

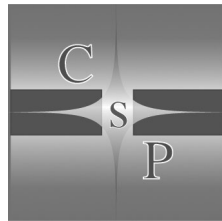
# Masculinities and Music



Masculinities and Music:  
Engaging Men and Boys in Making Music

By

Scott Harrison



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Masculinities and Music: Engaging Men and Boys in Making Music, by Scott Harrison

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For Jean and Duncan



# TABLE OF CONTENTS

List of Figures.....	x
List of Tables.....	xi
Acknowledgements .....	xii

## **Prelude**

A personal perspective.....	1
A philosophical perspective.....	8

## **Chapter 1**

Masculinities .....	15
1.1 Masculinities .....	15
1.2 Hegemonic Masculinity .....	21
1.3 Other Masculinities .....	24
1.4 Challenging Hegemonic Masculinity .....	25
1.5 Patriarchy, avoidance of femininity and male gender role rigidity ....	27
1.6 Summary .....	32

## **Chapter 2**

Masculinity, Media and Sport .....	34
2.1 Masculinity and Media .....	34
2.2 Masculinity and Sport .....	36
2.3 Music and Sport .....	42
2.4 Summary .....	45

## **Chapter 3**

Gender Relations in the School .....	47
3.1 The approach of teachers .....	47
3.2 The approach of students.....	49
3.3 Single Sex Activities .....	51
3.4 Achievement and Subject Choice .....	53
3.5 Co-curricular Activities .....	58
3.6 Music for Music's Sake .....	61
3.7 Summary .....	64

**Chapter 4**

Sex Stereotyping in Music.....	67
4.1 Early Studies: The seventies and eighties .....	67
4.2 The Nineties Shift (1) .....	70
4.3 The Noughties (1) .....	73
4.4 Summary .....	75

**Chapter 5**

Gender in Music Education.....	77
5.1 Historical Perspectives on Music and Gender .....	77
5.2 The Nineties Shift (1) .....	79
5.3 A Popular Music Sidebar .....	86
5.4 Returning to Western Art Music .....	88
5.5 The Noughties (2) .....	93
5.6 Summary .....	96

**Chapter 6**

Recent Perspectives on Stereotyping.....	99
6.1 Primary School Students' Preferences .....	100
6.2 Secondary School Students' Preferences .....	102
6.3 Tertiary Students Perceptions .....	110
6.4 Summary .....	113

**Chapter 7**

Men talk about School Music.....	117
7.1 Early Experience of Music .....	117
7.2 Stereotyping and Gender in Music Activity .....	120
7.3 Harassment of Musicians .....	122
7.4 Role Models .....	126
7.5 Individual Coping Mechanisms .....	131
7.6 Summary .....	133

**Chapter 8**

Principles for Change .....	134
8.1 Macro Change .....	134
8.2 School Change .....	135
8.3 Music Education for Boys .....	137
8.4 Summary .....	140



## Chapter 9

What about Boys? .....	143
9.1 Building a School Music Program .....	143
9.2 Musical Futures: Not just for the boys .....	145
9.3 Engaging Boys in Remote Communities .....	149
9.4 In the Deep End .....	151

## Chapter 10

What about Men? .....	154
10.1 Men just want to have Fun .....	155
10.2 Young Adult Community Choir .....	157
10.3 Old Rockers Never Die .....	159
10.4 Music for all ages .....	161

Postlude .....	163
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References .....	164
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Index .....	193
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## LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 0.1 Progression of theories .....	12
Figure 1.1 Influences on Male Socialisation .....	28
Figure 3.1 Year 12 enrolments by gender .....	55
Figure 3.2 Participation in non-academic activities.....	60
Figure 3.3 Quadrivial compass .....	63
Figure 4.1 Musical instrument stereotype continuum.....	75
Figure 6.1 Tertiary students' perceptions continuum .....	112

## LIST OF TABLES

Table 1.1 Historical positioning of masculinities .....	16
Table 1.2 Levine's examples of "sissy" work .....	31
Table 4.1 Transformations of instrument-gender: paired comparison.....	70
Table 4.2 Percentage of students: gendered instrument preference.....	73
Table 5.1 Students express of dislike for styles of music .....	88
Table 6.1 Primary students' instrument preferences.....	101
Table 6.2 Secondary students' instrument preferences.....	103
Table 6.3 Influences on secondary students' instrument choice.....	104
Table 6.4 Comparison of influences on students' instrument choice .....	105
Table 6.5 Secondary students' free instrument choice .....	106
Table 6.6 Secondary students' reason for instrument choice.....	107
Table 6.7 Instruments secondary students would not like to play .....	108
Table 6.8 Students' reason for choosing least liked instrument .....	109

