

*ESQUIRE* MAGAZINE, PRESIDENTIAL POLITICS AND HEGEMONIC  
MASCULINITY

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A Thesis

presented to

the Faculty of the Graduate School

at the University of Missouri-Columbia

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In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Arts

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by

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DECEMBER 2019

The undersigned, appointed by the dean of the Graduate School, have examined the thesis entitled

*ESQUIRE* MAGAZINE, PRESIDENTIAL POLITICS AND HEGEMONIC  
MASCULINITY

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a candidate for the degree of master of arts,

and hereby certify that, in their opinion, it is worthy of acceptance.

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## DEDICATION

I would like to thank my parents, who didn't give it a second thought when their 30-year-old son decided to leave the practice of law and return to graduate school. They've been a great support system for me despite the distance that separates us. They made this possible by taking over the everyday love and care of my sweet dog, Millie. By pursuing this degree, I've missed out on a third of her life, which breaks my heart because she was my saving grace while we lived together in Mississippi.

I would like to thank my sister, who reminds me that I have something worth saying, thoughts worth writing, and always reads my work. I would like to thank my brother, whose service in the United States Navy brings me pride and humbles me in ways I can't describe. His frequent calls were always uplifting reminders of the power of family.

I would like to thank my editors and those who've encouraged me to write. Judd Slivka welcomed me to graduate school, pushed me to report well, write beautifully, and then cut it by a third. Liz Brixey taught me to write on a deadline. Ron Stodghill shared his brilliance and passion for the written word, and he made me a better storyteller. Berkley Hudson reminded me of the beauty of not just storytelling but the world around me. Heather Lamb invited me to make a magazine with her, and it was one of the best experiences of my time here.

Finally, I would like to thank my girlfriend, Allison, because I cannot separate her from this graduate education. I met her three days after I arrived in Missouri, and I've been forever better for it. She has weathered my overwhelming stresses and difficulties

and lifted me up, and she's done so from the midst of medical school. She has celebrated my triumphs, making them all the sweeter. She's the ultimate reader for whom I write.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This thesis would not be possible without the assistance of my chair and committee. Jennifer Rowe has been so much more than a professor and advisor; she has been a true friend during my time here. She always made me feel at ease and at home in my classes and my program, though at times I struggled to feel like I belonged due to my age. She led some of the most beneficial classes I took during my course of study, and I feel like she truly knows me well. After four years of college and three years of law school, I cannot say that about any of my professors at either of those institutions, and I'm so grateful that she did not let me add the University of Missouri to that list. Her extreme organization and preparedness were sources of great comfort when I lacked those qualities on my own, and her counsel, advice and reassurance allowed me to maintain my sanity. I am forever in her debt, and I will forever consider her one of the foremost educators I've ever had the privilege to know.

I owe another debt of gratitude to Dr. Monique Luisi, who guided me through my thesis seminar course and provided me the foundation to successfully get as far as I have in this program thus far. I appreciate her serving as the methodologist on my committee.

Dr. Cristina Mislán was gracious enough to serve on my committee and give me untold amounts of valuable feedback during my proposal defense, making this thesis possible. She was generous with her office hours to talk me through my anxieties.

And last but not least, a special thanks to Dr. Mitchell McKinney, whose willingness to serve on my committee as my outside faculty member is so greatly appreciated, and the input of his political expertise during my proposal defense was invaluable.

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*ESQUIRE* MAGAZINE, PRESIDENTIAL POLITICS AND HEGEMONIC  
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ABSTRACT

*Esquire* magazine is one of the premiere men's magazines in the U.S. and has a long history of reporting on U.S. presidential politics. This study seeks to extend the sociological and psychological concept of hegemonic masculinity to *Esquire's* feature writing between 1996 and 2016, seeking to determine to what extent, if any, the magazine uses characteristics of the hegemonic masculinity paradigm to frame articles about U.S. presidents and presidential candidates and to what extent, if any, the politician's political party affects the use of such framings.

## Chapter 1: Introduction

*Esquire* magazine was created in 1933, and since then, it has been a driving force in shaping what “constitutes a desirable upper-middle class identity” (Breazeale, 1994). Its mission statement is simple: “*Esquire* is for men who are ambitious in their lives and determined to shape the world” (*Esquire* Media Kit). In positioning itself as a thought-shaping magazine for influential men, it is no surprise that *Esquire* has reliably tackled the issue of politics in its pages. From Norman Mailer’s 1960 New Journalism classic “Superman Comes to the Supermarket,” his profile of John F. Kennedy as he ran for president, to the commentary of Charles Pierce, the magazine has a long track record in serious political writing.

The 2016 presidential election in the United States marked the first time a woman was the nominee for one of the two major political parties. With Donald Trump’s defeat of Hillary Clinton, the glass ceiling of presidential politics remained intact, and Trump became the 45th President of the United States and the 44th man to hold the position. This surprised many pollsters and citizens, if for no other reason than then-candidate Trump had apparently weathered a political scandal unfathomed in previous campaigns, namely when he infamously bragged about sexual assault, in recorded conversations saying that, because he was famous, he could “grab ’em by the pussy” (Bullock, 2016). The consequences, electorally speaking, were practically nonexistent.

Media coverage is presented to the audience in frames, and frames determine how the audience perceives the information presented (Entman, 1993). *Esquire* positions itself

to help men be better men, and due to its willingness to cover politics, it has likely helped shaped how men think about political candidates.

In 2016 (and since), the mainstream media wrote about President Trump's appeal to masculinity. For instance, The *New York Times* wrote about Trump's version of masculinity after the second Republican primary debates in 2016 (Chira, 2016). Around the same time, NPR wrote about Trump's testosterone (Kurtzleben, 2016). In 2018, the Washington Post wrote about the concept of "fragile masculinity" and Trump supporters (Knowles & DiMuccio, 2018). Reflecting on the media's coverage of the 2016 presidential election, questions arose as to how the mainstream media, specifically men's magazines, have written about masculinity with respect to U.S. presidential politics in the past. The purpose of this research is to analyze to what extent, if at all, *Esquire's* political writing employs representations of hegemonic masculinity characteristics in its framing of U.S. politicians.

## Chapter 2: Literature Review

Because the aim of this study is to assess the content produced by *Esquire* writers and editors, two relevant strands of masculinity studies appear relevant to help establish criteria by which an in-depth qualitative content analysis might be possible: sociology and psychology. The study of masculinities blurs the line between the two, but an attempt to account for societal influences of masculinities and the personal effects of such influences seems justified when attempting to understand how writers and editors conceive of masculinities and thereby frame political stories related to the American presidency.

### **Hegemonic Masculinity**

The term hegemonic masculinity was originally coined by Connell (1987). Hegemonic masculinity is defined as a “form of masculinity in a given historical and society-wide setting that structures and legitimates hierarchical gender relations between men and women, between masculinity and femininity, and among men” (Messerschmidt, 2012, p. 58). Carrigan, Connell, and Lee (1985) characterize the concept as “how particular men inhabit positions of power and wealth and how they legitimate and reproduce social relationships that generate dominance” (p. 592). Hanke (1990) further refines the definition, referring to the “social ascendancy of a particular rule or model of masculinity that, operating on a terrain of ‘common sense’ and conventional morality, defines ‘what it means to be a man’” (p. 232).

The concept of hegemonic masculinity is built on a foundation of Gramsci’s use of the term “hegemony.” As Dragulin (2013) points out, Gramsci didn’t create the word,

but rather the concept. The word is much older, rooted in the Greek word *egesthai*, meaning “to rule,” “to be ruled,” or “to be in charge of” (Dragulin, 2013, p. 79). This gave way to the term “*eghemonia*,” which was used to describe one who had supreme control over an army (Dragulin, 2013). Gramsci first used the words in 1920 to describe Bolshevik Russia, but the concept grew to centrally define his writings which “explained the Risorgimento [19th-century movement for Italian unification] as a phenomenon, the disparities between the Italian North and South, and the gaps that divided the civilisations of these two peninsular regions” (Dragulin, 2013, p. 77). Connell’s conception of “hegemony” flowed from Gramsci, and is defined as “a social ascendancy achieved in a play of social forces that extends beyond contests of brute power into the organization of private life and cultural processes” (Connell, 1987, p. 183).

Messerschmidt (2012) explains that Connell’s formulation was primarily focused on the relational aspect of masculinity to femininity and how masculinity therefore subordinates femininity. Hegemonic masculinity is “always constructed in relation to various subordinated masculinities as well as in relation to women” (Connell, 1987, p. 183). Connell (1987) clarified two misconceptions: 1) it is not ascendancy predominated on force (though forceful ascendancy is not incompatible) and 2) it does not mean “total cultural dominance, the obliteration of alternatives” (p. 184). The concept has suffered from inexact definitions and expanding usages that led to confusion, such as the fact that hegemonic masculinity is not necessarily synonymous with “the commonest and/or the most powerful pattern of masculinity” necessitating revision and clarification (Messerschmidt, 2012, p. 59).

Connell and Messerschmidt's (2005) reformulation of the concept responded to numerous criticisms, such as "1) concerns over the underlying concept of masculinity itself, 2) lack of specificity about who actually represents hegemonic masculinity, 3) whether hegemonic masculinity simply reduces in practice to a reification of power or toxicity, and 4) the concept's unsatisfactory theory of the masculine subject" (Messerschmidt, 2012, p. 59).

**Measures of Hegemonic Masculinity.** Trujillo (1991) analyzed print and television representations of Nolan Ryan, a major league baseball pitcher, to assess how hegemonic masculinity was depicted in sports. In that study, he highlights five distinguishing features of hegemonic masculinity in American culture: 1) physical force and control, 2) occupational achievement, 3) familial patriarchy, 4) frontiersmanship, and 5) heterosexuality (Trujillo, 1991).

***Physical Force and Control.*** Physical force and control is envisioned as an extension of the male body (Trujillo, 1991). "In this way, the male body comes to represent power, and power itself is masculinized as physical strength, force, speed, control, toughness, and domination" (Trujillo, 1991, p. 291).

***Occupational Achievement.*** Trujillo's (1991) next distinguishing feature is "occupational achievement in an industrial capitalist society" (p.291). Carrigan et al. (1985) said hegemony is closely related to the types of work performed, with certain jobs deemed "men's work" and others as "women's work" and the general "definition of some kinds of work as more masculine than others" (p. 94).

***Familial Patriarchy.*** Trujillo (1991) defines patriarchy as "the manifestation and institutionalization of male dominance over women in society in general" (p.291). He

goes on to specify that patriarchal representations of men include “breadwinner” labels, “family protectors,” and “strong father figures” (Trujillo, 1991, p. 291). Women, on the other hand, are often represented as “housewives,” “sexual objects,” and “nurturing mothers” (Trujillo, 1991, p. 291).

**Frontiersmanship.** Trujillo (1991) states that “masculinity is hegemonic as symbolized by the daring, romantic frontiersman of yesteryear and of the present-day outdoorsman” (p. 291). A form of this is the archetype of the cowboy, and historically is represented in the media as “white male with working-class values” (Trujillo, 1991, p. 292).

**Heterosexuality.** Trujillo (1991) describes a “sex hierarchy” that elevates sex that is “heterosexual, marital, monogamous, reproductive, and non-commercial” (p. 292). This manifests itself as a form of hegemonic male sexuality which requires men not to be “effeminate (a “sissy”) in physical appearance or mannerisms, not having relationships with men that are sexual or overly intimate, and not failing in sexual relationships with women” (Trujillo, 1991, p. 292).

### **Patriarchy**

The study of men and masculinities emerged out of research by feminist scholars. As David and Brannon (1976) note, the male sex role was “ironically” “discovered” because of a “feminist consciousness” that gained prominence around 1965 (p. 3). The works of Friedan (1963; 1970), Weisstein (1970), Bird (1968), Morgan (1970), Bem and Bem (1970), Millet (1970), Salzman-Webb (1970) and Dixon (1969) were just some examples of research that formed a cultural “blueprint” of femininity, which would later be termed the “female sex role” (David and Brannon, 1976, p. 3-4). From that boom in

research came the term “patriarchy” to refer to the “notion of male power” (Smith, 2017, p. 107). Smith (2017) quoted Hartmann (1981) to define patriarchy as a “set of social relations between men, which have a material base, and which though hierarchical, establish or create interdependence and solidarity among men that enable them to dominate women” (p. 107). Smith (2017) further explained the concept of patriarchy by summarizing the work of Millet (1970) that said 1) “women’s oppression did not stem from biology but from the social construction of femininity” and 2) patriarchal society created a sexist society, with dominant (i.e., male) and subordinate (i.e., female) roles (Smith, 2017, p. 107).

**Gender Role Strain Paradigm.** Levant and Wong (2017) describe the gender role strain paradigm (GRSP) as the “standard model” for masculinities studies in psychology since its formulation in the early 1980s (p.15). Gender roles were redefined as a result of feminist scholarship (Unger, 1979), viewed as “socially constructed by gender ideologies” (Levant & Powell, 2017, p. 15).

**Social Constructionist Theory.** Pleck devised the sex role strain paradigm in *The Myth of Masculinity* (1981), which was later renamed the GRSP by Pleck in 1995 (Levant, 2017). “The GRSP views gender roles not as biologically determined but rather as socially constructed entities that arise from, and serve to maintain and protect, the patriarchal social and economic order” (Levant & Powell, 2017, p. 16). Gender roles, as social constructions, can be performed in any combination (e.g., men can perform masculinity, but men can also perform femininity) but may yield tangible rewards for those conforming and negative consequences for those who rebel (Levant & Powell, 2017, p. 16).

Pleck's (1995) conception of the GRSP displaced its predecessor in masculinity studies, the gender role identity paradigm (GRIP) (Levant & Powell, 2017). GRIP was based on the assumption "that people have a powerful psychological need to form a gender role identity that corresponded to their biological sex and that optimal development hinged on its formation" (Levant & Powell, 2017, p. 16).

**Gender Ideologies.** "Ideologies are systems of values, expectations, beliefs, or ideas shared by a social group and often presumed to be natural or innately true" (Thompson & Bennett, 2017, p. 47). Levant and Powell (2017) defines gender ideologies as "beliefs about the importance of men and women adhering to culturally defined standards for gendered behavior" (p. 18). Levant and Powell (2017) state that the "dominant gender ideologies in a given society define the norms for gender roles" (p. 18).

Masculinity ideologies is the name given by Thompson, Pleck and Ferrera (1992) to the "societal-wide cultural values, beliefs, and norms scripting men's lives" (Thompson & Bennett, 2017, p. 49). They are a "body of socially constructed ideas and beliefs about what it means to be a man and against which men are appraised within their communities" (Thompson & Bennett, 2017, p. 47).

**Traditional Masculinity Ideology.** Masculinities are numerous (Connell, 1987). Gerdes, Alto, Jadaszewski, D'Auria, and Levant (2017) cataloged some of the "culture-specific" ideologies, such as "machismo" and "caballerismo" in Mexican American culture (Arciniega, Anderson, Tovar-Blank, & Tracey, 2008) and the "cool pose" masculinity of African Americans (Majors & Billson, 1992), among others (p. 548).

But Pleck (1995) noted that “there is a particular constellation of standards and expectations that individually and jointly have various kinds of negative concomitants” (p. 20). This is called traditional masculinity ideology (Levant and Powell, 2017). It is “still the dominant cultural script that organizes and informs the development and maintenance of the traditional masculine role” (Levant & Powell, 2017, p. 18). In America, it manifests itself as “White, Western, heterosexual norms” that “exerts broad influence across gender, race/ethnicity, sexual orientation, and other dimensions of diversity because of the dominance of White heterosexual males in U.S. society” (Gerdes et al., 2018, p. 584).

This is particularly relevant to this study for various reasons, not the least of which is America’s overwhelmingly White heterosexual presidency, for which the only known deviation has been Barack Obama due to his race.

**Measures Of Traditional Masculinity Ideology.** David and Brannon’s *The Forty-Nine Percent Majority* (1976) represents the first effort to define traditional masculinity ideology (Gerdes et al., 2018). In their analysis, they recognized that numerous stereotypes could be characterized as “distinctively masculine” (David & Brannon, 1976, p. 11), but the differences were bound together by four “themes, or dimensions, which underlie the male sex role we see in our culture” (p. 12). In short, they are:

1. No Sissy Stuff
2. The Big Wheel
3. The Sturdy Oak
4. Give ’Em Hell! (David & Brannon, 1976, p. 12).

Each will be reviewed in more detail to document the underpinnings for latter measures of masculinity ideologies.

