, those who lack empathy are rendered "non-human" by more empathetic others - becoming dehumanised by those considered most humane. The conversations the data is drawn from is centralised around men and masculinity - and it is in this framework that this discourse of emotions as "human" emerged. The figure of the traditionally masculine man, who is noted for his lack of empathy and emotionality would herein be constructed as less "human" than the gay man or the 'emotional man', which inverts the notion of 'man' being representative of humanity as the figurehead of 'mankind' and construes him as "non-human". This notion of being a 'humane

human' is an interesting and potentially powerful discursive rhetoric that allows for resistance and critique against the traditional 'strong and silent' man archetype, yet it also runs the risk of dehumanising those who fail to live up to the ideals of being 'human', potentially having severe consequences. The future of this 'emotional man', this 'humane human', is one that will be interesting to follow in the coming years, particularly with regard to his political relationship with more traditional figures of masculinity and what constitutes the masculine ideal in its hegemonic form.

Chapter 6: Discussion, Reflections and Directions for Future Research

6.1 - What Then For Men?

At the beginning of this thesis, three research questions were outlined:

1. What discourses of emotion do young, urban, university educated men draw upon in contemporary New Zealand society?

2. To what extent are traditional 'hegemonic' forms of masculinity still powerful and influential?

3. How do sexuality, masculinity and discourses of emotions intersect to create new frameworks of identity?

The analysis of the research data was organised around each question. Chapter 3 looked at the ways in which emotions were constructed by the sample of young, urban, university educated New Zealand men interviewed. Chapter 4 revolved around the participants' discussions of contemporary cultural figures of masculinity and how they related to them, including the 'alpha male', 'Kiwi bloke' and 'emotional man'. These cultural figures are directly relatable to Connell's hegemonic masculinity model, and the men's positioning provides an interesting insight into the model's contemporary relevance. Finally, Chapter 5 analysed the participants' discourse around sexuality and how it relates to emotionality and masculinity. These three chapters showcased how participants construct their identity through discourse - drawing not only upon repertoires of masculinity, sexuality and emotionality but on subject positioning relative to the cultural figures which weave into personal narratives and develop a sense of self. This chapter draws upon the analysis in these three chapters and attempts to make sense of it in terms of the potential wider implications of the findings. The aim is to provide a better understanding of the landscape one demographic group of men in New Zealand navigate with regard to masculinity, sexuality, emotions and identity.

This thesis discussed how emotions were understood through various interpretative repertoires, centring the focus upon the discursive nature of emotions and how they are made intelligible by individuals. The study's participants constructed emotions as difficult to control, often acting against one's own interests, being something natural, biological and primitive - drawing from more traditional Western understandings of emotion as oppositional to reason (Reddy, 2001). Yet they also described how socio-cultural expectations asserted the necessity of controlling them. This situates the individuals in a challenging predicament - they must develop a way of dealing with seemingly fractious emotions that allows them to maintain social decency, particularly given the influences of discourses of masculinity that hold an expectation of emotionlessness over them. In response to this, processes that involve becoming aware of emotions and reflecting on them were discussed by participants as useful means of controlling emotions - thus preserving their social identity. But the uses of these processes go beyond just this. These technologies of emotion were also the means to which one's identity could be understood through emotions - a means of understanding oneself through understanding one's emotions. These newer discourses also construct emotion as a site for work on one's self through self-perfection and actualisation as a kind of 'subjective achievement', using the term of Williams (2000), and a way of developing an 'emotional intelligence' that both fosters better relations and improves one's emotional management. Emotions are thus diagnostic of identity within this discursive paradigm - both in how the individual is perceived by others and how they perceive themselves.