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# PRELUDE

## Personal perspectives

When I was six, I fractured my skull. Some of my friends say this experience had a lasting effect on my musical and intellectual capacity. They are right. While I was convalescing for six weeks in hospital, I had to lie very still on my back. This was problematic for an active six year old and I began to fill my days by singing. I would wake at sunrise and begin to sing. I don't recall much of the repertoire but I am guessing that it was influenced by two pillars of my life at the time:

We were living in Bundaberg, a small coastal town in Queensland, Australia. The main industry was sugar and the flat town was a patchwork of cane in various stages of growth. My dad was a Presbyterian minister who, after preaching the sermon, would sometimes join the choir for the anthem. While we led an itinerant life in some respects (I lived in ten different houses before I was 20), one of the constants in our life was attendance at church. The church was right next door to the house in Bundaberg, so the music of the pipe organ would float across the rose gardens into our home, even if we weren't inside attending the service. I knew all the hymns and sang them with considerable gusto.

The other influence was Mr Hesse, the school music teacher. With the benefit of hindsight, Mr Hesse was, more strictly speaking, a song teacher. We sang with him in class and I was also in the choir. One of the songs we sang was *A Tragic Story*, by William Makepeace Thackeray. The amusing story of a sage, whose pigtail remained behind her (regardless of her efforts to bring it to the fore), must have appealed to me, for I sang this song often on those mornings in bed. The other tune I can recall was *Morning Has Broken* which was enjoying simultaneous popularity as a song in church and in the charts. The song begins

*Morning has broken, like the first morning  
Blackbird has spoken, like the first bird.*

The elderly gentleman in the adjacent room must have loved being woken each day by the dulcet sounds of my clear, well-projected voice. After a few weeks, he began to send the food trolley into my room with a treat: some butterscotch lollies! These were my favourite sweets and served to keep my mouth closed for a few minutes.

My voice was to be silenced only one other time in this period. The following year, I had my tonsils removed and once again had the privilege of hospital accommodation and food. Two other childhood ailments prevented my complete involvement in school activities at this time: Firstly, I was mildly myopic and also suffered from strabismus. I was therefore unable to focus on distant objects and when I did, at least one of my eyes was looking at something else. Secondly, I had the condition medically known as *pes planus*, more commonly referred to as flat feet. The cure for the eye condition involved surgery, followed by eye exercise. Far worse, in my dysfunctional eyes, was the remedy for my flat feet: brown boots, with built-up insoles to ensure I developed an arch foot; which, after a few years, I did.

Treatment for these conditions took me out of school for various periods: this affected my involvement in many school activities, as did my inability to see into the distance or to walk without stumbling over small objects in my path. Being the youngest of four children, some of whom had suffered similar ailments, my parents were kept poor through medical expenses. I didn't thank my parents for their care and generosity: far from it. I suspected they were to blame for at least the flat feet and myopia and medical science seems to support the view that these conditions are, in fact, inherited. I didn't realize at the time that I would have been far worse off had I not been treated.

So it was that my first few years of formal education were punctuated by illness, accident and treatment for infirmities and afflictions, none of them particularly serious or life-threatening. There may have been some issues with social interaction, as children can be hard on their peers if they appear different. The child of poor parents, with wandering eyes and flat feet must have been subject to some scrutiny, but I remember none of it. Besides, I had my singing.

I sang at school, solo and in the school choirs, and participated in Eisteddfodau, often coming first or second in my sections. The choirs often sang in massed events with hundreds of children from the

surrounding schools. This was to become a feature of my musical experience for many years to come.

When I was ten my family moved to Brisbane, a place that was to become my home on and off for the next 30 years. [I was actually born in this city but moved to Bundaberg when I was three.] Two major musical events remain vividly in my memory from this time. Singing in the annual Choral Fest in the City Hall – again with hundreds of other children and singing in the school variety concerts. The feeling of community that we felt through choral singing led me to participation in choirs and choruses for many years. These feelings and friendships changed my life. There were other influencing factors. My introduction to organised sport was not a happy one. The first question I was asked at my new school was “Are you fast?” I thought for a while and replied “Fast at what?” I discovered at lunchtime that it meant fast at running (preferably with a ball in hand) towards other boys whose sole purpose was to grab you and throw you to the ground. This, I learned was called “Rugby League.” I wasn’t fast and I didn’t see the point. My excuse is that I had been born with flat feet and couldn’t see very well. Nevertheless, I settled into my adopted town [which was really my birthplace, anyway] relatively easily and continued to sing a lot.