*No Sissy Stuff: The Stigma Of Anything Vaguely Feminine.* David and Brannon (1976) state that parents want young boys to conform to the male sex role more than they care about whether young girls conform to the female sex role, and that fathers especially disapprove of boys displaying feminine characteristics. It's stated simply: "A 'real man' must never, never resemble women, or display strongly stereotyped feminine characteristics" (David & Brannon, 1976, p. 14). One particular example is the showing of emotionality, specifically emotions that show "vulnerability" or "extremely positive feeling such as love, tenderness, and trust" (David & Brannon, 1976, p. 16).

*The Big Wheel: Success, Status, And The Need To Be Looked Up To.* David and Brannon (1976) sum this theme up simply: "One of the most basic routes to manhood in our society is to be a success: to command respect and be looked up to for what one can do or has achieved" (p.19). They define success in terms of "occupational prestige and achievement, wealth, fame, power, and visible positions of leadership (David & Brannon, 1976, p. 19). Of particular interest to this study, David and Brannon (1976) suggest that becoming president of the United States as a means for achieving those markers of success. The researchers note that symbols of success are an important part of this theme, as a means to demonstrate to those who may not know the man closely that he is, in fact, successful (David & Brannon, 1976).

*The Sturdy Oak: A Manly Air On Toughness, Confidence, And Self-reliance.* The third theme from David and Brannon (1976) is somewhat ineffable, as it's not related to or dependent upon "success or traditional measures of social status" (p. 24). It manifests itself as a combination of "tough and self-possessed, which somehow emerges from the variable combination of quiet confidence, self-reliance, determination,

indifference to opposition, courage, and seriousness” (David & Brannon, 1976, p. 24). Elaborating on self-reliance, David and Brannon (1976) summarizes the concept as “the idea that a man should always be ‘his own man,’ should think for himself” (p. 25). This theme is described as going “beyond the mere avoidance of ‘feminine’ emotionality; it’s the cultivation of a stoic, imperturbable persona, just this side of catatonia. A ‘real man’ never worries about death or loses his manly ‘cool’”(David & Brannon, 1976, p. 25).

***Give 'em Hell: The Aura Of Aggression, Violence, And Daring.*** The final element of David and Brannon’s (1976) initial assessment of traditional masculinity ideology “smacks of strength and toughness but is not fundamentally wholesome, constructive, or benign” (p. 27). Specifically, they characterize it by “the need to hurt, to conquer, to embarrass, to humble, to outwit, to punish, to defeat, or... ‘to move against people’” (David and Brannon, 1976, p. 27). In contrast to The Sturdy Oak’s defensive posture, Give 'Em Hell takes an offensive attack posture (David & Brannon, 1976).

These theoretical underpinnings paved the way for numerous quantitative measures of masculinity, one of the earliest being developed by Brannon and Juni (1984).

***Brannon Masculinity Scale.*** In 1984, Brannon and Juni (1984) devised a scale to measure how people felt about “traditional American masculinity” (Thompson and Bennett, 2015, p.117). The scale grew out of the David and Brannon’s (1976) four themes. No Sissy Stuff was operationalized into two subscales: 1) avoiding femininity and 2) concealing emotions (Thompson and Bennett, 2015). The Big Wheel was operationalized into two subscales: 1) being the breadwinner and 2) being admired and respected (Thompson & Bennett, 2015). The Sturdy Oak was operationalized into two subscales: 1) toughness and 2) the male machine (Thompson & Bennett, 2015). Finally,

Give ‘Em Hell was operationalized in a single subscale, violence and adventure (Thompson & Bennett, 2015).

*Male Role Norms Inventory.* In 1992, Levant et al. sought to advance research within the GRSP by differentiating between stereotypes and norms (Levant, 1992). Sex roles were defined by both, but the existing research did not separate out stereotype’s descriptive nature from norm’s prescriptive nature (Levant et al., 1992). Stereotypes referred to “what people think men are like” whereas norms referred to “what people think men should be like” (Levant, 1992, p. 326). Norms were considered more important in the context of the GRSP due to their prescriptive nature (Levant et al., 1992).

Of the instruments evaluated, Levant et al. (1992) found only one that measured the absolute norms of the male role – Brannon Masculinity Scale (Brannon & Juni, 1984) – and deem it the “best instrument currently available for assessing male role norms” but acknowledge its limitations (Levant et al., 1992, p. 327). Specifically, it does not address attitudes toward sex and heterosexism (Thompson & Bennett, 2015).

Levant et al. (1992) proposed a new instrument, the Male Role Norms Inventory (MRNI). The original construction of the instrument consisted of 58 items divided into seven subscales:

1. Avoidance of Femininity
2. Homophobia
3. Self-Reliance
4. Aggression
5. Achievement/Status
6. Attitudes Toward Sex
7. Restrictive Emotionality (Levant et al., 1992, p. 329).

The MRNI was amended in 1998 by Levant and Fischer to “better operationalize the traditional masculinity standards thought to be representative of the United States and

other Western societies prior to the second wave of feminism” (Thompson & Bennett, 2015, p. 118). The inventory was revised again in 2007 into the MRNI-R, in which some subscales were change:

1. Restricted emotionality
2. Self-reliance through mechanical skills
3. Negativity toward sexual minorities
4. Avoidance of femininity
5. Importance of sex
6. Toughness
7. Dominance (Levant et al., 2007).

Further refinement of the instrument resulted in a shortened form, MRNI-SF (Levant, Hall & Rankin, 2013), which “affirms the seven-factor solution with good model-data fit” (Thompson & Bennett, 2015, p. 118).

According to Thompson and Bennett (2015), the MRNI, including all its various forms, is one of the most commonly used measures of masculinity ideologies (Whorley & Addis, 2006).

### **Masculinity in U.S. Presidential Politics**

The 2016 U.S. presidential election solidified a trend as old as the nation itself: Every president has been a man.

According to Khan and Blair (2013), “presidential political discourse is one of the primary mechanisms through which masculinity is constructed, challenged, and perpetuated” (p.59). Parry-Giles and Parry-Giles (2002) argue that presidential politics perpetuates hegemonic masculinity when “candidates define their images according to powerful values, ideals, and myths that typically represent masculinity” (p. 30). They argue this happens in two ways: 1) presidential candidates associate with “institutions and cultural practices that define masculinity for American society,” which reinforces a

“masculine model of leadership,” and 2) women are typically portrayed as “firmly within their familial, patriarchally determined roles, reinforcing the maleness of presidential candidates” (Parry-Giles and Parry-Giles, 2002, p. 30).

Katz (2013) highlights not just the truth of these two statements but also the weaponization of them, recounting the rise of masculinity politics and the ways in which conservatives understood long before liberals that “presidential politics are the site of an ongoing cultural struggle over the meaning of American manhood” (p. 1). Katz (2013) explains “if he comes down on the ‘right’ side of an issue, he’s considered more masculine: ‘tough on crime,’ ‘tough on immigration,’ ‘strong on national security.’ If he comes down on the ‘left’ side, he’s likely to face criticism that his position represents personal weakness: he’s ‘soft on crime,’ ‘weak-kneed on immigration,’ ‘naïve on matters of national security’” (p. 2). Katz (2013) also points out the conception of Democrats as the “party of women,” which feminizes the party and the male politicians within it (p. 12-13). The 2008 presidential ticket of John McCain and Sarah Palin tested that conception, as McCain’s entire brand as a politician revolved around his masculinity and the presence of a female as the vice-presidential nominee seemed out of character for the Republican party.

Gibson and Heyse (2010) consider Sarah Palin’s performance at the 2008 Republican National Convention as an interesting display of hegemonic masculinity values from the position of a traditionally maternal female. According to them, “the celebration of these particular hegemonic values is deeply woven into our political culture, and the masculinist script described by Trujillo (1991) defines much more than our cultural expectations for masculinity; it also defines our expectations for political

leadership” (Gibson & Heyse, 2010, p. 237). As a result of that, Gibson and Heyse (2010) highlight the trend in presidential elections since 1980 of “right-wing political propagandists” defining liberalism in terms of “weakness, dependency, and helplessness,” which most male-dominant societies would consider feminine (p. 237). “Progressive politics – like care for the environment, gay and lesbian civil rights, and government regulations of corporate behavior – have been cast as feminine by the conservative masculinist script” (Gibson & Heyse, 2010, p. 237). Progressive politics is associated with a feminine style of rhetoric, “characterized by its personal tone, references to personal experience, inductive reasoning, the use of anecdotes and examples as evidence, audience participation, and identification between the speaker and audience” (Gibson & Heyse, 2010, p. 238). Conversely, the conservative masculinist script highlights “strength, independence, and other ideals of traditional masculinity” (Gibson & Heyse, 2010, p. 237).

Gibson and Heyse (2010) applied Trujillo’s (1991) distinguishing features of hegemonic masculinity to political rhetoric.

For example, physical force was described in presidential campaigns as “military narratives, combat metaphors, and a characterization of the candidate as a tough soldier” (Gibson & Heyse, 2010, p. 240). Gibson and Heyse (2010) used as an exemplar the 2008 presidential campaign of John McCain, and noted that his experience as a POW “calls forward a variation of physical strength and bodily control that exalts physical sacrifice for country as the ultimate indicator of masculine strength and power” (p. 240). They go on to explain that masculinity and nationalism share significant overlap as rhetorical constructs, highlighting the characteristics of “honor, patriots, bravery, and duty” (Gibson

& Heyse, 2010, p. 240). As a result, the militarized component of hegemonic masculinity in political discourse feminizes “dissent, dialogue, and the consideration of alternative points of view” (Gibson & Heyse, 2010, p. 240). It also feminizes reflexivity, as “tank-like aggression is prized as evidence of masculinity and patriotism, whereas careful thought is cast as cowardice” (Gibson & Heyse, 2010, p. 241).

Gibson and Heyse (2010) next consider another of Trujillo’s (1991) distinguishing features of hegemonic masculinity in occupational achievement. In their study of the 2008 presidential election, Gibson and Heyse (2010) compared Senator Obama with Senator McCain, and McCain was presented as a “doer” versus Obama as a “talker” (p. 241). The hegemonic masculinity script values action over talk, which is considered feminine (Gibson & Heyse, 2010). Likewise, Gibson and Heyse (2010) determine that the scripts of conservatism and hegemonic masculinity value “only the work of mayors, governors, business executives, and military commanders” as “real occupations,” whereas the work of community-building, such as “child-rearing, teaching, nursing, social work, and community organizing” are illegitimate and disqualifying as preparation for presidential leadership (p. 242).

Finally, Gibson and Heyse (2010) rebrand Trujillo’s (1991) “frontiersmanship” as rugged individualism. They cite Theodore Roosevelt as the first U.S. president to portray the “cowboy ethos” of “confidence, chivalry, adventure, and toughness” (Gibson & Heyse, 2010, p. 243). Individualism is seen as masculine, associated with resolve and toughness; whereas, community is labeled feminine, associated with indecision and weakness (Gibson & Heyse, 2010, p. 243). The cowboy prioritizes solitary action (Gibson & Heyse, 2010). The cowboy “makes his own decisions and embraces a simple

worldview, with clear distinctions between good and evil” (Gibson & Heyse, 2010, p. 243).

In discussing these hegemonic masculinity characteristics, Gibson and Heyse (2010) demonstrated Obama’s existence as in opposition to the paradigm by highlighting McCain as a perceived “ideal American ‘alpha male’” who benefited from “blatant invocation” of his “heterosexual prowess” (p. 244). Fred Thompson described McCain’s past: “In flight school in Pensacola, he [drove] a Corvette and dat[ed] a girl who worked in a bar as an exotic dancer under the name of ‘Marie, the Flame of Florida’” (p.244). The authors marveled that “such a cliched reference to McCain’s sexuality is not only understood as appropriate, but is cheered-on within the context of hegemonic masculinity” (p. 244). Obama, by contrast, could not have survived such a blatant recitation of hegemonic masculinity ideals because he is outside the paradigm namely due to his race. Obama was constrained by racist tropes that simultaneously under- and over-masculinizes Black men (Ross, 1998). Writing about Daniel Patrick Moynihan’s infamous 1967 study, *The Negro Family: The Case for National Action*, Ross (1998) wrote:

Moynihan’s report casts Black men paradoxically as both overly masculine (they indulge their desire for women too much and out of proper bounds) and not masculine enough (they fail to enact the patriarchal role of breadwinner and family enforcer), both too present and too absent as American men (p. 603).

Due to America’s history with slavery, there has long existed a lack of autonomy of Black men over their bodies (Lowndes, 2013). “The black body, commodified materially in slavery, was commercialized culturally throughout U.S. history” (Lowndes, 2013, p. 489). Obama had to reckon with that reality and remain mindful of his subversion of the

hegemonic masculinity paradigm, lest he create a politically untenable situation for himself.

### **Framing**

McQuail (1994) said, “The entire study of mass communication is based on the premise that the media have significant effects” (as quoted in Scheufele, 1999, p. 104). “The proliferation and influence of media in presidential campaigns is without question” (Khan & Blair, 2013, p. 56). Politicians depend on the wide-ranging potential of media. “Most voters encounter presidential candidates only through the media coverage of those candidates; at the same time, presidential candidates recognize that the mainstream media is one of the primary avenues by which they can reach mass audiences. As such it is difficult to separate political candidates and their spouses from the images co-created by their rhetorical actions and the rhetorical framing of those actions by media” (Khan & Blair, 2013, p. 57). As a result, “media play a significant role in how society discursively constructs relations of power, especially in the realm of presidential politics” (Khan & Blair, 2013, p. 57). One of the most prominent theories of mass communication is framing. According to Scheufele and Tewksbury (2007), framing is “based on the assumption that how an issue is characterized in news reports can have an influence on how it is understood by audiences” (p. 11). It is often traced back to disciplines of psychology and sociology (Scheufele & Tewksbury, 2007). The psychological foundations were laid by Kahneman and Tversky (1979, 1984) in which “presentations of essentially identical decision-making scenarios influence people’s choices and their evaluation of the various options presented to them” (Scheufele & Tewksbury, 2007, p. 11). On the sociological side, Goffman (1974) was influential in his

assumption that “individuals cannot understand the world fully and constantly struggle to interpret their life experiences and to make sense of the world around them” (Scheufele & Tewksbury, 2007, p. 11).

Entman (1993) elaborated on frames by highlighting the importance of selection and salience. Framing involves the selection of “some aspects of a perceived reality” and making them “more salient in a communicating text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation” (Entman, 1993, p. 52).

Scheufele (1999) posits that framing necessarily operates on both macro and micro levels. In the macro sense, framing refers to how journalists present information to their audience in a way that resonates (Scheufele & Tewksbury, 2007). In the micro sense, framing refers to how the audience receives and uses information as members interpret the publication’s message (Scheufele & Tewksbury, 2007).

Entman (1993) described four “locations” of frames: the communicator, the text, the receiver, and the culture (p. 52). Of these, three – the communicator, text and culture – correspond with Scheufele’s and Tewksbury’s (2007) conception of the macro level of framing. Entman (1993) stated that communicators “make conscious or unconscious framing judgments in deciding what to say, guided by frames (often called schemata) that organize their belief systems” (p.52). Of the text itself, Entman (1993) said it “contains frames, which are manifested by the presence or absence of certain keywords, stock phrases, stereotyped images, sources of information, and sentences that provide thematically reinforcing clusters of facts or judgments” (p.52). Culture, according to Entman (1993) is “the stock of commonly invoked frames,” going so far as to say it

“might be defined as the empirically demonstrable set of common frames exhibited in the discourse and thinking of most people in a social grouping” (p. 53).

For the purpose of this study, only the macro level will be considered, as this study does not attempt to gauge or measure audience receptions or interpretations or opinions on the analyzed writings.

#### RESEARCH QUESTIONS

**RQ1:** *How does Esquire magazine’s feature writing on U.S. presidents and presidential candidates depict characteristics of hegemonic masculinity?*

**RQ2:** *How does Esquire magazine’s depictions of hegemonic masculinity change depending on the political party of the candidate?*

## Chapter 3: Methods

Qualitative content analysis “focuses on the characteristics of language as communication with attention to the content or contextual meaning of the text” (Hsieh and Shannon, 2005, p. 1278). Text can take many forms; it is not required to be the literal definition of the word. Text can be interpreted in “verbal, print, or electronic forms,” (Hsieh and Shannon, 2005, p. 1278).