The intersection of these repertoires of emotion into a focus on masculinity is a pertinent indicator of the dichotomy between traditional and liberal forms of masculinity that the young men of the study situate themselves within. As Pease (2012) argues, despite the increase in encouragement of emotional expression amongst men in recent times, the pre-existing expectation for men to manage their emotions continues to persist. There lacks a clear way of 'doing' emotionality for men as they are operating within a field of competing discourses of masculinity attempting to dictate and discipline their behaviour. With traditional masculinity still intact, the 'psy' complex outlined by Rose (1996; 1999) has come to have a greater influence on men, with therapeutic discourses regarding emotions being particularly salient throughout the interviews with the participants. However, the process of 'revealing' emotions through therapy leads to their management - something that was frequently discussed by the participants - which can arguably be said to be reinforcing the masculine idea that emotions are forces that one needs to manage and control (Robinson & Hockey, 2011). Indeed, emotional mastery is expected of men in social settings, however difficult this may be - reflecting the traditional masculine ideal of emotional control. But in contrast to this, the importance of internal emotional awareness and getting 'in touch' with their emotions described by participants reflects a more liberal ideology that subverts the traditional norms of masculinity regarding emotions. The situation thus appears to be that men continue to need to control their emotions in the external world to avoid facing the disciplinary consequences of the discourses of traditional masculinity, but also have the possibility (and perhaps even the pressure and new pleasure) to 'find themselves' through internally becoming more self-aware through their emotions, reflecting a liberal discourse of masculinity that has only recently become available to men. Men are thus, at least according to the data provided by participants, in a complex situation regarding management and awareness of their emotions that reflects the wider predicament of the competing discourses of masculinity they are situated within.

Holmes (2015) discusses how gender roles have changed rapidly within the 20th century, resulting in uncertainty as to how this relates to men's emotionality, particularly within heterosexual contexts where women are taking on more breadwinner roles. The 'figures' of masculinity discussed with participants were discussed in terms of their emotionality, with participants positioning themselves relative to the figures based on the kind of masculine emotionality they valued. This was seen in the participants' discussions around the 'alpha male' figure. This figure was dichotomised by participants - with some constructing a 'good' alpha male figure as a positive representation of masculinity. A 'good' alpha male is a man who not only has favourable leadership qualities and is successful in what he does but is one who is in touch with his emotions and feels empathy for others. However, this figure was constructed in contrast to what the participants saw society's conceptualisation of an alpha male to be - one who is domineering, inconsiderate and unemotional, a 'bad' alpha male. Some participants did argue for the merits of living up to such a figure, particularly given its glorification in the wider society. This was shown by participants in the correlation between masculinity and New Zealand national identity, with rugby, in particular, being construed as a site of exhortation of masculine prowess as well as national pride. The historically traditional New Zealand masculinity discussed by Jock Phillips (1996) appears to be alive and well in its influence on contemporary Kiwi men.

Nonetheless, alpha males who were representative of Connell's hegemonic masculinity - which includes figures such as the 'Kiwi bloke' and 'rugby jock' - were constructed as being in an ultimately unfulfilling position. The 'bad' alpha male was construed as being secretly insecure but masking it behind an aggressive front, ultimately rendering them as a not genuine individual. Because he is out of touch with his emotions, he was seen as being in a disadvantaged position in terms of relating to others but also lacking the 'self-awareness' that is posited to come through reflecting on one's emotions. Psychology's discursive influence on the wider population appears to come into play here: men experience a 'realisation' that it is problematic to be in a position of emotional repression (and thus in a state of self-repression), and therein need to develop a masculinity that is compatible with modern understandings of mental health and wellbeing. This is perhaps influenced by coverage of

high suicide rates in men, as well as the local advertisement campaigns by former All Black John Kirwan on men's depression, which were frequently brought into discussion by the participants of the study. In order to be 'healthy' under this new paradigm of masculinity, one must look to the figure of the 'emotional man' representative of the middle-way between masculine rhetoric and emotionality. This is reflective of how the participants saw many merits in the traditional modality of masculinity, whilst also acknowledging the necessity for change. Here, men can maintain their masculinity whilst also expressing their emotions, as long as they 'own' them. Masculinity is not done away with but reinvented to accommodate the perceived disadvantages of being detrimental to one's emotional well-being.