With high school came another change in schools. I caught the bus to high school and, although it was only a ten-minute trip, I still remember the horror that accompanied this journey each day. I didn’t play sport. I enjoyed singing *and* my parents wouldn’t buy me long trousers to wear to school – not even in winter. These three things combined to make me somewhat of a victim. [I may have already had something of a victim mentality, on the grounds of my childhood illnesses, but this is unlikely.] My immediate peer group consisted of the other two boys in my grade who didn’t wear long pants. We were subjected to some interesting acts of violence. One particular favourite was for the other boys to chew up lollies and spit them into our hair as we boarded the bus. Being the 1970s, we were all very proud of our long locks, but this pride diminished somewhat when it was strewn with slightly masticated fruit tingles, chocolates or, on particularly bad days, chewing gum. I still have an aversion to chewing gum ... and to wearing shorts. One highlight of this period could be found in my academic results: first in Japanese and, believe it or not, first in Woodwork.

We moved across town when I was fourteen. The principal reason for this upheaval to my fourth (and penultimate) school was to be nearer the church we were attending. I was not in favour of this move but it proved to be a useful one for my social and musical development. As part of the new school uniform, my parents bought me long pants. In my mind, my social status improved dramatically. School didn't offer me much. There were the usual subjects: maths, English, history, science and a language. I did music at school and learned a little about musical styles but nothing about the mechanics. It was a bit a bludge subject where no-one really worked hard. Lunch times were often spent alone in the library: sometimes reading but mostly just staying out of the way. My nemesis was compulsory Wednesday afternoon sport. How I loathed those afternoons! Reflecting now, I was often the *Last One Picked*, described so eloquently in Howard Crabtree's *Whoop-Dee-Doo*. No-one wanted the slightly bookish, uncoordinated kid on their teams and frankly, I wasn't so keen on being involved. I found alternate activities: photography, ice-skating, ten-pin bowling, chess and cards. The only down side to these activities was the bus ride to an off-campus location. My earlier experiences of buses were not happy ones and this phobia was exacerbated when the bus carrying us down the hill to ten-pin bowling had dodgy brakes and ran out of control for 500 metres into the school library. Two of my refuges were destroyed at once: no more off-campus activities and no more library-visiting at lunch time.

Outside of school, I began to learn guitar, largely under the influence and instruction of an elder brother who also played in a band. He was at university at the time and they played mostly covers, but also wrote some original music. My first chord was E minor, followed a short time later by A. I was then able to play some of George Harrison's *My Sweet Lord*. I played these two chords over and over for about six months until I learned D. This knowledge, combined with E major opened up a whole new range of repertoire I could sing and play. Armed with these four chords, I joined a band. For two years, I sang and played the latest rock: Status Quo, Deep Purple, Led Zeppelin and others. Clearly by the end of these two years I had added a few more chords to the repertoire and music surrounded me in the house, at school and at church. I realised that playing in a band, like singing in a choir, brought strong feelings of belonging and lifelong bonds were formed. My status improved through my involvement in rock music. Perhaps it was the instrumentation, perhaps the material. Perhaps I was just finding myself in these early adolescent years. After two years we moved ...again.



The destination this time was Rockhampton: a town of about 50000 people sustained by the railway and the meatworks. I went along to the new school, and the new church, with my usual fears about change. I was only beaten up once in the first few months, which I understand was pretty good for a newcomer in this part of the world. Despite my misgivings, Rockhampton proved to be an awakening on three counts: television, music theatre and girls.

The reference to television probably needs some explaining. Television came to Australia in 1956, in time for the Melbourne Olympics. Almost 20 years later, in 1975, colour television was introduced. I only know this because I saw the appliances in shop windows: we didn't have television in our house until I was sixteen. At the time I thought that the absence of this appliance added to my social disadvantage: classmates would come to school with stories of Gilligan's Island, F-Troop and Doctor Who. I had no idea what they were talking about. I felt isolated in this regard, but respected my parents' opinions that television would only stop me from studying.

All this came to an end when I was able to watch my Grandfather's black and white set in the spare bedroom. We had two channels: the national broadcaster and a commercial network. We could really only get reception for the national broadcaster, so I settled for watching that for 30 minutes each day. There was a music show in Australia at the time called *Countdown*. It featured clips and live performances of mostly local bands, with interviews from visiting artists. I began to understand the rock genre a little better. Every now and then I would be allowed to watch other shows but my parents had warned me to believe nothing of what you read in the newspapers and only half of what you saw on television: this is where my mistrust of the media began. At 16, I still found it intriguing to have the world brought into my house, but always felt a sense of unease with the authoritative masculine approach to the delivery of information.