### **Type of Qualitative Content Analysis**

Hsieh and Shannon (2005) describe three approaches to qualitative content analysis: conventional, directed and summative. Of the three, this study most closely aligns with the principles of directed content analysis. According to Hsieh and Shannon (2005), directed content analysis is appropriate when an existing theory or prior research exists about a phenomenon that is incomplete or would benefit from further description (p. 1281). Specifically, directed content analysis attempts to “validate or extend conceptually a theoretical framework or theory” (Hsieh and Shannon, 2005, p. 1281).

This study aims to evaluate *Esquire* magazine’s feature writing on U.S. presidents and presidential candidates by extending the sociological and psychological studies of masculinities to mass media analysis. The themes for which the writing will be analyzed derive from the masculinity research of Trujillo (1991), David and Brannon (1976) and Levant et al. (2007). As noted by Hsieh and Shannon (2005), the extension of prior theory can “determine the initial coding scheme or relationships between codes” (p. 1281).

## **Population**

Neuman (2003) defines “target population” as the “specific pool of cases that [the researcher] wants to study” (p. 216). The target population of this study is *Esquire* magazine features on the topic of U.S. presidents and presidential politics. *Esquire* has been published since 1933, and political writings have routinely been a part of the magazine. In order to narrow the universe to a manageable sample size, this study’s target population is bounded temporally between 1996 and 2016.

This date range serves numerous purposes for the study. First, it reduces the overall universe of possible articles for consideration. Second, it reduces the variable created by various editors-in-chief, as this time frame closely tracks *Esquire*’s longest-serving editor-in-chief, David Granger’s time at the helm. Editors-in-chief play a key role in the direction and tone of the magazine; according to Benson and Whitaker (2014), “good magazines have strong identities that are apparent by way of an easily identifiable voice, look and worldview” and that “[e]ditors are the guardians of those identities” (pp. 5-6). Therefore, minimizing the number of editors-in-chief analyzed strengthens the analysis. Third, it offers some variety in the political administrations being written about when the presidency and congressional control changes hands over the years. For example, the time period spans two Democratic administrations (Clinton (1996-2000); Obama (2008-2016)) and one Republican administration (Bush (2000-2008)).

## **Sampling**

According to Neuman (2003), qualitative researchers are less concerned with a sample’s representativeness, and as such, often eschew probability samples. This study does not seek to generalize its findings beyond *Esquire* magazine for the years analyzed.

It is not concerned with other men's lifestyle magazines or other types of writing within *Esquire* itself. Qualitative researchers seek "to find cases that will enhance what the researchers learn about the processes of social life in a specific context" (Neuman, 2003, p. 211). To achieve this end, nonprobability sampling is used, where the researcher "selects cases gradually, with the specific content of a case determining whether it is chosen" (Neuman, 2003, p. 211). Of various types of nonprobability sampling, the most appropriate for this study is purposive. Neuman (2003) gives three instances in which purposive sampling is acceptable; at least one is relevant to this study. Purposive sampling is appropriate when "a researcher wants to use content analysis to study magazines to find cultural themes" (Neuman, 2003, p. 213). This study is to evaluate representations of traditional masculinity ideologies in *Esquire* magazine's feature articles on U.S. presidents and presidential candidates, which would fall into Neuman's conception of "cultural themes" (p. 213).

### **Unit of Analysis**

The unit of analysis for this study is *Esquire* feature articles, most commonly profile articles about a particular president or candidate, written between January 1996 and December 2016.

### **Data Collection Methods and Techniques**

Cho and Lee (2014) describe qualitative content analysis as having three "core steps": "selecting the unit of analysis, creating categories, and establishing themes" (p. 10).

This study takes as its inspiration and starting point the work of Trujillo (1991), in which he applied the concept of hegemonic masculinity to professional sports via an

analysis of professional baseball pitcher Nolan Ryan. I will likewise attempt to use the foundations of masculinities studies, drawing from both the sociological tradition of hegemonic masculinity as expressed by Trujillo (1991) and the psychological tradition of traditional masculinity ideology as expressed by David and Brannon's (1976) four themes, which encapsulates Levant et al. (2007) MRNI-R.

“Qualitative content analysis is one of numerous research methods used to analyze text data” (Hsieh and Shannon, 2005, p. 1278). Qualitative content analysis is versatile. “Text data might be in verbal, print, or electronic form and might have been obtained from narrative responses, open-ended survey questions, interviews, focus groups, observations, or print media such as articles, books, or manuals” (Hsieh and Shannon, 2005, p. 1278). Qualitative content analysis has long been used for analyzing newspapers and magazines (Elo and Kyngas, 2008, pp. 107-08). Qualitative content analysis reduces large amounts of data into “fewer, content-related categories (Elo and Kyngas, 2008, p. 107).

Elo and Kyngas (2008) describes two approaches to qualitative content analysis-- deductive and inductive. The deductive approach is most appropriate for this particular study. Deductive content analysis is another name for what Hsieh and Shannon (2005) termed “directed qualitative analysis” (p. 1281). It is used “when the structure of analysis is operationalized on the basis of previous knowledge and the purpose of the study is theory testing” (Elo and Kyngas, 2008, p. 109). Since this study seeks to extend the categories of Trujillo's hegemonic masculinity analysis and the measures of David and Brannon's four themes and Levant's MRNI-R to the qualitative content analysis of *Esquire* magazine's political writing, a directed or deductive approach is appropriate.

Instead of the open coding of an inductive analysis, this study will code for specific uses of ideas and concepts found in the two strands of masculinities studies. In the alternative, inductive qualitative analysis is used when little previous knowledge is known about a phenomenon, such that categories during analysis must be derived from the data itself (Elo and Kyngas, 2008). Analysis in the inductive approach moves from specific to general, “so that particular instances are observed and then combined into a larger whole or general statement” (Elo and Kyngas, 2008, p. 109). However, according to Armat et al. (2018), a rigid selection of one approach is shortsighted, since each approach acknowledges and accepts instances of the other’s processes.

Elo and Kyngas (2008) set out three main phases to conducting qualitative content analysis: preparation, organizing and reporting. In the preparation phase, I reviewed the print issues of *Esquire* via library collections and *Esquire*’s online digital archive ([www.classic.Esquire.com](http://www.classic.Esquire.com)). The online digital archive is categorized and searchable, with the capability to narrow search results by category (such as “politics”) and by year; this tool made secondary searches much easier to accomplish and added extra reliability in the data set’s completeness. Initial selection of articles included reliance on cover images, cover lines, table of contents information such as headlines and decks so that issues that featured any of the following could be reviewed for fit: feature stories about U.S. presidents or presidential candidates, including but not necessarily limited to President, presidential candidates, and significant others/partners of the above. Feature stories are defined by *Esquire*; its table of contents groups stories as “features” and the online digital archive allows for searches to be narrowed by a “features” category. The

review spanned January 1996 to December 2016, and it produced 46 articles for analysis. Entire articles were analyzed.

Following the preparation phase is the organizing phase. This phase primarily includes taking the nine characteristics from Trujillo (1991) and David and Brannon (1976) and operationalizing them so that they can be represented as codes when reviewing the text. The categories from Levant (2007) are derivatives from David and Brannon (1976), so those categories were operationalized to assist in the coding process, but the results were subsumed back into the four themes of David and Brannon (1976). The definitions of the characteristics described above in Chapter 2 were reproduced as an initial coding guide, along with potential identifiers of the specific hegemonic masculinity characteristics (Appendix B).

After operationalizing the themes, initial coding takes place. As described by Saldana (2013), initial coding is “breaking down qualitative data into discrete parts, closely examining them, and comparing them for similarities and differences” (p. 100). Saldana (2013) states that initial coding provides “an opportunity for you as a researcher to reflect deeply on the contents and nuances of your data and to begin taking ownership of them” (p. 100). In the initial reading of the articles, potential words, phrases and sentences that even remotely touched on matters of gender, from physical descriptions to stereotypical tropes, were noted for review, but codes were not always initially attributed. Often, the initial reading was simply to gain familiarity with the article. The article was then read closely again with specific attention paid to the notations already in place from the initial reading. Where applicable, the words, phrases or sentences that were simply

highlighted for noteworthiness were given a code, but upon closer reading, some of the initial notations were deemed to be irrelevant to the research and are not coded.

Often, the words, phrases or sentences represented clear articulation of some of one of the hegemonic masculinity concepts and was coded directly as such. For example, Sager (2007) uses the phrase “in the mode of the classic housewife” when describing Elizabeth Edwards (p. 63). Trujillo (1991) uses the exact phrase “housewife” when laying out the parameters of the familial patriarchy characteristic. Therefore, in situations such as this, no intermediate code was applied which would need to be assessed for further classification during the focused coding stage.

During this process, analytic memos were written, documenting initial thoughts on the articles, why particular codes were selected and attributed in order to assist the categorizing to come in the focused coding stage (Saldana, 2013, p. 44). The purpose of analytic memos, according to Saldana (2013) is “researcher reflexivity on the data corpus” (p. 42). Coding and analytic memo writing go hand-in-hand, as they are “concurrent qualitative data analytic activities (Saldana, 2013, p. 42).

After the initial coding concludes, focused coding takes place. Focused coding “searches for the most frequent or significant codes to develop ‘the most salient categories’ in the data corpus” (Saldana, 2013, p. 213). The articles were read a third time, where a narrower focus on the codes already given takes place. Just like with the initial coding stage, there was a constant reexamination of the words, phrases and sentences to determine fit for the categories of hegemonic masculinity. Analytic memos were recorded at this stage as well, further refining and elaborating on the analytic memos from the first round of coding.

At this stage, words, phrases or sentences not directly coded into one of the hegemonic masculinity characteristics were evaluated for relationship to those characteristics, eventually resulting in notations on each article that demonstrated examples of the hegemonic masculinity paradigm being expressed through frames in the story. The articles were not assessed for frequency of certain codes nor were they categorized based on the prevalence of codes; instead, all articles were notated and analyzed for any and all of the hegemonic masculinity paradigm characteristics, and the clearest examples are collected in the next chapter to illustrate the prevalence of the hegemonic masculinity paradigm in *Esquire's* presidential political writing.

## Chapter 4: Analysis

In the current research, concepts from both the disciplines of sociology and psychology were extended to, and combined with, this mass media analysis. The five sociological factors, defined by Trujillo (1991), are applied first and will be followed directly by an application of the four psychological factors, defined by David and Brannon (1976). Examples of each of the nine characteristics both disciplines were found in *Esquire's* presidential political writing between 1996 and 2016, and the use of and reliance on the hegemonic masculinity paradigm characteristics did not appear to be tied to the politician's political party.

### **Physical Force and Control**

Donald Trump's victory of Hillary Clinton in the 2016 presidential election continued the unbroken streak of male heads of state in America. Because the country has never seen anything different, it is arguable that physical force, as conceived of by Trujillo (1991) as "an extension of the male body," is the most prominent characteristic by which American culture perpetuates hegemonic masculinity in its presidential politics. Connell (1995) agreed when she wrote that true masculinity is "almost always thought to proceed from men's bodies" (p.45).

*Esquire's* status as a men's lifestyle magazine makes it unsurprising that the male body would be a prominent feature in the pages, namely through advertisements and fashion photography. But the focus on physical force by way of an extension of the male body is a common tool used to frame the discussion of U.S. presidential politics.

Trujillo (1991) describes the male body as representing "power, and power itself is masculinized as physical strength, force, speed, control, toughness, and domination"

(p. 291). *Esquire* relies on these traits in its descriptions of the physical attributes of U.S. presidential politicians. For example, Ron Reagan wrote a June 2003 article about his father, President Ronald Reagan. The angle of the story was that as Reagan's mind deteriorated due to Alzheimer's disease, the memories that were most engrained were those related to physical athletic endeavors (Reagan, 2003). The son wrote of the father:

Real men – men healthily invested in their physical prowess – simply led “vigorous” lives. To that end, Dad rode horses, chopped wood, pounded fence posts, and swam – swam fearlessly in ocean breakers and, at home, back and forth in our pool (Reagan, 2003, p. 108).

He was not only lifting up his father's dedication to physical health, but also the manner by which he maintained it, i.e., the “manly” way. He denigrated gyms with “sound systems and fancy machines,” and he proclaimed that his father would be “baffled” by yoga (Reagan, 2003, p. 108). These specifics called into question what Ronald Reagan clearly viewed as the modern trend of working out, rather than simply being fit because it was how a man should be. It forms a strange contradiction as the younger Reagan wrote that his father “had an actor's concern for his appearance and an athlete's pride in the smooth grace of his body's mechanics” (Reagan, 2003, p.108). Reagan (2003) is able to project masculinity by his father's actions rather than linger on his father's motivations, which may be characterized as feminine.

Reagan's article is most accurately categorized as a son's hagiography for his father, but the style is not foreign to the pages of *Esquire*; Reagan employs many of the same framing devices professional writers would employ on subjects to whom they had no personal connection. For instance, the statistical measure of a man is common to profiles of presidential politicians. Reagan (2003) said, “At nearly six two and 180 pounds, he was an admirable physical specimen” (p. 108). Compare that with Michael

Paterniti's (2000) profile of outgoing-President Bill Clinton: "Despite the man's size – six two with a silvery mane of hair that adds at least another inch or two, his fingers double the average length – he is surprisingly nimble, flourishing cards over the table, rushing time" (p. 106). These two men – Reagan and Clinton – and the descriptions of their size seem almost causal, as though they were elected president because of the size and power they projected. If they represented a fulfillment of the hegemonic masculinity characteristic of physical force, then a candidate like Dennis Kucinich represented its antithesis. Raab (2007) framed an entire article on Kucinich's unlikeliness to become president. For all the ways Raab (2007) described Kucinich as a fighter, the article seemed to lack a certain degree of seriousness when viewed through the lens of physical force. Raab (2007) wrote of the candidate:

In real life, he's five seven, not really all that short, but his diet – no animal products of any kind... has thinned him to 130 pounds, and the fact that he looks decades younger than his age, combined with his buzz-saw voice and Sears wardrobe, not to mention his general level of intensity, makes him seem onscreen like a high school debater, or an embittered elf. The camera does not love him; luckily, Elizabeth does (p. 185).

Raab seems to be writing from a place of bemusement, as if he really does not understand what this beautiful woman sees in this elfish man, and though he does not state it explicitly, it seems as if Raab is fine with *Esquire* readers wondering the same thing (Raab, 2007).

For the articles on Reagan and Clinton, both authors use pure physical size as a symbolic marker of capability for the immense job of being president. Reagan (2003) does not address his father's presidency, but it looms large in the subtext of the article. In fact, it seems to be the heavy end of a seesaw, as if to say, "I realize I'm writing about my father's mental deterioration, but doesn't it make up for it that he was incredibly

physically fit for most of his life?” He treated readers to feats of his father’s physical prowess, including saving 77 people from drowning as a lifeguard to breaking a World Arm-Wrestling Championships contestant’s arm after then-Governor Reagan suggested they “y’know, go at it a little” (p.133).

These two anecdotes in particular do more to promote the physical force characteristic of hegemonic masculinity. Reagan (2003) described the difference between the senior Reagan rescuing a woman, as he speculated that some “would deliberately stray too far toward the middle of the river for the opportunity to be rescued by him,” but the men who were rescued would only say thank you after being encouraged to do so by their girlfriends (p. 111). Reagan (2003) continued in this vein, describing “brawny farm boys” who, when starting to drown, had to be “subdued with a right cross to the jaw in order to effect a safe rescue” (p. 2003). And when his father broke the man’s arm, Reagan (2003) framed it as if his father simply did not know his own strength, calling him merely “overly enthusiastic” and seemingly unable to control his mighty strength (p. 133). Although the article was not overtly political, Reagan (2003) invited assessment of his father’s presidency by portraying high levels of masculinity.

Paterniti (2000) more directly related his observations about President Clinton’s body to his job performance. After establishing Clinton’s size, Paterniti (2000) wrote:

And he tried to carry them all [emotional weights] within his huge, enveloping body, on his wide shoulders...And he understands how his mere physical presence – the bulk of his body, the corona of his hair – is a message of hope to some and, for others, a totem to despise (p. 106).