This 'emotional man' figure is somewhat evocative of the 'new man' discussed by Edley and Wetherell (1997) and subsequently the 'real man' of Toerien and Durrheim (2001). Both figures at first glance appear to be somewhat subversive of the traditional masculine order, and yet ultimately reproduce patriarchal ideology in a more socially acceptable manner. To synonymize this 'emotional man' with these two figures would be a misnomer, however, as the patriarchal implications of such a figure cannot be clearly affirmed from the data with the same clarity of Edley and Wetherell (1997) and Toerien and Durrheim's (2001) work. However, the figure indeed seemed to be represented as a new form of 'manliness' which asserts the importance of maintaining an intelligibly masculine image within men. Indeed, the figure clearly allows for maintenance of masculine capital within liberal male ideology whilst also addressing dysfunctional aspects of traditional masculinity, all framed behind a positioning of liberal tolerance and social acceptability. Nonetheless, I would as Toerien and Durrheim (2001) do, engage the discretion of Wetherell and Edley (1999) in avoiding arguing that this new 'emotional man' is wholly a hegemonic, complicit or resistant figure of masculinity, accounting for the complexity of discourses as they operate in practice and acknowledging the capacity for a discourse to have a myriad of effects.

Interestingly, many of the participants constructed gay men as appearing to occupy a position of greater social (and perhaps even masculine) capital under this new paradigm where emotional reflection and self-awareness is not only acceptable but becoming increasingly revered among liberal men. The gay man was constructed by participants as a figure representative of expert-level emotional awareness, with gay men as the vanguards of this new male emotional culture - the "leaders" and "example" in the words of Alan in Extract Nineteen. The coming out process was described as being a process in which gay men became more emotionally intelligent and self-aware - a challenge that they go through that ultimately benefits them as human beings. Not only this, but the bravery of coming out was also exalted as a sign of masculinity. Whilst gay men were once emasculated for their perceived emotionality, they may now be admired by their male peers because of it.

Does this mean that gay men are now part of the process of redefining masculinity? The interviews certainly showed how gay men have greater leverage now more than ever to critique their heterosexual peers for their lack of emotional awareness and lack of sophistication - discussed by Alan in Extract Twenty-Six and Dan in Extract Twenty-Seven. However, the data also suggest that gay men are not as free from the constraints of traditional masculinity as it may seem. While participants argued that 'stereotypical' gay men were more representative of the gay community, it was the 'non-stereotypical', 'straight-acting' gay man who had the most privilege, particularly in heteronormative environments. Professionalism is correlated with masculinity, and thus gay men feel pressure to avoid 'stereotypical' behaviour that is seen as un-masculine in order to survive and prosper in workplace environments that often marginalises them (Rumens & Kerfoot, 2009). Herein lies an example of how traditional masculine behaviour retains social capital, despite an emerging change in the masculine order and a greater social acceptance of homosexuality.

Relating this to Connell's model of hegemonic masculinity, the interview data definitely suggest a shift in how gay men are represented and understood, yet it would be erroneous to argue a complete reconfiguration of the model as Anderson (2009) does. Rather, it appears that one's performativity of masculinity is key in how homosexuality relates within the paradigm of the masculine hierarchy. Greater social acceptance of homosexuality has meant that being gay may not in and of itself render a man subordinate - seen in Geoffrey's statement in Extract Twenty-Five around gay men having more masculine capital than himself, for example - but it is highly contextualised and dependent on the degree to which a gay man performs a 'stereotypical' or 'non-stereotypical' form of gay masculinity. The inclusivity of 'inclusive masculinity' may be largely dependent on whether the gay man in question is able to successfully perform masculinity as it is socially valued, indicating that elements of traditional masculinity still remain intact. The 'homohysteria' of Anderson's (2009) work is being preserved around a new focus upon masculine performativity as opposed to insecurities around sexual orientation itself.