I auditioned for the school musical *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolour Dreamcoat*, and won the leading role. This proved to be a turning point in my life. I had found my place in the world of music theatre. Here I could combine my singing with my love of rock music and do it before an adoring audience. I loved the thrill of performing on stage: of telling a story through singing and movement. I sang in more stage shows at this time and also joined a folk group. I returned to the Eisteddfod circuit and performed creditably. In school music we studied a

variety of material from the western art music canon. Two highlights remain from this time: Verdi's *La Traviata* and Peter Maxwell-Davies' *Eight Songs for a Mad King*. The works could not have been more diverse in style but they had the same dramatic intent. I am still moved when hear the last act of *La Traviata*. I am equally moved by the plight of the mad King George in *Eight Songs* and particularly enjoy the moment when he breaks the violin. I dreamed of performing these pieces one day, not just because I, too, want to break a violin. The teacher who introduced these pieces to us was an interesting fellow: He loved his music with a passion and chose these works, and the school musicals with considerable care. He gave me an opportunity to play in the school orchestra: first on guitar and later on drums. The school music program was a fledgling one and I learned about how to build a music program from this man. I later realised that I also modelled my teaching style on his: passionate about the content, yet calm and relaxed in delivery.

Then, there was the issue of girls. I had been attracted to them from late primary school but here, in Rockhampton, things really started to happen! The notoriety brought about through the stage productions (not to mention the ratio of males to females) brought with it many opportunities for casual moments and more serious relationships. My first serious girlfriend was a dancer: good looking, light on her feet and sharing my interest in music theatre. Despite my interests in things "feminine" and my lack of interest/ability in things "masculine," my sexuality was never in doubt, at least not in my mind. I lost this first girlfriend to a soccer player and my loathing of and rivalry with sportsmen commenced. I liked music theatre, I disliked sport (and many of those who played it in these rural communities) and I really loved female company. These experiences were constants throughout my adolescent years and I was resolute about being a heterosexual male, who engaged in so-called "feminine" pursuits.

At the end of my school years, there was the inevitable question: what now? I had not excelled as a scholar and life as professional sportsman seemed a long shot, so at the instigation of my brother, I auditioned and was accepted into the vocal program at the state Conservatorium. If I thought that singing in a musical was fun, here was a place where I could sing all day. It was heaven. I sang in choirs, in operas, musicals, with big bands, and in solo recital. I toured Europe and Asia. These tours were, in hindsight, critical incidents in my life. The first took me to Venice, where I had my first beer and Vienna, where I enjoyed wine-tasting ... from a stein. In Germany I realised for the first time that involvement in music

didn't mean that you were on the periphery. Here was a place where music was revered and those who performed were supported by the public, the press and the government. Later, this realisation would form the basis of study into distinctly Australian perspectives on the arts, many of which are reported in this volume. My first visit to England was also part of this tour and I saw first hand the involvement of males in vocal music, from the boy chorister to the all-male Welsh and Cornish choirs. What a joy this was; what a relief!

Outside of study times, in the evening and on the weekends, I played (on and off) in a band with my brother. He was beginning to write musicals at this time and we spent time together recording and producing these. I learned some valuable lessons in these undergraduate years: take opportunities when they come, learn from your mistakes and if you want to make a living in the arts, consider teaching.

After completing studies in classical singing and music education, I pursued dual careers as music teacher and opera/music theatre singer. I entered the world of professional performance in opera and music theatre, performing works by Stravinsky, Wagner, Verdi, Puccini and later Bernstein, Sondheim Schwartz. Performing in the opera that had instigated my love of the art-form, *La Traviata*, however, was to prove elusive.

This period was like a return to my school days: doing something I really enjoyed, being paid for it and forming life-long friendships. There was something about singing together, the dressing room banter, the on-stage fun and after show relaxation that appealed. Simultaneously, I taught in primary schools initially before taking on positions as Director of Music and Performing Arts in private schools, both single-sex and coeducational. In particular, I spent ten years teaching in a day and boarding school for boys. I saw boys struggle as a result of their choices at school. Boys who didn't play sport were often ostracised or plain bored, and boys wouldn't engage with certain types of music. Together with the school management, we set about changing this perception. The Headmaster organised a mixed-voice choir with the girls' school nearby and drove the bus himself to pick them up. The next initiative was to introduce a jazz program and from there, things really took. It was to be the beginning of a program that led to over 500 boys being engaged in music making in bands, orchestras, choirs and, of course, music theatre.

A few university posts followed: one in which I was able to share my love of music theatre with students and my current position where I have the opportunity to influence a whole new generation of teacher and performers. The last few years in a university have afforded me the opportunity to devote time to researching the involvement of males in music, reflecting on my own experiences and the experiences of others.