This approach is emblematic of the perpetuation of hegemonic masculinity since the deployment of Clinton’s physical size is pure imagery; Paterniti (2000) said Clinton was trying to “carry” the emotional weight that comes from speaking to “thirty-five

thousand screaming people in a square in Riga,” reaching “to greet emotional throngs in the ruined streets of Belfast,” embracing “AIDS victims in Nigeria,” and crying “with widows brought to grief by drug traffickers in Catagena” (p. 106). Nothing about Clinton’s physical size or stature makes him more adequately equipped to handle the stress of such experiences, but the imagery seems fitting – broad shoulders to bear a great load. Paterniti (2000) acknowledged the symbolic power explicitly, linking the “bulk of his body” to “a message of hope” (p. 106).

For as useful as physical force as an extension of the male body is for describing presidents, it is perhaps even more so used to describe those seeking the office. The election process is the most apparent enactment of war in the political arena. Gibson and Heyse (2010) link the physical force characteristic with “military narratives, combat metaphors, and a characterization of the candidate as a tough soldier” (Gibson & Heyse, 2010, p. 240). *Esquire* followed those scripts with numerous articles of political candidates who served in the armed forces, including Bob Kerrey, Wesley Clark, and John McCain.

Martha Sherrill (1996) wrote about Senator Bob Kerrey based on his 1992 candidacy; he did not run for president in 1996, but he was given attention as a serious possible contender. Kerrey was a Navy SEAL during the Vietnam War, and the SEALs grueling training regimen alone would have been enough to establish Kerrey’s physical force bona fides. But he also lost most of his right leg in an explosion, and Sherrill (1996) wrote about the physicality of his recovery; she also noted that he never campaigned on the fact that he was awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor.

Similarly, Tom Junod (2003) profiled General Wesley Clark's brief 2004 presidential campaign, and he described Clark as "around five ten and not so much diminutive as compressed, like a man who never exhales" (p. 93). Junod (2003) continued: "His stride is at once jaunty and athletic and somewhat artificial, like the stride of a man who has devoted time to teaching himself to walk...as, in fact, he has, after getting shot four times in Vietnam" (p.93). He concluded the description: "Taught himself to walk again, without a limp, despite the fact that a quarter of his calf muscle was gone; taught himself to shake hands manfully, despite the loss of the muscle around his right thumb" (Junod, 2003, p. 93).

Chris Jones (2006) wrote about John McCain's 2008 election campaign, and the story holds off until the sixth page, when this description is found:

On October 26, 1967, he was shot down over Vietnam and held prisoner for more than five years, mostly at the Hanoi Hilton. As the son and grandson of Navy admirals, he was offered early release, but he refused it. Instead, McCain, who had already broken both of his arms and a leg in ejecting from his plane, was beaten and tortured (p. 101).

The details of each of these instances serve as a framing device for the authors, and thus, the readers, in considering these candidates.

Another type of physical force exemplified through the male body is seen in an article about Bill Bradley's 2000 presidential campaign. Charles Pierce (2000) profiled the former senator, who had been a well-known college and professional basketball player. In the article, Pierce (2000) wrote:

Each part of his life informs the others. It has become such a consistent whole that it obscures the fact that having once been a professional athlete is a formidable political tool all on its own – that the 1970 New York Knickerbockers were Bradley's PT-109 (p. 108).

Not only does Pierce explicitly state that Bradley's professional athlete bona fides are useful on the campaign trail, but he also likens it to John F. Kennedy's service in Vietnam, which was an essential element in the presidential myth-making that would cement Kennedy's legacy (Pierce, 2000).

If the physical force is expressed as an extension of the male body, then the hegemonic masculinity paradigm demands the inverse of that formula to be the submission to that force by the female body. Hillary Clinton, because of her husband's adultery, was forced to deal with the physical force of the male body by way of its absence, as if because he and his male body wandered, she was to blame. "Explicit references to his sexual activity, although often cast in a critical light, still functioned to highlight and reinforce his masculinity and simultaneously raised questions about Hillary Clinton's ability to 'control' her husband" (Khan & Blair, 2013, p. 63). Junod (1999) evaluated Hillary Clinton's body in lascivious detail, though seemingly in genuine admiration, but also in a way that envisioned countless males' gazes and assumed that vitriolic hate aimed at her was actually male bodily and sexual superiority disguised as political disagreement. Other times, it was blatant defeminization, a denial of her body by joke ("What's the Hillary Clinton KFC special?...Two small breasts, two large thighs, and two left wings" (Junod, 1999, p. 116)) and then by comparison on male terms ("I bet she has bigger balls than Bill" (Junod, 1999, p. 117)).

Other references to Hillary Clinton's submission to her husband's physical force are less sexualized but no less telling in their imagery. Sherrill (1998) wrote a highly figurative and imagery-laden article about Bill Clinton and his relationship with celebrity status, and in the article she employed the device of imaginary rooms that Clinton, other

presidents and celebrities enter and interact with each other. In one section, Sherrill (1998) imagined a room populated with high-ranking government officials, “Al Gore sits at the table, doodling diagrams of Digital Earth... Alan Greenspan is glowing, if it is possible for him to glow. Madeleine Albright has just left to take a call from Tom Freidman...” (p. 78). The final person in this description is Hillary Clinton, about whom Sherrill said:

Although she might belong in this room even more than her husband, Hillary Rodham Clinton isn’t anywhere in sight – the voters don’t want to see her here – so she’s under the table, where Bill kicks her every so often for ideas (Sherrill, 1998, p. 78).

Some references deal with submission in more symbolic terms. Kurson (2003) described her stature in comparison with her surroundings:

She looks smaller when not on a stage or dais or behind a podium. Her security detail stands a few feet away to give her breathing space, making her look even more solitary, and the scene is quite striking. Who has ever seen Hillary Clinton stand alone? (p. 189).

Even when her physical might and endurance are celebrated, they cannot be totally divorced from her association with her husband’s presidency. Junod (2010b) praised her stamina as secretary of state but undermined it by association with her more diminutive role as First Lady:

You don’t know how she does what she does. You don’t know how anyone possibly could. You see her use her hands to push herself up when it’s time to stand up from the day’s work at the dais; you see her use the banister when she’s climbing the steep stairs from the runway to the waiting plane. You see her so tired that her face looks almost punctured. You see her emerging from one closed-door conference after another, standing next to one ceremonial man after another, speaking in the same dead diplomatic tongue, staring at him and nodding as he speaks in a language she doesn’t understand, and you wonder if the job she has taken is a parodic reiteration of the poses she mastered as a political wife (p. 87).

As evidenced by the examples included in this subsection, *Esquire* did not rely on the physical force and control characteristic to describe only Republicans like Reagan and McCain. Numerous Democratic examples exist for this characteristic, and this fact highlights the hegemonic quality. The masculine ideal of a powerful male body with the power to exercise control has been successfully associated more with the Republicans, so the numerous Democratic examples found in *Esquire* are responses to that notion as a counter to the conventional script. Whether deployed by the Republicans as an expected quality as the more masculine party or deployed by Democrats as a reminder that Democrats can be powerful too, the hegemonic nature of the characteristic is clearly represented in *Esquire*.

### **Occupational Achievement**

Due to the incredibly small number of presidents who have served the country, discussing the hegemonic masculinity characteristic of occupational achievement for presidents may seem anticlimactic since arguably being elected president is the highest level of occupational achievement in America. Not just anybody can do it; we have standards in this country, imposed on us by the Founders – must be thirty-five years old, must be a natural born citizen of the U.S., and a resident of the U.S. for at least fourteen years (U.S. Constitution, Art. II. Sec. 1). There are now numerous other hurdles a candidate must clear, including fundraising to sustain a long primary season, securing the nomination of a major party, and winning the general election. To see the purest distillation of this characteristic of the hegemonic masculinity paradigm, it seems useful to analyze the candidates' occupational achievements that are used as evidence of their

fitness for the presidency, as opposed to considering the occupation achievements of politicians who have already reached the presidency.

There are two general categories within this candidate-level analysis: political jobs and non-political jobs. The political jobs are relevant for career politicians whose familiarity with different levels of government (local or state) or different branches of government lend credibility to their campaigns for president. For instance, Bill Clinton's entire professional life was spent in public service in positions to which he had to be elected. Consider as Paterniti (2000) did when he wrote: "By the time he was thirty, the man had been elected attorney general of Arkansas, and by thirty-two he was governor" (p. 109). "This year's election is the first since 1974 in which the man hasn't run, and yet he still runs" (Paterniti, 2000, p. 107). Ahead of the 2016 presidential election, Charles Pierce (2014) wrote about who would run as the Democratic candidate, and Hillary Clinton's governmental resume was incredibly impressive: "She's the wife of a two-term president, a former senator from New York, and the former secretary of state" (p. 152).

Of course, there is no guarantee that articles framed to highlight occupational achievement would have any effect on a reader and potential voter. As Pierce (2014) put it when describing Hillary Clinton's prospective candidacy for the 2016 presidential election: "Clinton had the same advantages in 2008 that she has today, with the exception of her subsequently having been the secretary of state" (p. 152). She lost both of those elections. Likewise, consider Jon Huntsman's anemic 2012 campaign for president. Chris Jones (2011) profiled Huntsman as imminently qualified: "He was only a couple of months removed from his role as the U.S. ambassador to China" (p. 146) and "Huntsman, a first-stringer all his life – the son of a billionaire, a two-time governor, a three-time

ambassador, a man who has worked for four presidents...” (p. 147). No matter the fact that these qualifications did not resonate. *Esquire* certainly validated his accomplishments as explanatory of why he was a candidate in the first place. The much larger category of non-political jobs has no limitation on what qualifies; it simply must be a career outside the halls of government.

For the non-political category, a popular career is the military. Although many candidates who have military experience and run for president have already leveraged that experience into a lower-level political position, some like General Wesley Clark did not. Clark had no prior political experience; he had never been elected to public office (Junod, 2003). His resume painted an impressive (and decidedly masculine) portrait; he had retired as a four-star general, he was the former Commander in Chief of the United States European Command and former Supreme Allied Commander of NATO (Junod, 2003). He served thirty-four years in the military, and he held twenty-three different jobs (Junod, 2003). He won a war against the Serbians in Kosovo (Junod, 2003). Before his career started, he went to college at West Point, graduated first in his class, and won a Rhodes Scholarship (Junod, 2003). Junod (2004) concluded:

We like our presidents to have been soldiers because we like them to have shown courage under fire, which is to say we do not like them to be cowards. We do not like our presidents to have been generals because we do not like our presidents to have had military ambitions, which is to say we do not like them to be warmongers (p. 121).

The hyper-competent nature of his resume, along with the fact that he has already served in a position that held the title of “Commander in Chief,” Clark’s resume is the type of biography that perpetuates the hegemonic masculinity paradigm in U.S. presidential politics.

Another example of occupational achievement outside of the government is Bill Bradley. What makes his example interesting is that he had occupational achievement in the government as well, but it was not the focus of the article. Pierce (2000) chronicled Bradley's career path as "a Princeton graduate, an Olympic gold medalist, a Rhodes scholar, a former NBA star, [and] a respected former senator" (p. 104). Pierce (2000) went on to suggest that Bradley was able to project "authenticity," which allowed him "the ability to run for president without seeming to do so" (p. 108). Pierce concluded that Bradley's past, because it was unique and interesting and exciting, allowed him to seem more human, and thereby relatable, despite the fact that he had served three terms in the Senate; Pierce perceived this to be an effective (and subversive) strategy.

As is evidenced by the examples of this section, occupational achievement is used as a framing device for presidents and presidential candidates from both parties. The examples lean slightly in the Democratic direction, possibly in response to the implications of weak leadership described by Katz (2013) and Gibson and Heyse (2010). The Democratic candidates may rely more heavily on occupational achievement in order to show they are, in fact, strong, competent leaders, whereas Republic candidates may not highlight that aspect due to the perceptions that already exist. These narrative frames may be the starting point for the *Esquire* writers and influence the frames the writer chooses for the article. Overall, the value of occupational achievement to voters and readers is not questioned, illustrating its hegemonic nature.

### **Familial Patriarchy**

Much like the previous characteristic, the familial patriarchy element of hegemonic masculinity was of particular interest after the 2016 U.S. presidential election.

The candidates were ripe for analysis under this framework because Hillary Clinton was, despite her myriad accomplishments in her own political career, seen as an extension of her husband, Bill Clinton, and his presidency. On the other side of the equation, Donald Trump used his wealth as a stand-in for numerous qualities, but to socially conservative base on which his election depended, Trump's life seems open to criticism on the elements of "family protector" and "strong father figure," as described by Trujillo (1991, p. 292).

President Clinton is perhaps the president whose time in the White House most triggers an examination of this hegemonic masculinity characteristic, namely because of how he and Hillary Clinton attempted to exist outside of the typical paradigm. By the beginning of the time period for this study, Hillary Clinton had already been given a central role in the Clinton administration's push for national health care legislation during President Clinton's first term. Junod (2010b) called it a "copresidency" (p. 85). Gibson and Heyse (2010) stated that women are not recognized for professional roles nearly as much as the private, supportive roles, such as a wife and mother. When the healthcare reform effort failed, the framing of Hillary Clinton as an atypical First Lady remained, and therefore the image of her as an affront to hegemonic masculinity paradigm has persisted.

The other presidents during the period under consideration in this study followed the traditional hegemonic masculinity paradigm, where it was seen as a given that if a man was the leader of the free world, then surely he was the leader in his own home. The presidents carried out the business of running the country, and their wives played the role of helpmate, each conceptualizing the role of First Lady in relatively the same way.

Junod (2010a) evaluated President Obama through the lens of being a father, comparing his handling of political situations the way a parent would if engaged in the positive-discipline parenting strategy. Junod (2010a) said people wrongly try to understand or explain President Obama by mentors in his life, such as controversial figures Saul Alinsky, Bill Ayers, and Jeremiah Wright, or political allies like Rahm Emmanuel, or his wife, Michelle; Junod posited it would be more effective to seek understanding through his daughters, Sasha and Malia. After he introduced the concept of positive-discipline, Junod (2010a) used it as the lens through which to see numerous events, like Representative Joe Wilson shouting to call him a liar during an address to Congress. Junod (2010a) commented on his lack of a reaction; President Obama turned it into a “teachable moment” (p. 56). It was a different brand of politics, like positive-discipline is different from active punishment. Junod (2010a) said: “There is no punishment in the Obama White House” (p. 57).

Because of the nature of elections and campaigns, this characteristic is more easily observed in candidates, where part of the developing narrative is a holistic vision of the candidates’ lives. The candidates and their families are in a very real way auditioning for the public, so a natural framing device for the campaign is to show off a well-rounded and happy home life. Like numerous other magazines, *Esquire* uses this frame quite frequently. John Edwards and Donald Trump illustrate two different strands of Trujillo’s (1991) conception of familial patriarchy.

Mike Sager (2007) profiled John Edwards as he campaigned for the 2008 U.S. presidential election. As part of his interviewing process, Sager met with Elizabeth Edwards, the candidate’s wife. Despite a charming tale about how Edwards first became

aware of his future wife in law school due to her brilliance in class, Edwards' success as a trial lawyer and the immense wealth that brought to the couple seems to have dwarfed Elizabeth's past in Sager's (2007) writing. Edwards was on the campaign trail when Sager (2007) spent time with him, but he visited Elizabeth at the family's home in North Carolina, and by sheer placement of the home's description as the setting for the interview in the portion of the story given to Elizabeth, it makes the home seem as if it was Elizabeth's domain. Toward the end of the section, Sager (2003) shared an anecdote that made the implicit assumption very explicit:

A woman who, in the mode of the classic housewife, one evening opened the front door to her house in Washington, D.C. to find Hillary Clinton on the front stoop, having been invited by John for dinner, something he had neglected to mention (p. 63).

Elizabeth is portrayed as ever the dutiful wife, rustling up a meal fit for one of the most famous politicians in the country out of the few ingredients the couple had at home at the time (Sager, 2003). During the interview with Sager (2003), Elizabeth confronted the reality of her cancer diagnosis, and she provided the quintessential political spouse answer to the constant question of why Edwards was running at all while she was sick:

John listened to me. He waited for me to tell him what I wanted. I think he was probably relieved that I said what I said, honestly, but he waited for me to say it. He is respecting my wishes by staying in the race (p. 120).