The interview data also contained the construction of homosexuality as antithetical of New Zealand national identity. This is a complicated assertion to make, given the nation's history of self-construction through traditional (homophobic) masculinity (Phillips, 1996) and yet also being a progressive early proponent of gay rights (Carroll, 2016). I would suggest a similar 'transgendering' occurs upon gay men in New Zealand as it does towards women in the vein of Brady (2012). Gay men can be included in homosocial spaces as they can be within the wider masculine national culture as long as they maintain the masculine social norm in favour of 'stereotypical' gay behaviour. In this, New Zealand can maintain itself as a champion of gay rights alongside many other Western nations without a sense of loss of its national masculine capital.

The findings of this thesis suggest that we are in a time of great change within masculine culture. The implications of this change, however, is one that cannot be easily assessed at this point in time. The interview data suggest that greater awareness of men's mental health issues alongside the 'psychologisation' of modern society, as well as the progression of the gay (and wider LGBTQ) civil rights movement, have shaped modern men's critiques of the traditional disregard for homosexuality and emotional expression, and thus changed the masculine culture. This confirms a prediction that Connell herself always had - that masculinity would be subject to change, as masculine culture is complicated and inconsistent (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005). The data in this thesis cannot be properly utilised in order to assert a clear shift in what represents modern 'hegemonic' masculinity, however. The interviews suggest a complicated pattern where both traditional and liberal discourses of masculinity appear to have a strong influence. Nonetheless, it is important to acknowledge that liberal notions can be used to reproduce a more traditional representation of masculinity. Men can indeed use discourses of maturity and emotional growth in order to accomplish the performance of a more traditional form of masculinity (Korobov & Bamberg, 2004), and as Wetherell and Edley (1999) note, men's challenging of traditional masculine identities can lead to their reinforcement through the notion of independence and autonomy. The accessibility of these discourses for men, however, is a different matter.

In the participants' discussion of the figural 'human', comes a point of necessary investigation. The figure was used to include both homosexuality and emotionality within a monolithic categorisation - that gay men, like straight men, are 'humans' - all of whom experience 'human' emotions. Gay men and straight men are constructed as having a common humanity through their shared human emotions, reminiscent of Bridges' (2014) article 'A Very "Gay" Straight?' discussing straight men who described themselves as 'gay' in certain ways, such as in being emotionally expressive, in order to present a progressive masculine identity. While at first appearing to suggest a greater humanity between gay and straight men, such presentations masked their heterosexual privilege and ultimately their differentiation from gay men in that they could reap benefits of certain facets of gay culture whilst maintaining a heterosexual identity.

In liberal circles, it appears, men's acceptance of homosexuality and emotional expression gives rise to a sense of identifying as a 'humane human', one who is praised as morally worthy while not at a risk of losing masculine capital. However, not all men have access to such discursive resources for their identity narratives. The men of this study were all from urban and university educated backgrounds, spaces wherein liberal masculinity is valued more than elsewhere. The situation is vastly different for men in more rural and working-class backgrounds, where traditional masculinity is revered as the status quo. This explains, for instance, the large working-class following of Donald Trump who see him as a figurehead for a masculinity under threat (Jacobs, 2016). If it is the case that a more liberal, humane, 'emotional masculinity' is becoming hegemonic with the increased psychologisation of society and the influence of the liberal elite, what becomes of the men who do not have access to a more progressive masculinity? Does this create the potential for such men to be seen as inhumane and thus 'non-human' for being a product of an environment that continues to espouse unemotionality, sexism and homophobia as the criteria for masculine capital? What is missing from many contemporary liberal dialogues appears to be a class-based analysis of access to education and resources that allow for masculinity to be understood critically and not simply perpetuated as the status quo. Whilst traditional masculinity may have detrimental effects on women and gay men, as well as the men who endorse it themselves, it must be understood within the context of its discursive environment without necessarily blaming individual men. In this, there is the hope that the cultural resources that allow critical reconstructions of their masculinity become more widespread.