### **A philosophical perspective**

The story above accounts for a number of factors the reader will encounter in this book. The book is firmly situated in the Western art music tradition, with (like the author) occasional excursions into popular genres. Furthermore, as a male, researching male participation in music, I come with a particular viewpoint: there is little doubt that patriarchy continues to privilege males in western society and I acknowledge that I am the beneficiary of that positioning. Not only am I a biological male, my sexuality is heterosexual and I have a white, middle-class upbringing. A common theme in masculinities research is that writing from such a privileged position as McLean (1995, p. 82) notes

...often arouses impatience, frustration or outright hostility from those groups who have experienced the consequences of men's power. There is nothing quite so off-putting as listening to someone moan about how hard it is to be privileged...

The risk of accusation of chauvinism, misogyny and particularly patriarchy are strong themes in masculinities studies. As an author, I have struggled to locate myself in the debate that is gender research in music education. I initially investigated feminism and found that according to Hadley and Edwards (2004, p. 5) such research could be situated within feminist studies:

Feminism offers an alternative in the midst of male modes of seeing themselves. Not only interventionist, but also critical, feminism attempts to deconstruct the various ways that the feminine has been constructed... feminism ought to be inherently diverse, and encouraging of difference, plurality of voices, and have a rich and complex imagery.

The sentiments expressed about acceptance of difference and diversity were not my experiences of the study of gender through a feminist lens. Rather, I found many feminist musicologists stuck in the second wave and unable to accept a male researcher wanting to study males in music.

Rejections from journals and conferences were common and when accepted for conference presentations, the reception was frosty at best, hostile at worst. I felt the need to investigate what other male researchers were doing. Ashley (2007, p. 2) claims that the examination of masculinity as an academic discipline has grown out of feminist studies. Ashley comments further that

The greatest amount of masculinity literature is written by feminist, or (when male) ... pro-feminist scholars. The social constructivist view of gender is both hegemonic and hostile to writers on boys such as Biddulph (1997), who insist that boy is a biological quality inherent in individual brains. This kind of question seems to trouble Mac-an-Ghaill (2002) who notes that we still do not have a language to describe the majority of boys who are "soft boys"

Pro-feminism appeared to be worth examining. I certainly didn't subscribe to the essentialist views of Biddulph, so the movement already had credibility in my eyes. Historically, its origins can be found in the men's liberation movement of the 1970s. The basic premise is that pro-feminism works towards a gender-just society through a personal and political definition of masculinity. Masculinity, in the view of the pro-feminists, is a two-edged sword: it brings both power and powerlessness.

McLean (1997) clarifies this point stating, "Men have a desire for power while having a fear of powerlessness." Pro-feminists are "gay affirmative" and campaign for an end to homophobia and any other forms of discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, though most of their members are heterosexual. This seemed to be an ideal fit. I agreed with creating a gender-just society and was certainly interested in any campaign that was going to reduce homophobia. The problem for me was that the movement is concerned with developing a theoretical framework and can, as such, be viewed as a political force, not a personal one. The examination of masculinity and music is personal: both for me and for all males who suffer because of their engagement in musical activities. Pro-feminism argues that the vast majority of males experience considerable privilege due to living in a sexist society. Pro-feminism has strong links to academia and, as Ashley noted above there is an almost exclusive association of masculinities literature with pro-feminist scholars.

The themes of difference, plurality and complexity mentioned by Hadley and Edwards seemed to have resonances with post-feminist thinking about gender. In post-feminist thought, a gender-just society is

also sought. Post-feminist men support the claims of women for social, political and economic equity. They also express similar concerns for men and boys. It is on this point that pro-feminists and post-feminists differ. The post-feminist claims that the feminists (male and female) lack an understanding of the disproportionate ways in which males suffer, are disempowered and are at risk of abuse and neglect. There is a danger that male affirming voices can be seen as misogynist and repressed by feminists because they challenge feminist doctrines. As a post-feminist, Kipnis (1995, p.283) claims that a critique of feminism needs to be viewed as “more than chauvinism, backlash or counter-social revolution and where proactive male perspectives are not paranoically dismissed as implicitly anti-feminist.”

Writing with my Canadian colleague Adam Adler in 2004, we posited that a post-feminist construct is required for examining issues of gender in music and general education. At that time we embraced the term critical *genderist* thinking and action which described the process/s of examining issues of gender across the entire gender spectrum. The idea behind this was to overcome the fact that male gender studies remain outside of gender studies because they do not focus on the experiences of girls and women. Gender studies had, in our view, become a feminist-centric study of gender which, in philosophy, could include any studies of gender, including studies of femininity, masculinity and male gender issues; but in practice did not. “Masculinity studies” as a way of describing what we were investigating was also found to be problematic because such a reference

Conveys a two-dimensional view of male gender issues, whereby any study of male gender issues necessarily focuses on the issue of masculinity. In post-modern terms, we recognize that a continuum of gender exists, and that all individuals – whether gendered male or female through still sex-related categories – experience and exhibit aspects of both masculinity and femininity (Adler and Harrison, 2004, p. 271).