Sager (2007) epitomized the familial patriarchy as conceptualized by Trujillo (1991) when he wrote that women are often represented as "housewives," and "nurturing mothers" (p. 291).

Junod (2000) exemplified the "sexual objects" element of Trujillo's (1991) conception of this characteristic in his profile of Donald Trump. At that time, Trump was not yet married to Melania Knauss, and Junod (2000) described meeting her: "... he

introduced Melania not as ‘my girlfriend’ but rather as ‘my supermodel’ (p. 210). Junod (2000) confessed that Trump’s discussion with Chris Matthews about Trump’s two divorces and how that must have disappointed his father, “‘who’d married Donald’s mother for life,’” made Trump seem “almost human” (p. 210). When Junod (2000) himself sought to speak with Trump about his divorces, Trump agrees, but Junod noted, “... he permitted himself a satisfied, even loutish smile. ‘Hey,’ he said, ‘you gotta admit: The kid’s the king of the prenups’” (p. 210). This simultaneously plays into Trujillo’s (1991) conception of women as sexual objects, but in many ways, it undercuts Trump’s “family protector” status under the familial patriarchy characteristic.

Because of her unique position as a First Lady and the first female nominee for a major U.S. political party, Hillary Clinton has been a subject of *Esquire* articles a number of times since during the time period covered by this study. Her narrative is inextricably bound up in the familial patriarchy characteristic of the hegemonic masculinity paradigm. Junod (1999) wrote a highly sexualized article about Hillary Clinton’s 2000 senate campaign, which even then was an article about future presidential ambitions. The opening paragraphs of Junod’s story are replete with double entendres as he describes her physical appearance, and at times, flagrantly reduces her to a sexual object, per Trujillo (1991). Junod (1999) sought to explore the hypothesis that “so many men hate her and that their hatred is less political than it is sexual”; its thesis:

...accused of abnegating her proper sexual role in return for power, she has gained the ability to get under men’s sexual skin in a way no actress or supermodel ever could, and stands as the incarnation of every unresolved and irreconcilable feeling a certain kind of man has about his wife and about feminism and about marriage and about the entire question of sexual fidelity and about women in general (p. 117).

This abnegation, of course, refers to Hillary Clinton's response to her husband's affair with Monica Lewinsky (and his other alleged infidelities as well) during his second term in office. The hegemonic nature of familial patriarchy is evident in how Hillary Clinton's character is subjected to scrutiny due to the acts of her husband. Bill Clinton's sexual indiscretions, affairs and possible sexual assaults are attributed to Hillary Clinton by transference. Junod (1999) quoted one of the voters gathered to see Hillary Clinton: "You know: Hillary. The Clintons. This means he's coming. You get her, you get him. First Jennifer Flowers, then Paula Jones and Monica. Who's next – my mother?" (p. 117). Junod (1999) then said:

It was an effectively compressed formulation of Hillary's political and sexual standing – that is, as political hussy and sexual doormat who in order to fulfill her ambitions first had to depend on her husband's sexual allure and now had to countenance his plunder (p. 117).

Hillary Clinton strained the familial patriarchy paradigm by stepping forward after her husband's career concluded and starting one of her own, despite the fact that she had fulfilled her helpmate role for the majority of their marriage by relegating any professional aspirations she might have to the back burner.

To further illustrate the hegemonic nature of familial patriarchy, Junod (1999) said:

It's not as though her husband's affair with Miss Lewinsky is somehow tangential to Hillary's political fortunes, after all. No, it is absolutely central, because it is through the magic of sexual humiliation that she was somehow transformed from the woman the Republicans ran so successfully against in 1994 – the woman who did her best to disappear in '95, '96, and '97 – into the most admired woman in the country, the steadfast captain of what passes for 'family values' in the Clinton White House (p. 118).

Robert Kurson (2003) profiled Hillary Clinton ahead of the 2004 U.S. presidential election. Kurson's examination of Clinton has been echoed many times in *Esquire*,

inevitably turning to the point in her life when she hitched her fortune to Bill Clinton's rising start: "Long ago, when Hillary Clinton still had that Chicago accent, she was the best of her generation, the embodiment of the liberated woman. Back then, people said that Hillary Rodham could become whatever she wanted to become" (Kurson, 2003, p. 186). The familial patriarchy frame explains Kurson's approach: "Then her direction changed. For the next twenty-seven years, she became the second in a two-for-the-price-of-one life. In photos from those years, Hillary Clinton no longer looks as if she can become whatever she wants to become" (Kurson, 2003, p. 186).

As evidenced by the examples of this characteristic, candidates from both parties are scrutinized for their adherence to and departure from the familial patriarchy. As noted above, the strongest (and most numerous) example of the concept is seen in the departure epitomized by the Clintons, but this does not indicate one party being held to the standard more rigidly than the other. The hegemonic nature of this characteristic is not in question, as it is the dominant social standard that all presidential politicians are measured against.

### **Frontiersmanship**

Due to the singular nature of the presidency and presidential campaigns despite its firmly entrenched position within a political party, Trujillo's (1991) frontiersmanship is one of the most recurrent scripts in U.S. presidential politics. Trujillo (1991) describes this characteristic as "symbolized by the daring romantic frontiersman of yesteryear and of the present-day outdoorsman" (p. 291). It is easily recognized as rugged individualism seen in the "cowboy ethos" of "confidence, chivalry, adventure, and toughness" (Gibson & Heyse, 2010, p. 243).

There is a long history of the theatrical aspect of frontiersmanship in American presidential politics, bringing to mind casual images of Theodore Roosevelt carrying his big stick but walking softly, Lyndon Johnson's Texas ranch, and Ronald Reagan on horseback. During the period analyzed for this study, President George W. Bush most exemplified the theatrical aspect of frontiersmanship, with his Texas ranch mirroring Johnson's. In 2004, Ron Reagan (2004) wrote a reasoned case against President Bush ahead of the election, and he mentioned the infamous photo-op of President Bush, in a flight suit, landing on the *USS Abraham Lincoln*, and later gave a speech under a banner that read "Mission Accomplished." Reagan (2004) went on to say: "But image is everything in this White House, and the image of George Bush as a noble and infallible warrior in the service of his nation must be fanatically maintained, because behind the image lies...nothing?" (p. 184).

Landing in a fighter jet on an aircraft carrier is not required to portray the visuals of ruggedness, as Sager (2007) captured John Edwards at a Habitat for Humanity project during the 2008 campaign. Edwards was partnered with actor Danny Glover, and a stark contrast was drawn between the two, with Edwards' working class North Carolina roots shining through:

The visiting dignitaries were each issued a hammer, a carpenter's belt, and a pair of brown cloth work gloves. While the actor immediately donned his gloves, the candidate chose to stuff his into the empty pouches of the carpenter's belt, an accessory that seemed to irk him a bit, you could tell, devoid as it was of any real utility in his present situation (Sager, 2007, p. 59).

This simple observation conveyed ruggedness on the part of Edwards, meant to belie his reputation as a pampered millionaire, to imply he knew his way around a worksite. The message was hammered home (literally) a few sentences later:

From the start, it was clear that the actor was not quite as comfortable with a hammer as the candidate, employing the tool in a series of choked-up staccato taps, as opposed to Edwards's longer, more confident strokes, the mark of a man who'd spent the summers of his youth mucking out looms, building mobile homes, painting markings on highways (Sager, 2007, p. 59).

But the cowboy ethos is not purely visual theatrics; it is also a framing device to denote individuality, single-mindedness, and independence which is valued in American presidents. In this version of frontiersmanship, numerous presidents and candidates have been depicted as outsiders to the system, marching to the beat of their own drums.

In one of the few pieces that ran before he became president, George W. Bush exemplified the simplistic, cowboy ethos of the frontiersmanship characteristic: "My attitude has been all along, I make the calls as I see them. If there's a political consequence, too bad. So what? Maybe I'll see you in national politics. Maybe I won't. I've got a pretty cool life." (Brodner, 1998, p. 113).

Taylor Branch (1996) recounted a series of interviews with President Clinton, specifically those around the time Clinton decided to deploy U.S. military forces to intervene in Haiti. "The Haiti venture violated the whole political canon on leadership and support for choosing which battles to fight," (Branch, 1996, p. 110). Clinton explicitly stated his rugged individualism: "I'm going ahead with the invasion anyway," he said, 'because it's the right thing to do.' He said he might lose his presidency, but he had to take that chance" (Branch, 1996, p. 110). Branch (1996) provided other examples of the cowboy ethos in Clinton's presidency, including going against his party by trying to get NAFTA passed and not backing down against the powerful National Rifle Association. Instead of adhering to the prevailing wisdom on such matters, Clinton's rugged individualism embodied what Gibson and Heyse (2010) described as the cowboy

making “his own decisions” and embracing “a simple worldview, with clear distinctions between good and evil” ( p. 243).

In 2008, candidates from both the Democratic and Republican fields were known for their rugged individualism – Dennis Kucinich and John McCain, respectively.

Kucinich, as the mayor of Cleveland, in his straight-away brand of governing somehow offended the local mob, which put out a hit on Kucinich’s life; Kucinich was made aware of the ordered assassination by the police, and he simply took to wearing a bulletproof vest and keeping a gun in his home (Raab, 2007). Raab (2007) was able to project an image of Kucinich as essentially a man who stared down the mob, while also undermining Kucinich in other characteristics of hegemonic masculinity; Kucinich “looks small” (p. 184) and wears a “twelve-year-old boy’s haircut” (p. 184) and seems like “a high school debater or an embittered elf” (p. 185).

At the same time, McCain was also burnishing his reputation as a “maverick.” In Chris Jones; account of McCain’s 2008 presidential bid, the article began with McCain giving a graduation commencement address at The New School in Manhattan; the students were actively revolting against McCain’s invitation to speak (Jones, 2006). McCain faced down the hostile crowd with grace and eloquence (Jones, 2006). A week earlier, he was speaking at Liberty University, at the invitation of Jerry Falwell (Jones, 2006). Though the crowd was expected to be much friendlier, it was surprising McCain accepted the invitation at all. Falwell had been involved in the 2000 election, campaigning hard for Bush, which included a smear campaign against McCain in South Carolina, in which it was suggested that McCain’s dark-skinned adopted daughter was an illegitimate African American child (Jones, 2006). Falwell said, “That’s when he shot us

between the eyes” (Jones, 2006, p. 98). Shortly after the smears, McCain told a crowd in Virginia: “Neither party should be defined to the outer reaches of American politics and the agents of intolerance, whether they be Louis Farrakhaan or Al Sharpton on the Left, or Pat Robertson or Jerry Falwell on the Right” (p. 98). In both instances, McCain demonstrated the cowboy ethos and rugged individualism of the frontiersmanship characteristic. These anecdotes at the top of Jones’ (2006) profile showed an adoption of McCain’s narrative framing device and perpetuating that through the article.

The rugged individualism can focus on the “individualism” aspect more than the “rugged” aspect. Junod (2010a) wrote about President Obama’s style of leadership, comparing it to parenting styles, and the most salient feature of President Obama’s style was how contradictory it was to our political expectations. Junod (2010a) rattled off a litany of all the things President Obama was not – “he’s too deliberative, too methodical, too cool, too unemotional, too even-tempered, too undemonstrative, too rational, too conciliatory, too compromising” (p. 57) – and the novelty of the list was that Americans were somewhat disappointed in him for not playing by established rules. Although the very nature of the style Junod (2010a) described would seem to be anti-rugged, the individualism element is predominant.

As evidenced from the examples of this characteristic, frontiersmanship is valued by politicians of both parties. Though the typically rugged strain of this characteristic is probably most closely associated with conservative, Republican politicians, it is apparent that liberal, Democrat politicians want to project a strong individualism as a symbol of their strength and commitment to their values. There is great narrative appeal for the *Esquire* writers to find such instances of individualism, and the type of strength and

fearlessness projected by frontiersmanship seems to be expected of presidents and presidential candidates, thereby illustrating its hegemonic nature.

### **Heterosexuality**

The U.S. presidency, from the narratives the candidates tell about themselves to the presentation of the First Family as the figureheads for the country, is a prime institution through which to see Trujillo's (1991) heterosexuality characteristic of the hegemonic masculinity paradigm. It is defined by a "sex hierarchy" that elevates sex that is "heterosexual, marital, monogamous, reproductive, and non-commercial" (p. 292). The most sexualized presidency during the period of analysis was President Clinton's. Although it violated multiple tenets of Trujillo (1991) because the sex was often non-marital and non-reproductive, its heteronormative element was never questioned, highlighting the hegemonic nature of heterosexuality.

Heterosexuality narratives are more noticeable in the candidate phase of U.S. presidential politics as it is closely related to the notion of familial patriarchy. But heterosexuality narratives exist outside of the familial patriarchy even though sexual activity is rarely acknowledged by a national politician unless in the confessional mode of political scandals. Senator Bob Kerrey, when profiled by Sherrill (1996), was single and described, in contrast to other single senators, as never having the "public reputation of being much of a ladies' man" (p. 93). Sherrill (1996) went on to reveal insight from the women who had dated Kerrey: "Women who have been interested in Kerrey...dismiss his behavior as 'classic Peter Pan,' but some insist it's only shyness and awkwardness that keep him from a committed relationship" (p. 93). The heterosexuality element of the

hegemonic masculinity paradigm is apparent in this framing as these descriptions are used as perceived negatives against Kerrey.

Richardson (2010) placed the heterosexuality characteristic at the forefront of his profile of Newt Gingrich by dedicating a lot of space in the article to the insights provided by one of his ex-wives. Gingrich's ex-wife told the details of the affair that began their relationship as well as the subsequent one that ended their relationship, and she described the contradiction between his personal indiscretions in his marriage and his very public condemnation of Bill Clinton during the aftermath of the Monica Lewinsky scandal (Richardson, 2010). The article itself does not openly criticize Gingrich for his actions, but the honesty of the revelations from his ex-wife so clearly implied the sexual impropriety of both the genesis and conclusion of their relationship that the hegemonic ideal of heterosexuality was itself a character in the story (Richardson, 2010).

Sager (2007) described John Edwards' relationship with his wife, Elizabeth, as being firmly within the familial patriarchy, but there was also an element of the heterosexuality characteristic in the article. Sager (2007) asked Edwards about how they became aware that Elizabeth's cancer had returned, and the public narrative had been it was discovered because she was seeking treatment for a broken rib suffered from a hug. Edwards intimated that hugging was perhaps not the real reason: "'Maybe it is a little personal,' Edwards said, laughing self-consciously" (Sager, 2007, p. 60). When asked if hugging was a euphemism, Edwards demurred: "That's my story, and I'm stickin' to it" (p. 61). But the implication of some sort of vigorous sexual activity was clear.

Perhaps the clearest example of the prevalence of the heterosexuality characteristic is found in Raab's (2007) profile of Dennis Kucinich. Raab (2007) wrote in

unabashed admiration for not only the beauty of Kucinich's wife, Elizabeth, who was more than three decades his junior, describing her after quoting Kucinich as saying "You look great":

He's right. Great oogly-moogly, is he right... she's wearing a thrift-store summer dress that she just bought – a flimsy, low-cut, flowery thing whose thin straps leave her shoulders and back bared – ... Her clavicles alone are heart stopping. And Dennis can't stop grinning, a schoolboy lost in love (p. 186).

The impression given off by Raab (2007) is that Kucinich must be doing something right to have landed such a beautiful young woman as his wife, and Raab internalizes that lust and projects it as the only natural response to seeing her. Raab (2007) said: "Truth is, I'm proud of the guy. Electable or no, homeboy's talking presidential smack and getting laid. They probably even do it tantric style – lifting Kucinich to interstitial pleasure planes no Clevelander, East or West, has visited before" (p. 188). Raab (2007) focused so primarily on the heterosexuality characteristic of the hegemonic masculinity paradigm that he was willing to completely discount Kucinich on the merits of his candidacy yet still celebrated him because of his young wife and his perceived sex life.