6.2 Towards a Better Man? - Directions for Future Research

In choosing to study the emotional cultures of contemporary men, this thesis contributes to an under-researched body of academic literature (Holmes, 2015). In doing so, the aim was to engage in discussion around the implications of the discourses of emotions that young, urban, university educated New Zealand men endorse and the ramifications of these ways in which emotions are understood. This study used sexuality as its main variable amongst participants in order to centre much of the focus upon the intersection between homosexuality and male emotionality, a significant trope in traditional masculine ideology (Connell, 2005). However, this study could have instead looked at differences between rural and urban men, indigenous and non-indigenous men, men of various ethnic backgrounds, or older and younger generations of men, for example, in order to map out differences amongst men's emotional cultures. This study was limited in terms of its number of participants, and thus the findings cannot be said to be widely generalisable, but they nonetheless provide significant indications of how young, urban, university-educated men in New Zealand discursively construct emotions, masculinity, sexuality and identity - providing a framework for a broader discussion on the changes within modern masculinity. It is also important to note that this work, along with much of the literature it draws upon, is centred around a Western paradigm wherein 'traditional' masculinity produces men who cannot and do not express their emotions, which is certainly not the case for all men on a global scale (Robinson & Hockey, 2011), and thus this work and its theoretical basis must be understood as culturally and geographically specific.

In terms of future research in this area, there is certainly plenty of room for investigation around this study's topic of focus. Within the data corpus of this study, many topics were discussed that were not included in the analysis section of the thesis. Participants discussed the differences between themselves and female partners in terms of expressing emotions, their shifting of displays of emotions and performance of masculinity depending upon circumstance and environment, the minority status of homosexuality - including solidarity with other minority groups and how intersections of race and religious affiliation have an impact, masculinity and drinking culture in New Zealand, expressing happiness as a sign of weakness in men, and how mental illness influences emotional expression. Unfortunately, these topics could not all be included within this thesis, but are all nonetheless areas in

which future research could focus upon in order to develop a greater understanding of contemporary male culture.

Perhaps the most dire concern the nature of this study lends itself to is that traditional masculinity, one that influential figures such as Donald Trump are argued to encourage (Sexton, 2016) appears to be heavily responsible for the disparities in men's health worldwide compared with women (Courtenay, 2000; Lee & Owens, 2002). Whilst this study has found that more liberal forms of masculinity encourage men to develop 'emotional intelligence' and take on psychological discourses that encourage 'self-work' to respond to these concerns for men's well-being, the accessibility of such discursive resources is limited and thus concerning. The fact that research on masculinity/sexuality and emotions is so sparse is also concerning when there is clearly a significant contemporary issue at stake regarding how modern men are faring in terms of their health. Hopefully, more research will be produced that aims to better understand how these health predicaments are perpetuated, and ultimately through this develop a means to which they can be properly addressed.

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Appendices:

Appendix 1: Advertisement

KIWI BLOKES DON'T CRY
YOU GOTTA BE A REAL MAN
HARDEN UP
DON'T BE A WUSS
BOYS WILL BE BOYS

How do these statements make you feel?

We're looking for straight and gay New Zealand men looking to take part in a Masters research study investigating men's emotional cultures, masculinity and sexuality amongst young New Zealand men.

We are wanting your unique perspective on what it means to be a Kiwi bloke in the 21st century.
We are looking specifically for self-identified straight and gay New Zealand men between the ages of 18 and 30 who are interested in discussing the rules and understandings of emotions for men in the modern world – whether it's OK to cry and under what circumstances, what emotions can or cannot be expressed in order to maintain a masculine image, whether one's emotional expression and sexual orientation has anything to do with each other and whether all the talk about Kiwi men being strong, silent and emotionless has any weight to it anymore.

The study involves a 1-2 hour interview that will take place at the University, or a place of your choosing if it is more convenient for you. If you are interested in participating, we will send through an information sheet and a short demographics questionnaire to get a bit more information on you.
If you are interested or have any questions about the study, feel free to email us at atan113@aucklanduni.ac.nz

Approved by the University Of Auckland Human Participants Ethics Committee on 17/05/2016 for three years. Reference Number 017260

<u>Participant Information Sheet</u>

Men's Emotional Cultures: A Sexuality-Based Comparison of Young Urban New Zealand Men

Researcher: Alexander Tant
Supervisor: Professor Margaret Wetherell

Kia ora, and thank you for considering volunteering in this research.
My name is Alex Tant, and I am studying for a Masters in Psychology at the University of Auckland. The focus of my Master's thesis is men's emotional cultures – in particular how they relate with masculinity and sexuality. My supervisor is Professor Margaret Wetherell for this project, who is overseeing the research I am conducting for my thesis. This is a one year project, which I aim to complete by February 2017.