Furthermore, we found that the reference to male-centred gender research as “masculinity studies” presented a linguistic challenge and served to marginalize male-centred research and male researchers from the field of gender studies. So while feminist studies served to divide gender researchers, masculinity studies created similar divides. In addition, “gender studies” was found to be a kind of vacuous place in which nothing really existed. By using the term critical *genderist* thinking and action we were able to mobilize researchers and practitioners in the field. The

combination of both philosophy (thinking) and practice (action) was an attractive one that produced some exciting initiatives and collaborations in our field.

Within myself, however, there was still some disquiet. I was unable to reconcile my own gendered experience of music as described in my auto-ethnography with the philosophy. I was encouraged to map the interaction of sex, sexuality and gender in relation to my experience, using the following definitions from my own recent writing

*Sex* is described as a biologically determined entity, related to male and female anatomy. *Sexuality* is the preference for male and/or female partners and the performance of the acts associated with those preferences while *gender* refers to the societal expectations associated with being male or female, typically described in terms of masculinity and femininity. These categories are independent yet related to the extent that males may exhibit feminine attributes just as females may possess masculine qualities. A further influence is the role of sexuality: for example, males who exhibit feminine attributes are often labeled as homosexual, though there is no causal link between being male, feminine and homosexual (Harrison, 2008, in press).

If the spheres of biological sex, sexuality and gender were to interplay, I had positioned myself as biological male and heterosexual. What of my gender? I suspected that my interests skewed my gender slightly towards femininity. Using continuums to map this (allowing for the fact that these are, in themselves, inadequate binary oppositions and cannot be represented without the use of a three dimensional model), I would map myself as:

SEX: Male \_\_\_\_\_ Female

SEXUALITY: Heterosexual \_\_\_\_\_ Homosexual

GENDER: Masculine \_\_\_\_\_ Feminine

Many of my colleagues were not personally located in this way and so my search began for yet another position. The term SNAG (sensitive new age guy) was popular in the eighties, but this didn't quite capture my essence, either. One of my research students pointed me towards the work

of Heasley (2005) and Hill (2004), which provided some elucidation. Hill (2006) refers to the term "feminine heterosexual men" and goes on to provide a number of labels that have been employed in academia:

Academics have called these males "feminine boys" (Green, 1987) or "girly boys" (Corbett, 1999). They might have been called "sissies" or "queer" during childhood (Corbett, 1998; Green, 1987) and some are proudly reclaiming both labels in adulthood (e.g., Heasley, 2005; Hunter, 1993; Rottnek, 1999). Others have called them simply "effeminate" men (e.g., Dansky, Knoebel, & Pitchford, 1977) or ambiguously "nontraditional" men (Coleman, 1986). More recently, the terms "nice guys" (Herold & Milhausen, 1999) and "new men" (Miller, Bilimoria, & Patti, 2000) have been used.....though clearly the term that caught the imagination of the popular media is "metrosexual." (Hill, 2006, p. 146).

For those who are straight men who identify with feminine attributes, Heasley (2005) uses the term queer-straight males. While this seems tautological, Heasley's term defines a way for men to explore ways of being masculine that is outside the hetero-normative. These ways of being then act to change constructions of masculinity that disrupt, or have the potential to challenge the hegemonic male. My journey could therefore be described in the following way:

Figure 0.1 Progression of theories



This is how I have come to view myself in the gender landscape: as a practitioner making music theatre, as a teacher working with males and females and coming to terms with their views of being different. As a teacher, I have also embraced the views of music education and democracy as espoused by Kumashiro (2000) in relation to broader views of education and, specifically in relation to music, those of Woodford. Woodford (2004) describes a "social critique of oppressive systems is grounded on the universal belief in the right to freedom and justice for all" (p. 101). Specifically in relation to gender, Woodford recognises that



Some musical and pedagogical practices, such as those denying male or female children access to certain kinds of musical participation, emphasizing slavish imitation over personal creativity, or discouraging them from considering alternative values, may well be inimical to democratic culture... music education scholars have written extensively about how negative societal attitudes and gender stereotyping contribute to the musical disfranchisement of children by arbitrarily restricting their involvement in specific kinds of school and community activities. Among the more pernicious negative stereotypes already found in schools are that “boys don’t sing” and that “girls shouldn’t conduct, compose, or play ‘masculine’ instruments like drums.” (p. 77)

These democratic views inform my teaching, but also influence my role as researcher who is largely involved in describing and interacting with facets of males’ engagement with music.