As evidenced by the examples of this characteristic, the hegemonic nature of heterosexuality is firmly established in the U.S. presidential politics and *Esquire's* writing on the topic. It is a cultural hegemony that transcends the bounds of political parties, and it is so accepted and expected that subversion of the expectation become more newsworthy than adherence. *Esquire* has written about failings of politicians from both political parties, and it demonstrated the hegemonic ideal of heterosexuality is closely related to the hegemonic ideal of familial patriarchy.

In turning to the application of David and Brannon's (1976) four themes – No Sissy Stuff, The Big Wheel, Sturdy Oak, Give 'Em Hell – the factors of Levant's (2007)

Male Role Norms Inventory – Restricted emotionality, Self-reliance through mechanical skills, Negativity toward sexual minorities, Avoidance of femininity, Importance of sex, Toughness, Dominance – were used as initial codes and then condensed into the David and Brannon (1976) four themes.

### **No Sissy Stuff**

Of all the characteristics used to analyze *Esquire* in this study, David and Brannon's (1976) No Sissy Stuff is perhaps the most out of place when it comes to U.S. presidential politics. It is not well-suited for analysis of politics, as its maxim "A 'real man' must never, never resemble women, or display strongly stereotyped feminine characteristics," (p. 14) such as "vulnerability" or "extremely positive feelings such as love, tenderness, and trust" (p. 16) would make the role of a public politician virtually impossible. The stereotypical trope of politician kisses baby does not seem to have affected *Esquire's* presidential political coverage; while displays of emotion and affection are never held against candidates, rarely are they the focus of a presidential politician's story frame. (This sentence confused me, too, or appears contradictory.)

Restricted emotionality is one of the six categories from Levant (2007), which has its root in David and Brannon's (1976) No Sissy Stuff. During the coding process, passages that were coded for restricted emotionality were later condensed into the No Sissy Stuff category. Numerous instances of restricted emotionality were detailed in *Esquire's* presidential politics coverage.

Junod (2012) recounted Obama's use of drones to carry out targeted killings of suspected terrorists. Though Junod framed the article as a rebuke for such uses of military force, the article functioned as a reinforcement of the awesome power claimed by the

president. Junod's moral questions about the targeted killing, if anything, placed the author in the less masculine position, for showing uneasiness with the results, and it was notable that Junod described all the ways the president had communicated his own moral questions through leaks and statements from other officials but never from his own mouth (Junod, 2012).

Military service in war provides the backdrop for many examples of restricted emotionality. Senator Bob Kerrey, who ran in 1992, lost his right leg due to an explosion in Vietnam (Sherrill, 1996). After he came back to the U.S., he elected to do his recovery in the hospital that was farthest from his home (Sherrill, 1996). "I wanted to be alone, to begin recovery alone" (Sherrill, 1996, p. 90). When he finally returned home to Kansas a year later, his sister recalled a "period of awkwardness" (Sherrill, 1996, p. 90). She said, "And you could see, too, that Bob needed some space... He'd come over to visit my parents, and we'd talk about everything but what had happened to him" (Sherrill, 1996, p. 90). Likewise, despite his decorated service, John Kerry did not talk about his experience in Vietnam; a co-worker at the Middlesex County district attorney's office said: "The whole time we were there, John never talked about Vietnam. We spent hours together, and that was an area that he didn't talk about" (Pierce, 2004, pp. 105, 156). John McCain, whose story of capture and torture is so well-known it practically tells itself, is uncomfortable with the narrative. Jones (2006) said: "Even now, nearly forty years later, he is reluctant to talk about it, except to say, 'I have never considered myself a hero, because I failed in some ways'" (p. 101).

Then there are the rare examples of candidates who simply defy expectations and break down emotionally. Richard Ben Cramer (1996) captured a moment on the campaign trail with Bob Dole, who became emotional talking about his hometown:

Then he stopped speaking, and his left hand came up to hide his eyes. He was crying – and no one had seen that before. No one knew what to do. Elizabeth wanted to go to him – but not onstage! The silence was awful. Bob could not stop crying ... (Cramer, 1996, p. 115).

The silence was awful not merely because it was an awkward social moment, but because of the added awkwardness the man, his reputation, and his purpose for being on that stage before the crowd in the first place made it ever more so.

There may be a critical mass to such restrictive emotionality though. At some point, it may pass beyond what is expected of a man to become something of a defining feature, and for a presidential candidate, that could be detrimental. Consider Bill Bradley, who left the Senate after three terms to tend to his cancer-stricken wife and raise their daughter, as he returned to political life with a campaign for the presidency in 2000.

Pierce (2000) said of him:

Nevertheless, Bradley declines to share his anguish over his wife's breast cancer, diagnosed in 1992, with those citizens who tell him about their struggles with the nation's health-care system. He holds back the details of helping to raise his daughter from all those people who come to talk to him about the pressures on working families (p. 106).

But Pierce described the complicating factor for politicians adhering to the No Sissy Stuff category:

To be a genuinely charismatic political candidate is to at least seem to share the secrets of the soul, something Bradley has never done – not with his teammates, not with his fellow senators, and not with the country he wants to lead. He's so greedy for other people's stories and such a miser with his own. He is a public man with a cloistered heart (Pierce, 2000, p. 106).

For Pierce, the contradiction created by Bradley's yearning for others' stories but refusing to share his own created a layered, complex portrait of the man.

### **The Big Wheel**

David and Brannon (1976) used running for president as one of their examples for this particular characteristic. Generally, it is defined by the ability to "command respect and be looked up to for what one can do or has achieved" (David & Brannon, 1976, p.19). Closely related to Trujillo's (1991) category of occupational achievement, this precursor defines success in terms of "occupational prestige and achievement" but it goes beyond that to include markers of "wealth, fame, power, and visible positions of leadership" (David & Brannon, 1978, p. 19).

Due to the relative equality bestowed on all presidents by virtue of occupying the highest office in the land, this analysis, similar to the occupational achievement characteristic, will focus on articles of candidates to establish the prominence of this particular characteristic of the hegemonic masculinity paradigm.

Charles Pierce (2014) analyzed the potential candidates for the 2016 election, focusing mainly on the Democrats, and he framed the article through the lens of Hillary Clinton embodying Big Wheel characteristics. The article was presented as an argument against the phenomenon of a "cleared field," which means that a politician's campaign was so inevitable so as to scare off any potential competitors (Pierce, 2014). Pierce (2014) declared Clinton as just such a politician, one whose popularity was such that she became the "conventional wisdom" (p. 152). After beginning the article with Martin O'Malley's potential candidacy, Pierce pivoted to Hillary Clinton:

And there is one thing that Martin O'Malley doesn't talk about is the fact that there is one undeclared candidate on the Democratic side who is reckoned to be

capable of taking the oxygen from the room, the money from the campaign, and the nomination for the asking (Pierce, 2014, p. 151).

David and Brannon (1976) described the Big Wheel generally as “to command respect and be looked up to for what one can do or has achieved” (p. 19), and the healthy respect of other potential candidates toward Hillary Clinton is evidence of her Big Wheel status.

Pierce (2014) described Hillary Clinton’s pre-2016 status as the “conventional wisdom” for the Democratic party:

Hillary Clinton has pride of place unlike any candidate in recent memory: She’s the wife of a two-term president, a former senator from New York, and the former secretary of state. She has first call on the party’s most talented campaign staffers, both nationally and in the states. She has first call on the party’s most overstuffed wallets and on every local- and national-television camera from Iowa to New Hampshire and back again. This has been recognized tacitly by almost every other proposed potential candidate (p. 152).

Hillary Clinton’s reputation preceded her; as Pierce (2014) put it:

Without even announcing that she will run for president, Hillary Clinton has frozen the Democratic primary process. She has frozen the media’s attention and the energies of the party’s activists, and, most important of all, she has frozen the wallets of all the big donors, all of whom are waiting for her to jump to decide what they will be doing over the next two years (p. 152).

By virtue of the Big Wheel, Pierce (2014) never had to acknowledge what a monumental statement he was making by announcing Hillary Clinton as the “conventional wisdom”; he proceeded directly to a principled objection of the whole concept of cleared fields, inevitable candidates, and conventional wisdom. He did not pause to ponder that for the first time in our nation’s history, the conventional wisdom was a female candidate for president of the United States. It is arguable that such an approach by Pierce is one of the most subversive pieces of presidential political writing in *Esquire*, as it recognized the

hegemonic masculinity paradigm but did not treat Hillary Clinton's candidacy differently than it would a similarly situated male politician's status.

Pierce (2014) elevated Hillary Clinton's Big Wheel estimation by connecting her to two former presidents. First, on clearing the field as a showing of strength, Hillary Clinton's 2016 prospects were compared to the spring of 1991 when President George H.W. Bush, "the conqueror of the Levant, had an approval rating of 80 by-God percent. This scared away most of whom were perceived to be on the Democratic party's A-list...The elder Bush had cleared both fields, they said" (Pierce, 2014, p. 152). Of course, the second part of that two-pronged elevation by Pierce (2014) was that "one of the few people who stepped up was the governor of Arkansas," (p. 152) also known as her husband, Bill Clinton. Pierce (2014) said the cleared field allowed Bill Clinton to "put together a renegade staff that out hustled the Republicans for two years" and win the election in 1992; Hillary Clinton was an instrumental part of the campaign (p. 152). While Pierce's larger point is that cleared fields can allow candidates with nothing to lose room to roam, he is approaching it from a position skeptical of the Big Wheel candidate, which, in 2016, was Clinton.

Junod (2000) showed Donald Trump as a candidate through the lens of David and Brannon's (1976) Big Wheel characteristic. Junod (2000) adopted Trump's 2000 campaign narrative as defined by the Big Wheel to make it the defining frame for the article. Junod (2000) started the actual narrative element of his article by describing Donald Trump on his golf course, playing with a professional golfer. The owner of the course, Trump, playing with a professional is all about status, both of Trump himself and the Trump International Golf Club. Trump, later in the article, will confess that proximity

to golfers like Raymond Floyd is what allows him to charge a regular member so much money (Junod, 2000). By describing the specifics of the course, Trump is presenting an assessment of himself as the owner, where the money spent redounds to Trump's intrinsic value. He described the course:

“They say it takes 150 acres to build a good course, 185 to build a great one. This is 215 acres, okay? We're charging \$250,000 for memberships. And we're raising the price to \$300,000 in January. And still we can't keep 'em out” (p. 209).

Junod (2000) described the portrait of Majorie Merriweather Post, the builder of Mar-a-Lago, so that when he described the similar but larger portrait of Trump, the reader can tell what Trump thinks of himself. He then detailed Trump's use of more status symbols, mainly a royal-blue Lamborghini “which was so new that its opalescent leather seats were still covered in plastic” and noted that Trump had trouble finding the windshield wipers and “even more trouble finding third gear” (p. 210). The car itself was what mattered; it represented that Trump could have such a luxury, but Trump seemed unconcerned that his unfamiliarity with the basic operations of the car might undermine the symbolism.

Finally, Junod (2000) recalled a story told by Trump's butler, Tony Senecal, where Trump asked Senecal if Trump's private jet is the most impressive jet he had ever flown on. Senecal answered it was the second most impressive, and Trump seemed perplexed (Junod, 2000). Senecal had flown on Air Force One, and he “loved to remind his current employer of places where his reach did not extend” (Junod, 2000, p. 214). Senecal shared the story “as a possible explanation of Mr. T's presidential ambitions” (Junod, 2000, p. 214). Junod (2000) wrote:

Of course, it was hard to believe that even a man such as Donald Trump would have so simple and so reductive a pretext for running for president, but then,

having met him, I found it hard to believe that there could be anything more. He was weirdly...complete (p. 214).

After he described Trump as “a man of wealth and accomplishment and largesse,” Junod (2000) recounted how he posited loftier motivations for Trump’s campaign for president, some of which were overheard by Trump when he walked into the room. Junod (2000) confessed what happened next: “He listened respectfully to my spiel, then slapped me on the back and whispered briskly and confidentially in my ear: ‘Maybe so, Tommy, but in the meantime it gets me a *hell* of a lot of publicity” (p. 214).

### **Sturdy Oak**

The prominence of David and Brannon’s (1976) Sturdy Oak category in *Esquire’s* writing on presidential politics may be due, in part, to the ineffable nature of the characteristic. It is something different and apart from the “success or traditional measures of social status” mentioned in *The Big Wheel* (David & Brannon, 1976, p. 24). It is a sense of toughness and self-possession, “arrived at through a combination of traits, including, but not limited to, “quiet confidence, self-reliance, determination, indifference to opposition, courage, and seriousness” (David & Brannon, 1976, p. 24).

In short, this characteristic of the hegemonic masculinity paradigm is instrumental in portraying presidents, with their awesome power and responsibilities, as individuals worthy of such things. Paterniti (2000) provided a simple example of that seemingly effortless self-possession, when he described Clinton:

He is a famously voracious multitasker. He can do a crossword, watch golf on television, get briefed on a conflict in Africa, and work on a speech, all at once. An adviser, exasperated by the man’s seeming lack of interest during one briefing, demanded that he repeat what the adviser had just said. And then the man did, verbatim (p. 107).

Branch (1996) captured a similar sentiment:

He is famous among his staff for doing several things at once, and I have seen him carry on an intense phone discussion with the secretary of state while chewing an unlit cigar, finishing a crossword puzzle, and moving on without missing a beat to deal solitaire (p. 109).

Such descriptions paint a portrait of a top-rate intellect at work, and it takes on a superhuman glow in the awe it generates in those who see it. Self-possession and quiet confidence are radiated outward, and the president is portrayed as the right man for the job.

Junod (2010a) documented President Obama's numerous traits that, when considered in total, produce that ineffable quality of both self-possession and toughness (David & Brannon, 1976). Junod contrasted President Obama with what came before – “After eight years of the Decider, we elected the Deliberator...” (Junod, 2010a, p. 57).

Junod wrote:

Now we've decided that that he's too deliberative, too methodical, too cool, too unemotional, too even-tempered, too undemonstrative, too rational, too conciliatory, too compromising, which makes him, even in the view of his admirers, a Vulcan and in the view of his enemies, a literal alien, who by temperament and maybe even birthright could never be considered “one of us” (Junod, 2010a, p. 57).

Every one of the descriptors given by David and Brannon (1976) can be reformulated to fit the list given by Junod (2010a), a “combination of quiet confidence, self-reliance, determination, indifference to opposition, courage, and seriousness” and also the quality that “a man should always be ‘his own man,’ should think for himself” (David & Brannon, 1976, pp. 24-25).

Junod (2012) wrote harshly about President Obama's drone policies, but before he did, he described those dual strands of tough and self-possessed:

You are a good man. You are an honorable man. You are both the president of the United States and the winner of the Nobel Peace Prize. You are both the most powerful man in the world and an unimpeachably upstanding citizen. You place a large premium on being beyond reproach... You are not only rational; you're a rationalist. You think everything through, as though it is within your power to find the point where what is moral meets what is necessary... You prize both discipline and deliberation; you insist that those around you possess a personal integrity that matches their political ideals and your own... (p. 100).

These positive traits are what make the article and the argument so powerful; due to these qualities that we like and want in our president, the action of targeted killings is harder to accept, because some part of the reader expects more from such a figure.

Junod (2010a) also described the self-possession and confidence of President Obama in an article about Hillary Clinton. When he wrote about the decision to select Hillary Clinton as the secretary of state, he quoted one of her longtime friends as saying:

He was a rock star, but he knew he was going to have to concentrate on domestic issues. He needed another rock star to travel the world because he knew he couldn't. He didn't want to have to worry about it, and now he doesn't. It says a lot about him – his confidence – that there can be two rock stars in his administration (p. 85).

Back when he was a candidate for the presidency, Charles Pierce (2008) described then-Senator Obama in a way that illuminated the very epitome of self-possession:

He seems to have emerged into this campaign, and into this moment in history, fully formed. One of the chief – and most deadly accurate – criticisms of Hillary Clinton was that her entire campaign was based on the inevitability of her nomination... the cynic realizes that nobody ever thought Hillary Clinton was as inevitable a president of the United States as Barack Obama believes himself to be (p. 109).

As the Sturdy Oak characteristic is often used to describe the qualities that candidates possess, its hegemonic position in U.S. presidential politics can also be used to recognize the absence of the collection of traits in a candidate. For example, Junod (2000) described

Donald Trump as completely lacking the characteristics of the Sturdy Oak. The unspoken root of the Sturdy Oak is that it is not an affectation, but a representation of reality; in short, it is sincere.