The study I am conducting looks at the relationship between men's ideas around masculinity, their sexual orientation and how it relates to their understanding and expression of emotions – what are referred to as 'emotional cultures'. Emotional cultures are the socially-influenced ways in which we understand and express our emotions – essentially where our personal emotions meet the cultures that shape us, particularly in terms of our social interactions. The emotional cultures of men in modern Western society are heavily linked with ideas around masculinity and what it means to "be a man". Studies on the topic have discussed how men are expected to repress certain emotions in order to be perceived as being in control. These limits and restrictions on men's emotional expression are known as "feeling rules" – norms that dictate the appropriateness of emotions in a given setting.
A large part of contemporary male emotional cultures includes the ways in which homosexuality relates to manhood, and how being gay is often polarised against what it means to be a "real man". I want to interview men on this topic and see how they discuss homosexuality in relation to manhood, then linking it back to men's emotional cultures more broadly.

The reason I chose this area to research is because of its contemporary significance. There have been many recent discussions in New Zealand and worldwide around men's physical and mental health, particularly with relation to men's inability to seek help and express their emotions. This situation is believed to be linked with the high rates of male suicide that has been plaguing this country in recent years and is of dire need of addressing. As well as this, the topic of this thesis relates to the poor mental health rates of gay men (as well as other LGBT individuals) and the complications of these factors.

For this study, I am looking for young, self-identified straight and gay men who are willing to talk about the topic of emotions and how it relates to both the culture they live in and their life experience as a part of the culture. In particular I want to focus on masculinity and sexuality in relation to emotion, as men's emotional cultures are linked to these topics.

<u>Details of the study:</u>
Upon expressing interest in the study, you will be sent a very brief questionnaire prior to the interview that you will need to fill in and send back to me before the interview begins. It will involve a few demographics questions such as your age, ethnic background, nationality, educational background, sexual orientation, as well as your preferred pseudonym that will be used for the duration of the study. You need to be a self identified gay or straight male between the age of 18 and 30, and be a New Zealand citizen in order to participate, as this is the demographic I will be focusing upon for the study.

The study will involve a 1 – 2 hour interview with you which will be recorded and later transcribed by me or by a transcriber who will have signed a confidentiality agreement. The interview will take place in a research room or office in the School of Psychology. If you prefer, I am happy to meet in a public place of your choosing (such as a cafe) so long as the space is quiet enough for the sound equipment to record effectively.

Confidentiality:
In this research, your confidentiality is of utmost importance, and I want to ensure that this research in no way violates your personal privacy or involves anything that could be considered unethical.
The conversation between us will be audio recorded, and will be later transcribed by me or a trained transcriber to be utilised as data for the thesis. Thereafter, only my supervisor, Professor Margaret Wetherell, and I will have access to the original audio recordings – which will be kept in a secure location at the University of Auckland campus. Our work on the data will be with the transcripts after pseudonyms have been allocated. We will be the only ones who will have full access to what was recorded during the interview. During the process of the interview, you are free to ask to have the audio recorder switched off without having to give any reason. Participation is voluntary and you do not need to answer any questions if you do not want to. You can withdraw from the interview at any time also without giving a reason.
All data collected will be stored for a period of up to six years for the purpose of developing the research for publications that may take some years to complete. The information collected will be kept securely and safely so that only myself and my supervisor will have access to this data. After the period of six years, interviews stored on digital files and any hard copies will be deleted.
In order to protect confidentiality, I will ensure that I do not include any material in the final thesis that could potentially identify you as an interviewee. A pseudonym of your choice will also be used in order to not reveal your identity.
You can also request to be sent a transcript of your interview. Upon receiving this, you are free to alter or remove any parts or the whole interview from the data-set for two weeks after receiving the transcript. This will be done in order to preserve confidentiality and ensure that you are happy with the material that your interview has contributed to the research. You are also welcome to withdraw all your data without a reason within the two-week period of receiving it if you wish to do so.