To enable others to join me on the journey, I have begun by discussing the factors that contribute to the construction of masculinity in Chapter One. One of the significant aspects of this chapter is revealed in figure 1.1, in which themes of socialisation of males are captured. This diagram should be viewed in the light of the personal and philosophical perspectives revealed in this prologue. “George” is also introduced to us in Chapter One. George is a fictional character, but based on amalgams of many males, including myself. In the first five chapters, George represents the views of men who were interviewed for this volume and other men encountered in discussions about masculinity and music.

Chapter Two explored the manifestation of masculinities in contemporary society. Particular foci in Chapter Two are the inter-related themes of media and sport, both of which are strongly influenced by my childhood and adolescent interactions as described above. The school environment is dealt with in Chapter Three, with discussions on single-sex schooling and out-of school activities, also part of my own experience of music. Chapters Four and Six explore notions of stereotyping in the literature and through recent fieldwork respectively, while the intervening Chapter Five takes a look at the study of gendered participation in music.

Several other themes drawn from the opening narrative are pursued in the volume. The roles of family, religion and peers feature, and are evident in the first few chapters. In a manner reminiscent of this reflection, early experiences, role modes and school influences of Chapter Seven. Similarly, the case studies reflect on the ugly side of bullying and almost compulsory interest or ability in sport. In Chapter Seven, several other

men are introduced to the story, men like George who shared their stories in much the same way as I have shared mine. Chapters Eight and Nine deal with the practicalities of applying the discussions in the previous chapters for boys and men respectively.

The pages of this volume demonstrate my journey and the journeys of other men and their interactions with music. The personal reflections above, alongside observations of other males, combined with the literature identify a number of salient themes to be explored in this book.

# CHAPTER ONE

## MASCULINITIES

This chapter focuses on the investigation of masculinities and femininities in attempt to define their nature and constituent parts. The process of defining these two gender concepts as single objects is almost impossible but this nebulousness is simultaneously limiting and emancipating. Because gender constructs are fluid through time and context, it should be acknowledged that any attempts at categorisation need to allow for those constraints.

### 1.1 Masculinities

The terms femininity and masculinity are typically used to refer to the social and cultural expectations attached to being a woman or man including thinking, behaviour, aspirations and appearance. Masculinity and femininity are typically viewed as binary opposites. They are similarly assigned to a particular biological sex – males are considered masculine and females are regarded as feminine. Furthermore, there is an expectation of compulsory heterosexuality associated with discussions of sex and gender. Given that males are assumed to be masculine, they are logically supposed to be attracted to females. Similarly females are expected to be feminine and attracted to males. These erroneous associations are counterproductive and affect the engagement of males and females in many aspect of life, including music and other arts.

Given that masculinity could be comprised of a substantial amount of femininity, attempting to define masculinity as a single entity is pointless. Recent thought has centred on the notion of the existence of a multiplicity of masculinities (Tolson 1997; Brod 1987; Kaufman 1987; Kimmel 1987; Jefferson 1994; Connell 1995). Of these, Connell used the term “hegemonic masculinity”, implying the existence of a variety of masculinities and a hierarchical ordering of them, in which one form (the hegemonic) overrides almost all others. Hegemony refers to the beliefs and values held and enforced by dominant and powerful social groups.

Connell also challenges the concept of defining masculinity as an object, insisting that the focus be on “the processes and relationships through which men and women conduct gendered lives.” Similarly, Kenway and Fitzclarence (1997, p.119) state: “masculine identities are not static, but historically and spatially situated and evolving.” Masculinities may therefore change over time within a culture and vary from one culture to another. Kimmel and Messner also argued that the meaning of masculinity could change throughout the course of a man’s life.

In order to gain some concept of the historical positioning of masculinities in the 21st century, historical foundations (as described by Doyle, 1995), are worth contemplating:

Table 1.1 Historical positioning of masculinities

Ideal Male	Source(s)	Major Features
Epic	Epic sagas of Greece and Rome (800 – 100 BC)	Action, strength, courage, loyalty and the beginning of patriarchy
Spiritual	Teachings of Christ, early church fathers and monastic tradition (400 – 1000AD)	Self-renunciation, restrained sexual activity, anti-feminine and anti-homosexual attitudes, and a strong patriarchal system
Chivalric	Feudalism and Chivalric code of honour (12 <sup>th</sup> century social system)	Self sacrifice, courage, physical strength, honour and service to the lady and primogeniture
Renaissance	16 <sup>th</sup> century social system	Rationality, intellectual endeavours and self exploration
Bourgeois	18 <sup>th</sup> century social system	Success in business, status and worldly manners

Source: Doyle (1995, p.27)

The historical basis for notions of patriarchy that emphasize physical strength, courage and the subordination of women and homosexuals are worthy of comment at this point as they relate directly to the power relationships inherent in masculine and feminine constructs and their effect on musical participation. A closer examination of these features will assist in establishing a context for rigidity of gender roles.