It is ineffable as David and Brannon (1976) said because it is not achieved by trying, but rather is recognized in those that possess that complicated mix of traits.

Donald Trump, in Junod's (2000) profile, is presented as a man who cannot resist trying and is, in fact, defined by his trying. Junod (2000) said:

Was he spinning me, was he playing me, was he selling me? Of course he was. That's what he does. Indeed, when people ask if he is always that way – if, indeed, he is always Donald Trump – I say he always is, and he never is, at the very same time, in the very same word and the very same gesture, and that's why he's so... permanent (p.208).

### **Give 'Em Hell**

Closely related to Trujillo's (1991) characteristics of physical force and frontiersmanship, David and Brannon's (1976) Give 'Em Hell is ripe for analysis in U.S. presidential politics and *Esquire's* chronicles of it. The most interesting aspect of Give 'Em Hell is its offensive attack posture, as opposed to the Sturdy Oak's defensive posture (David & Brannon, 1976). This hegemonic masculinity characteristic is easily recognized in the combative nature of politics and the potentially violent nature of the presidency when utilizing the incumbent powers of the commander in chief. David and Brannon (1976) described the characteristic as one that “smacks of strength and toughness but is not fundamentally wholesome, constructive, or benign” (p. 27).

Presidents Bush and Obama presided over the country during declared wars in the Middle East, and much ink has been spilled over this part of their presidencies. President Clinton also presided over military actions, though not as epic in scope or effect as the

wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. But *Esquire's* framing of issues that could be classified under the Give 'Em Hell characteristic do not blindly endorse the hegemonically masculine position; the magazine recognizes the hegemonic paradigm but often writes from a position of opposition to the power. As a case study of this particular point, Tom Junod's (2012) examination of President Obama's drone policies criticized the president for his Give 'Em Hell approach.

Junod (2012) retold the story of the killing of Anwar Al-Awlaki, an American citizen who became associated with Al Qaeda, who was killed in a drone attack in September 2011. Just a few weeks later, Al-Awlaki's son was killed in a separate attack though he did not seem to be the intended target (Junod, 2012). Interspersed with the narrative of Al-Awlaki's life and death, Junod (2012) structured the other half of the article in the second-person, directed as a letter to President Obama himself. Within the second-person sections, Junod (2012) provided a history of the drone program that killed Al-Awlaki, and most notably, he pointed out that President Obama is the first president to make "...killing rather than the capture of individuals the option of first resort, and have killed them both from the sky, with drones, and on the ground..." (p. 100).

Junod (2012) described the context of President Obama's decision to use the drones as often as he did. He recounted how President Obama had inherited three wars from President Bush: "the two 'hot theater' wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, and the 'asymmetrical' war against Al Qaeda" (p. 102). Junod (2012) acknowledged the fundamental difference that technology has made in the waging of war; where other presidents had to consider the "slaughter of massed armies," President Obama, enabled by technological advancements, had "to decide if [he] could target and kill one person at

a time?” (p. 102). Junod (2012) entertained the possibility of his own ignorance about wielding such power, when he said: “Maybe it’s an easy question, considering the difficulty of the others. Maybe killing one person isn’t a burden at all; maybe it’s a relief, in light of the alternatives” (p. 102).

Junod (2012) was, in many ways, deferential to President Obama; he spent a great many lines describing how honorable and upstanding he saw the president to be. In that way, Junod (2012) recognized the hegemonic masculinity paradigm, but in his recognition, Junod (2012) and, by extension, *Esquire* challenged the paradigm rather than blindly supporting or perpetuating it.

*Esquire’s* coverage of presidential candidates, long before they might ever have to grapple with the moral implications made possible due to the power to make decisions like President Obama, also relies heavily on the frame made possible by the Give ’Em Hell characteristic of the hegemonic masculinity paradigm. At a bare minimum, *Esquire* writers must navigate the personal and political narratives of the candidates, and campaigns are especially fertile grounds to see the Give ’Em Hell ethos in practice.

In the political realm, military narratives are reliably Give ’Em Hell in nature. Chris Jones (2008) wrote about John McCain’s campaign for president, and he described an evening in Las Vegas where McCain saw a boxing match with his youngest son, Jimmy. It was a night off from the campaign, the chance for McCain to say a proper goodbye to his son, a marine who would be going off to war at the young age of 19 (Jones, 2008). McCain’s Give ’Em Hell attitude, mixed with his experience in the Vietnam War, led him to be fairly hawkish on the war in Iraq, and he endeavored to send more troops as he was critical of President Bush’s strategy (Jones, 2008). When he

succeeded in that effort, it all but guaranteed that his own son would be called into service (Jones, 2008). To bring the point home, Jones (2008) detailed how McCain's father had made a similar commitment to war when he ordered air strikes on Hanoi when McCain was being held there as a prisoner of war. McCain, his honor already well-established by virtue of his capture and torture at the hands of the enemy, so embodied the Give 'Em Hell characteristic that he did not pull back from his convictions, even though it meant greater risk for his youngest son.

Back in the 2004 presidential election, Junod (2004) framed his entire profile of Wesley Clark around the Give 'Em Hell ethos. The article begins with a quote from the Bible, from the book of First Samuel, of the moment Goliath appeared before the Israelites and struck great into them, except for David (Junod, 2004). David's refusal to back down in the face of a literal giant is the epitome of Give 'Em Hell. Junod (2004) could not help describe Clark as a machine of war. David and Brannon (1976) elaborated on the Give 'Em Hell characteristic by saying it was "the need to hurt, to conquer, to embarrass, to humble, to outwit, to punish, to defeat, or... 'to move against people'" (p. 27). These traits smack of war, so *Esquire's* framing of Clark was imbued with the electricity such acts can generate. Junod (2004) said of Clark: "For thirty-four years, he'd been serving his country by studying, teaching, planning or making war, and now he was finally putting war behind him" (p. 93). The Give 'Em Hell frame is used to drive home the point: For Democrats to win the 2004 election, it will take winning an all-out war, and this is the man to lead them."

Beyond the military narratives, Give 'Em Hell also encompasses the fiery outsider brand of politics, and *Esquire* does not shy away from presenting those candidates in

vivid, colorful language. Take, for instance, Dennis Kucinich's 2008 campaign for president. Scott Raab (2007) profiled Kucinich and framed his candidacy as the longest of long shots, but because of that reality, Kucinich was one of the few candidates willing to speak truth to power, to be unabashedly himself and hope the message, in both style and substance, would resonate. The first paragraph yielded this:

...It's Kucinich time, now, because what this blue-balled, war-thwacked nation needs is not another scleroid corporate whore but a sixty-one-year-old vegan peacemonger, poor beyond corruption and honest as spit, hauling balls big enough to choke Dick Cheney and keep a smile like a woozy kitten's on the love-lit face of a twenty-nine-year-old heartthrob wife... (p. 183).

Part of Raab's angle for the story is he is from the same city as Kucinich; therefore, he is uniquely situated to understand the candidate, to capture him, and from that conceit comes an article that revels in the magazine equivalent of Kucinich's outsider candidacy.

Raab (2007) later described Kucinich as a:

bare-knuckled urban populist who believed that funding city schools and services was more vital than tax abatements for developers, who held court at Tony's Diner on West 117th Street, not the Union Club downtown, and who called them blackmailers and con men in public (p. 184).

Raab (2007) described an answer Kucinich gave in one of the debates, where the wife of a deployed soldier asked if he had the opportunity to kill bin Laden with a Hellfire missile that would kill not only bin Laden but other civilians as well, would he launch? Raab (2007) wrote: "Because he is from Cleveland, Kucinich won't duck and, worse, can't say no without throwing his own punch" (p. 218). He goes on to say he does not think assassination should be used as a tool, that bin Laden should be tried in an international court, and "so should any other person," meaning Dick Cheney, according to Raab (2007). So Kucinich displayed "the need to embarrass...to humble...to punish" (David & Brannon, 1991, p. 27) both bin Laden and Cheney, and he displayed it to the

wife of a deployed soldier; this is the offensive-minded strength and toughness that David and Brannon (1976) described. David and Brannon (1976) recognized that such actions may not be “fundamentally wholesome, constructive, or benign” (p. 27). As Raab (2007) would put it: “It’s a perfectly awful answer, right or wrong” (p. 218).

## Chapter 5: Conclusions

This research set out to answer two related questions:

**Research Question 1:** *How does Esquire magazine's feature writing on U.S. presidents and presidential candidates depict characteristics of hegemonic masculinity?*

**Research Question 2:** *How does Esquire magazine's depictions of hegemonic masculinity change depending on the political party of the candidate?*

### Findings

Through the literature review, it is evident that characteristics of hegemonic masculinity have become increasingly prevalent in U.S. presidents' and presidential candidates' narratives about themselves. Through the analysis of 20 years of *Esquire* magazine issues, though diverse in writing styles, voices of authors, and political leanings, overall the magazine, perhaps unsurprisingly, framed the majority of their feature articles about U.S. presidents and presidential candidates using those nine hegemonic masculinity characteristics. Though few, if any, articles analyzed could be said to encapsulate all nine characteristics evaluated by this study, the vast majority of *Esquire's* feature writing on U.S. presidents and presidential candidates is set firmly within the hegemonic masculinity paradigm.

To conclude that the findings in this study are merely unsurprising would flippantly discount the historical role of *Esquire* in the mass media landscape. Many readers (the author considers himself among this crowd) viewed this period of *Esquire* as a version of refined manliness, a version of manliness that valued a suit and tie over Carhartt work clothes, handcrafted leather-soled oxfords over steel-toed boots, and a briefcase over a lunch pail. Implicit in *Esquire's* foregrounding of those values were the

requirements that made them possible, such as a college education and a well-paying professional job. Consider the language used by Hearst Corporation to describe *Esquire* in 2012:

*Esquire: Man at His Best*—As the only general-interest lifestyle magazine for sophisticated men, *Esquire* defines, reflects and celebrates what it means to be a man in contemporary American culture. Required reading for the man who is intellectually curious and socially aware, *Esquire* speaks to the scope and diversity of his passions with spirited storytelling, superb style and a tonic splash of irreverent humor (Draper, J., 2012, p. 95).

David Granger, *Esquire*'s editor in chief during the vast majority of this study's period of interest, wrote of the magazine this way:

*Esquire* is special because it's a magazine for men. Not a fashion magazine for men, not a health magazine for men, not a money magazine for men. It is not any of these things; it is all of them. It is, and has been for nearly seventy years, a magazine about the interests, the curiosity, the passions, of men (Granger, 2007).

In a 2017 New York Times article, Alex Williams said:

It's a question that may determine the fate of a magazine for 84 years has not just sought to serve the American man, but to define him. Since the days of Hemingway, *Esquire* has provided a running seminar in the arts of manhood. It is where young men turn to learn to mix a French 75, tied a full Windsor knot, ogle (in purely aesthetic terms, of course) the latest lingerie-clad Hollywood ingénue and absorb life lessons from stoical, stubble-face cover subjects like Clint Eastwood and Bradley Cooper (Williams, 2017).

While those values represented a sort of white-collar masculinity, the magazine's discourse surrounding the hegemonic masculinity paradigm did not exhibit more enlightenment, equality or feminist-values. But if any men's magazine could have gotten away with such enlightened, feminist-friendly writing while maintaining its readership, the author submits that *Esquire*, due to its well-established literary prestige and its editorial willingness to pursue interesting story angles, could have, if it had chosen to do so. The fact that it chose not to move in that direction may not be surprising, but it

certainly was not inevitable. Instead, the characteristics of hegemonic masculinity served as a default worldview for the magazine.

Physical force is commonly deployed by *Esquire* in profiles of U.S. presidents and presidential candidates. Part of the explanation for this could be attributed to the general nature of a profile article, in which a common technique is to describe the physical attributes of the subject. But the hegemonic nature of the male presidency seems to have greatly influenced *Esquire*, as its writers seem not only to be reporting on what they see when they are with a candidate, but also standing in for the millions of readers and voters who will not meet the candidates by considering the question, “Can I really see this person as president?” In the cases of Bill Clinton and Ronald Reagan, the authors reminded readers, “Of course you can; just look at them.” In the case of Dennis Kucinich, the message was bleaker, “No, not really.” The male body was held up as the standard by which we measured our candidates, and those who had lost some part of their body during a war exuded even more manliness despite the subtraction. Bob Kerrey was manlier than most because of the incredible pain he could endure (Sherrill, 1996). Wesley Clark was manlier than most for how he taught himself to walk again (Junod, 2004). John McCain was manlier than most because, after years of torture, he could not raise his arms to brush his own hair (Jones, 2006). And for Hillary Clinton, she was forever connected to the male body, not only because of her departure from that norm, as a woman, but also because of her husband’s body (and his use of it) and her proximity to it.

*Esquire* used the occupational achievement characteristic as a framing device often in profile articles because such articles are made to go into a president’s or candidates’ pasts, to evaluate where they have been and what they have done. It is less an

element of features about sitting presidents because by virtue of having been elected president, they have attained the pinnacle of a political career. It is often used to in profiles of candidates, highlighting the achievements of the candidate in other levels or branches in government or by providing the accomplishments of the candidate from a life outside of politics. *Esquire* reflects the hegemonic nature of occupational achievement, as those who run for president tend to come from accomplished backgrounds. So while *Esquire* is not in a position to create this impression for a candidate where no evidence exists, it does perpetuate the hegemonic masculinity of this particular characteristic.

Familial patriarchy reveals itself as a hegemonic masculinity characteristic by the paucity of references to it; it is considered so commonplace as to barely deserve mention. That is not to say there are not explicit examples of the characteristic to be found in *Esquire's* feature articles on U.S. presidents and presidential candidates. The clearest example of this characteristic is found in the *Esquire* articles about Bill and Hillary Clinton, both of whom have been the subject of numerous articles, and for every article about one, it is fundamentally an article about the other. And that is the point, as Kurson (2003) wrote: "For the next twenty-seven years, she became the second in a two-for-the-price-of-one life" (p. 186).

*Esquire's* reliance on the frontiersmanship characteristic is not surprising, considering its potential for interesting stories. Presidencies and presidential campaigns generate a great amount of media coverage, so it is in *Esquire's* interest to frame stories overflowing with rugged individualism and the cowboy ethos; candidates who exemplify this characteristic add flavor and spice to the potentially bland genre of political writing. Because of how broadly defined the characteristic is (and broader is better, since few

candidates are actual cowboys, there is a need to transpose that ethos onto the relatively drab and mundane acts of campaigning and governing), frontiersmanship is perhaps one of the most widely used narrative devices from U.S. presidents and presidential candidates, and correspondingly, it is one of the most commonly used frames in *Esquire's* writing of the same.

Heterosexuality, much like the closely related characteristic of familial patriarchy, hums along in the background of *Esquire* articles on presidents and presidential candidates, scarcely rising to the surface, and because of that fact, its marker of the hegemonic masculinity paradigm is firmly established. The heteronormative nature of the presidency is beyond dispute; the time period analyzed for this study saw no presidents or presidential candidates to challenge that status. But sexual activity, for the most part, has remained implied in U.S. presidential politics, usually only becoming an issue in the event of affairs, which in themselves are still heterosexual in nature, but violative of the hegemonic ideal expressed by Trujillo (1991).

The list of hegemonic masculinity characteristics considered in this study is not exhaustive of the possible manifestations of hegemonic masculinity, but in evaluating for the nine characteristics of this study, *Esquire* is entrenched in, and perpetuates the continuation of, the hegemonic masculinity paradigm through its reliance on framing devices that are rooted in that paradigm.

The findings for the second research question build off of the findings for the first, but consider more closely the nature of the coverage in relation to the political party affiliation of the politician. Of the 46 articles reviewed, 28 focused on Democratic presidents or presidential candidates and 18 focused on Republican presidents or

candidates. Many of the examples of the hegemonic masculinity characteristics highlight Democratic politicians more than Republican politicians, but the researcher submits that reality is not rooted in a disproportionate application of the hegemonic masculinity paradigm. The fact that the number of articles about each party might represent a bias within *Esquire* is outside the scope of the current research; it only looks at the articles that were printed between January 1996 and December 2016 to determine if the application of hegemonic masculinity frames were used more for one party or another. To that end, the hegemonic masculinity paradigm is so accepted at *Esquire* that nearly all stories about U.S. presidents or presidential candidates must be considered to have the paradigm as a starting point, whether the politician (or the politician's party) promotes or subverts the relevant characteristics. As conservative politics are more easily associated with masculinity and liberal politics generally are seen as more feminine (Gibson & Heyse, 2010), a potential way to check whether *Esquire's* use of hegemonic masculinity characteristics more depending on the political party of the politician is to analyze whether *Esquire* adheres to that conventional sorting of the parties described by Gibson and Heyse (2010). For instance, does *Esquire* portray conservative, Republican presidents or candidates as more masculine than Democratic opponents? And conversely, does *Esquire* portray liberal Democratic presidents or candidates as less masculine?