Potential Risks:
The interview is not aiming to delve into the details of your personal life. We are interested in your thoughts and views about the social frameworks affecting the expression of emotion for gay and straight men in New Zealand. In the unlikely event that you do find the interview upsetting, however, you can ask for it to be suspended at any point and below you will find the contact details for a range of support services:

Appendix 3: Participant Questionnaire

Participant Questionnaire:

Part 1: General Questions on Emotion

Do you see yourself to be an emotional person?

Do you wish you could be more open and expressive of your emotions?

How are your friends/family regarding you expressing your emotions?

Are your emotions something you regularly think about?

Are some emotions easier for you to express than others?

Do you think it's normal to become "over-emotional" in certain circumstances (e.g. All Blacks game)? If so, why do you think this is the case?

Part 2: Masculinity and Emotions

There is the stereotype that Kiwi men are supposed to be strong, silent and emotionless. Do you think there is any truth to this stereotype? Do you relate to this stereotype or not?

Do you believe you can still be considered masculine and also express your emotions?

Are there certain 'rules' around expressing emotions if one wants to retain their masculinity?

Which emotions do you think are acceptable to express in order to maintain a masculine image?

How would you define an 'alpha male'? Would you say being an 'alpha male' is an appealing thing to be? What emotions can an 'alpha male' express?
Why do you think men are perceived as less emotional than women? Do you think this is true?

Do you believe that certain emotions are 'feminine'? Do you think that there are certain emotions that are 'masculine'? What are they?

Do you think the relationship between maintaining one's masculinity and expressing emotions is changing?

Do you think it is in men's best interests to become more or less expressive of their emotions?

Part 3: Sexuality and Emotions

There is a cultural tendency to associate male emotionality with homosexuality. Do you think that this is still apparent in modern society? Why do you think this is the case? How do you feel about this sentiment?

Do you think that by being emotional, people will see you as being gay? Are there certain emotional expressions in particular that people would associate with homosexuality?

Do you think it is more acceptable for gay men to be emotional than straight men?

There is a stereotype that gay men are more emotional than straight men. How do you feel about this? Do you think there is any truth to this? Why do you think that this stereotype exists?

Do you feel like people are perceived as more emotional because they are gay? Do you believe this to be true? Do you believe it is a good or bad thing to be more emotional?

Do you feel that being gay allows people to express their emotions more openly than if they were straight? Does this vary from being in gay company to being in straight male company? How about female company?

Do you worry that expressing your emotions makes you appear more feminine? Is appearing feminine something that concerns you?
Do you feel that gay (LGBT) people feel emotions that heterosexual people do not? E.g. uncomfortableness in certain settings due to heteronormativity, suppressing oneself, a sense of solidarity etc.

There is a stereotype that gay men are less masculine than straight men. Do you think that there is any truth in this? Why do you think this stereotype exists?

Do you feel as though gay men need to adhere to the same codes of masculinity as straight men do in New Zealand? Why/why not?

Do you feel like Kiwi men have good access to emotional support networks? Do you think that this is something that they need (or not)?

There is a strong sentiment that the average man's main emotional support network is his relationship with his partner. Would you agree with this? Do you think that having this emotional support is a big part of the appeal of a partner?

Are there certain emotions you would only feel comfortable expressing around a partner?

Do you feel like you need to be less emotional than your partner?

How do you feel about the idea that men aren't good at expressing their emotions (particularly in romantic relationships)? Do you think men just express their emotions differently to women? If so, how is this done? (e.g. expression through touch?).

There has been a lot of discussion around Kiwi men's issues with emotional expression and the high male suicide rates we have in this country. Do you believe there is a link between the two? If so, what needs to be done about this?