Doyle claimed that the “Epic” world of the Greek and Roman literature, featured action, strength, courage, loyalty and the beginning of

patriarchy. It is important to note that, in the context of this discussion, no distinction will be made between Greek and Roman culture. In justifying a similar position Walters (1993, p. 23) states

there are some differences in surface cultural patterns between the Greek-speaking and Latin-speaking halves of the ancient world, it *is* arguable that beneath these lie deep-seated cultural assumptions that are shared; that there is, with local variations, a pattern of thought on issues of gender common to what Peristiany has called “Mediterranean society.”

Masculinity in Greco-Roman societies valued competition, evidenced through public (and peer-reviewed) performance in political, athletic and military contexts. Greek and Roman literature confirm the existence of a hegemonic view of masculinity, albeit somewhat different from the modern hegemony described above. Physiognomy, the use of external features, facial characteristics and physical gait influenced and continues to provide some basis for understanding 21<sup>st</sup> century stereotypes. Aligned with this theory is an emphasis on patriarchy, pederasty and male homosexuality. Keuls calls this period a “phallocracy:” the reign of the phallus in which the glorification of war, male athleticism, and public male nudity was featured. A complementary set of skills also brought social status: Homer’s *Iliad* draws the characters as honour, status, and power. To achieve such values, self-control, order, clarity, and rationality were inherent to the extent that, as Morgan (2000, n. p.) notes

Other values and qualities, to the extent that they deviate from the idealized norm were pushed to the periphery, to the dark and spinning edge of the world. All that is foreign, all that is feminine, all that is wild and unrestrained; all these are coalesced into an idea of Otherness that forms a dark sea of chaos into which one must strive continually not to fall.

Morgan also acknowledges that without otherness, there is no central hegemony, and that the arts at the time celebrate the conquest of hegemony over otherness. Otherness (or difference) will be explored in more detail later in this volume.

An important distinction made by Bloch (2001) is that this hegemonic masculinity in the ancient world was related to gender but not to sex. Sexuality did not carry the same compulsory connection with gender and the biological sex: compulsory heterosexuality was not part of the construction of masculinity as described thus far in this chapter. The so-called post modern view of biological sex, gender and sexuality as

independent spheres was part of society 2000 years ago. Patriarchy, however, was as potent as ever: a man could switch forth between female and male partners, as long as there were his inferiors. The married man was not expected to confine himself to his wife, but could continue the full range of his sexual activities just as he had done before marriage. The function filled by the wife was to provide her husband with children, but not, as Bloch notes, to act as companion or intellectual partner. Williams (1999) suggests that the major societal organizers did not centre on homosexual and heterosexual but on other dominant-subordinate categories: free and slave, dominant and subordinate, masculine and effeminate. Veyne (1978, p. 33) concurs

The sexuality of the ancient world and our own are two structures that have nothing in common, and cannot even be superimposed on each other. If we shift focus from sexuality to gender, the constellation of meanings becomes clearer, for the people so categorised, though male in sex, are not men in gender.

Despite the emphasis on patriarchy and the other dichotomous structures evident in Greco-Roman societies, the study of their view of sex, gender and sexuality provides an opportunity to break away from a stance that categorizes only as “masculine” or “feminine” to the extent that forsaking one gender role can only result in the adoption of the “opposite” gender. Walters (1993, p. 21) further suggests that Greco-Roman cultures permit

a more open-minded exploration of the other ways men’s and women’s lives, sexualities, and genders have been organised [which] may be useful in enabling us to see our own society’s gender arrangements in a fresh light, and thereby start to ask new and interesting questions of that crucial site of social power that we call gender.

Of particular note in Doyle’s historical account in Table 1.1 are anti-femininity and the anti-homosexual bias present in the early Christian church. Some women were viewed as evil and the early church fathers portrayed women as the reason for men’s downfall and subsequent sinfulness. Biblical evidence as described in the stories of Adam, Eve and the Serpent; Herod, Salome and John the Baptist reinforced this argument. With regard to homosexuality, the early fathers emphasized the need for a true man to renounce his sexual desires and an insistence that the only sexual outlet was to be found in heterosexual activity (and even then only for procreation). Sex beyond marriage and sex as a human expression of