The short answer to both questions is no; *Esquire's* adherence to the hegemonic masculinity paradigm treats masculinity as partyless. This is made possible by a diversity of writers, a diversity of opinions (not always explicitly expressed), conscious decisions to present opposing viewpoints, and an institutional preference for and acceptance of interesting writing.

Consider the similar characteristics of physical force and control and No Sissy Stuff, with both being heavily expressed through military or war narratives. Republicans Bob Dole's 1996 campaign and John McCain's 2008 campaign (and their war service) were not treated any differently than the Democratic candidacies of Bob Kerrey, Wesley Clark, and John Kerrey. The uses of military force under the Democratic presidencies of Presidents Clinton and Obama was not treated any differently than those of President Bush. Both parties' presidents were praised for doing what was seen as necessary and excoriated for doing what was considered outside the bounds of decency. While the opinions found in *Esquire's* articles were as various as the authors who penned them, a fairly constant reliance on the hegemonic masculinity paradigm pervaded the articles of the time period under consideration, and that did not seem to change based on the politicians' political parties. This sort of duality is present for almost all of the nine hegemonic masculinity characteristics used in this study, with each category containing a reference to at least one Democratic president or candidate and one Republican president or candidate.

Although the reliance on the politicians' parties does not seem to affect *Esquire's* use of the hegemonic masculinity paradigm, there are instances when the magazine seems to subvert the paradigm. This is perhaps best represented by the numerous stories about Hillary Clinton, whose unique qualifications arguably make her the most potentially subversive candidate to the existing hegemonic masculinity paradigm. As explored through the literature review, political parties can be sorted along a masculinity scale (Katz, 2013; Gibson & Heyse, 2010). Gibson and Heyse (2010) collected such conventional wisdoms, reaching a general conclusion that politically conservative

candidates (of the McCain/Palin ticket variety) are more readily associated with hegemonic ideals of masculinity when compared to politically liberal candidates (of the Obama/Biden ticket variety). As a well-established and loyal Democrat, Hillary Clinton is oriented with the American political party that is viewed as less masculine (Katz, 2013). Although she did not formally run for president until 2008 (and even then, she was not the party's ultimate nominee, losing to Barack Obama) and did not formally become the Democratic party's nominee until 2016, she was long considered by *Esquire* as a serious presidential candidate, as early as 1999. For all of the ways that Hillary Clinton was posed to break up the hegemony of the male presidency, *Esquire's* articles about her during the period under examination show that the magazine was unable to write about her outside of the hegemonic masculinity paradigm, with one possible exception. Pierce (2014) can be read as stepping outside of the hegemonic masculinity paradigm by writing about Hillary Clinton as the front-runner of the potential 2016 candidates; while adhering to concepts of hegemonic masculinity, namely the Big Wheel characteristic, the focus on Hillary Clinton as such a powerful and fearsome candidate is subversive of the paradigm.

Other candidates do not possess the sort of paradigm-shifting qualities that Hillary Clinton does, so, for the purposes of this analysis, she is held up as the bar the magazine must clear to be seen as deviating from its typical hegemonic masculinity framework. *Esquire* takes as its starting point many of the narrative frameworks established by the candidates (or the candidates' opponents), so to the extent that hegemonic masculinity characteristics are being advocated or challenged by the campaigns dictates *Esquire's* framing much more than a perceived ideological preference of the magazine.

## Implications

The current research is multidisciplinary, as it touches on political communication studies and masculinity studies in addition to mass media studies.

As of the writing of this study, American politics approaches the 2020 presidential primary elections. The Democratic field of candidates is large and one of the most diverse in the history of presidential politics (Bump, 2019). With this expansion in the presidential candidate field, new methods of communication are needed by the candidates, and as such, the current study could be of practical use to future presidential campaigns. For diverse candidates, there may little-to-no upside for them to allow *Esquire* to profile their candidacy, as the prominence of the hegemonic masculinity paradigm in the magazine could overshadow the usefulness of the publicity. Candidates wishing to make their “outsider” status in terms of the hegemonic masculinity paradigm an explicit strength or defining characteristic could see a benefit from agreeing to be profiled by *Esquire*, as explicitly discussing the topic of hegemonic masculinity in society may force the writer and editors to frame the interview as a subversion of the paradigm. At a minimum, candidates should be aware of the historical precedence of *Esquire’s* reliance on the hegemonic masculinity paradigm and consider carefully whether they would care to be profiled in that manner. Due to the increase in potential media outlets and platforms available to candidates that allow them to circumvent the traditional media gatekeepers and reach potential voters directly, a men’s consumer magazine may not seem worth the risk that editorial discretion resides with the magazine no matter how the candidate comports himself or herself during the interview.

The current study's impact on the field of masculinity studies mirrors that of Trujillo's 1991 work to extend the hegemonic masculinity characteristics to media representations in sports. Hegemonic masculinity, as a cultural script, pervades many spheres of public and private life, and the addition of various cross-disciplinary applications increases the awareness of and acceptance of hegemonic masculinity research. This study further validates the characteristics enumerated by Trujillo (1991) and their application to presidential politics as extended by Gibson and Heyse (2010).

This is an interesting time in the history of *Esquire*. Near the end of the period analyzed in the current research, *Esquire*'s editor-in-chief of 19 years, David Granger, was fired. During that time, the magazine won 17 National Magazine Awards (Eha, 2019). He was replaced by Jay Fielden, whose three-year stint at the magazine ended in 2019, yielded none. According to Eha (2019), men's magazines are dying and startling statistics prove his point: "In 2005, five men's magazines—*Esquire*, *Details*, *GQ*, *Maxim*, and *Men's Health*—had combined newsstand sales of 1.4 million. Ten years later, those same publications were selling only 540,000 newsstand copies between them..." *Esquire*, specifically, is feeling the tightening and decline in cultural relevance: "In 2015, *Esquire* sold an average of 76,531 newsstand copies per issue, but only 22,425 per issue in the first half of 2018—a mere 3 percent of total circulation" (Eha, 2019).

The current research is a useful foundational step in closely examining men's magazines' latent ideologies that may manifest through editorial decisions. Identifying and acknowledging that such ideologies are being reflected in the framing of stories is an important step that may prompt a more thorough analysis of the genre as a whole. The analysis is not just an academic exercise; in an age where media organizations of all

stripes are grasping for strategies to replace the relevance that the internet has stolen from them, a glossy men's magazine could stand to closely scrutinize its content and grapple with the accumulated tone perpetuated. Analyses like those represented by the current study, that is to say, wide-ranging macro content analyses, force a publication such as *Esquire* to consider where it has been as it contemplates where it is going.

Consider the example of the *New York Times* in the wake of the 2016 presidential election. The publisher and executive editor published an open letter to readers, and while couched in fairly neutral language, it was essentially a concession of myopic coverage that led the paper to be one of the many news outlets caught off guard when Donald Trump defeated Hillary Clinton (Sulzberger, Jr. & Baquet, 2016). Almost 100 days into the Trump Administration, the paper made the implicit exceedingly explicit with an article from Liz Spayd, the public editor, in which she acknowledged the letter was the opening salvo in an attempt to burst the “hermetic bubble” of elite media organizations (Spayd, 2017, p. 9). In short, she highlighted the ways the *New York Times* attempted to reckon with its shortcomings, which, in the moments that mattered most, nobody at the paper seemed aware of. Such an introspective assessment led those in power at the *Times* to concede they had failed to be what they wanted to be, despite continued excellence.

This research serves as a starting point for not only researchers but those in power at *Esquire* should they ever wish to turn their gaze inward. Conceptions of masculinity have changed drastically since *Esquire's* founding in 1933, and the world into which the magazine is distributed today – one where gay marriage is no longer a news story and #MeToo revelations are no longer kept secret – views both men, masculinities and mainstream media differently.

## Limitations

The researcher is a longtime reader of *Esquire* magazine in a purely recreational sense, outside the critical context of academic research. As a male researching a men's magazine for characteristics of hegemonic masculinity, familiarity with the magazine, and admitted affinity for it, has to be recognized and confronted constantly during the research, coding, analysis and writing processes.

As such, a foundational limitation of this research is the inherent subjectivity of a qualitative content analysis conducted without a team approach. As the current research represents an extension of sociological and psychological concepts to the existing mass media studies framework of framing, the researcher's main purpose was exploratory in nature, determining to what extent, if any, *Esquire* utilized the characteristics of the hegemonic masculinity paradigm as framing devices. The current research demonstrates that such an analysis is possible with only one coder, but additional coders would likely strengthen the findings by reducing the subjective nature of coding.

Subjective choices were made at various points in the current research, one such being the decision to analyze for hegemonic masculinity characteristics by the extension of particular research findings in other disciplines. As masculinities are numerous, the researcher's selections excluded many forms of masculinity in the analysis. Different conceptions of masculinity could be brought to bear on this type of research, and those possibilities could be explored in further research, as this is a beginning, foundational step in this field of research.

## Further Research

Due to the relative dearth of research on men's consumer magazines generally, and *Esquire* specifically, the possibilities for continued research are numerous. The first possibility for continued research in this vein would be the expansion of the time period under consideration. *Esquire's* long publishing history and frequent forays into presidential politics makes for a natural extension of the current research. A study of *Esquire's* archive in such a longitudinal fashion provides a glimpse into the evolution of the magazine's relationship to masculinities.

A similar analysis could be expanded to include *Esquire's* other feature content, analyzing to what extent the hegemonic masculinity paradigm influences the magazine's coverage of other categories of people, including but not limited to celebrities, women, entrepreneurs. A broader analysis of *Esquire's* editorial sensibilities with regard to the deployment of the hegemonic masculinity paradigm could yield deep insight into the evolution of masculinities over time in one publication aimed at men.

Drawing off the inspiration drawn from the psychological studies of masculinity which resulted in measures such as the Male Role Norms Inventory, *Esquire* and other men's magazines' editorial staffs are ripe areas for surveys and measures of attitudes toward masculinity. Such a study could work in tandem with content analyses of the work being produced and the implications for the perpetuation or subversion of the hegemonic masculinity paradigm.

Further research need not remain vertical under the *Esquire* banner, but rather it could also expand horizontally to include other men's magazines, such as GQ. As

conversations about one magazine usually encompass the other, it would be interesting to see how the two compare in use and reliance on the hegemonic masculinity paradigm.

As the current research is qualitative and exploratory in nature, extending the concepts developed in sociology and psychology studies of masculinities, it provides a foundation for a quantitative study of the concept. A quantitative study of the concepts presented in the current research could yield insight into how the hegemonic masculinity paradigm presents in *Esquire*, such as showing the prevalence of each characteristic and quantifying *Esquire's* use of the paradigm. It could prove insightful to know which characteristics, if any, are deployed most commonly.

There is also the audience side of this area of research. While the current research only considers the production of the magazine, a full range of research potential exists which focuses on whether, and to what extent, the hegemonic masculinity paradigm is noticed by the readership.

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## Appendix A

Title: Grave Doubts  
Author: Martha Sherrill  
Date: January 1996  
Subject: Bob Kerrey

Title: Searching For Deliverance  
Author: Norman Mailer  
Date: August 1996  
Subject: Pat Buchanan

Title: Clinton Without Apologies  
Author: Taylor Branch  
Date: September 1996  
Subject: Bill Clinton

Title: The Heart of the Bobster  
Author: Richard Ben Cramer  
Date: September 1996  
Subject: Bob Dole

Title: The Rogue in the White House  
Author: Paul Johnson  
Date: June 1997  
Subject: Bill Clinton

Title: Our Man in the White House  
Author: Tom Junod  
Date: April 1998  
Subject: Bill Clinton (via John Travolta's portrayal of him)

Title: The Hardest Working Man in Show Business  
Author: Martha Sherrill  
Date: April 1998  
Subject: Bill Clinton

Title: Dubya!  
Author: Steve Brodner  
Date: October 1998  
Subject: George W. Bush

Title: You'll Never Look at Hillary Clinton the Same Way Again  
Author: Tom Junod  
Date: October 1999  
Subject: Hillary Clinton

Title: The Heartthrob  
Author: Charles Pierce  
Date: February 2000  
Subject: Bill Bradley

Title: Lessons in the Simple Humanity of Donald J. Trump, America's Host  
Author: Tom Junod  
Date: March 2000  
Subject: Donald Trump

Title: The Last Will and Testament of William Jefferson Clinton  
Author: Michael Paterniti  
Date: December 2000  
Subject: Bill Clinton

Title: The Exit Interview  
Author: Michael Paterniti  
Date: December 2000  
Subject: Bill Clinton

Title: What Does W. Stand For?  
Author: Paul Begala  
Date: April 2001  
Subject: George W. Bush

Title: My Father's Memories  
Author: Ron Reagan  
Date: June 2003  
Subject: Ronald Reagan

Title: The General  
Author: Tom Junod  
Date: August 2003  
Subject: Wesley Clark

Title: Hillary's Last Chance  
Author: Robert Kurson  
Date: October 2003  
Subject: Hillary Clinton

Title: JFK at 86  
Author: Charles Pierce  
Date: October 2003  
Subject: JFK

Title: The Misunderestimation of John Kerry  
Author: Charles Pierce  
Date: June 2004  
Subject: John Kerry

Title: The Case for George W. Bush  
Author: Tom Junod  
Date: August 2004  
Subject: George W. Bush

Title: The Case Against George W. Bush  
Author: Ron Reagan  
Date: September 2004  
Subject: George W. Bush

Title: Jesse, We Hardly Knew Ye  
Author: John H. Richardson  
Date: September 2005  
Subject: Jesse Jackson

Title: The Third Term  
Author: Joe Canason  
Date: December 2005  
Subject: Bill Clinton

Title: One of Us  
Author: Chris Jones  
Date: August 2006  
Subject: John McCain

Title: The Beauty Contest  
Author: Charles Pierce  
Date: August 2007  
Subject: John Edwards

Title: American Gothic  
Author: Mike Sager  
Date: August 2007  
Subject: John Edwards

Title: It's Kucinich Time!  
Author: Scott Raab  
Date: November 2007  
Subject: Dennis Kucinich

Title: John McCain's Last War (One of Us, Pt. 2)  
Author: Chris Jones  
Date: January 2008  
Subject: John McCain

Title: Two Nights (One of Us, Pt. 3)  
Author: Chris Jones  
Date: April 2008  
Subject: John McCain

Title: The Cynic and Senator Obama  
Author: Charles Pierce  
Date: June 2008  
Subject: Barack Obama

Title: Joe  
Author: John H. Richardson  
Date: February 2009  
Subject: Joe Biden

Title: The Future of the Republican Party  
Author: Tucker Carlson  
Date: August 2009  
Subject: Jeb Bush

Title: Papa in Chief  
Author: Tom Junod  
Date: February 2010  
Subject: Barack Obama

Title: Hillary Happy.  
Author: Tom Junod  
Date: May 2010  
Subject: Hillary Clinton

Title: The Indispensable Republic  
Author: John H. Richardson  
Date: September 2010  
Subject: New Gingrich

Title: Romney Doesn't Scare Obama. This Guy Does.  
Author: Chris Jones  
Date: August 2011  
Subject: Jon Huntsman

Title: Poor Jon Huntsman  
Author: Chris Jones  
Date: November 2011  
Subject: Jon Huntsman

Title: The Lethal Presidency of Barack Obama  
Author: Tom Junod  
Date: August 2012  
Subject: Barack Obama

Title: The Cynic and President Obama  
Author: Charles Pierce  
Date: November 2012  
Subject: Barack Obama

Title: 1998  
Author: Charles Pierce  
Date: October 2013  
Subject: Bill Clinton

Title: If Not Hillary, Who?  
Author: Charles Pierce  
Date: November 2014  
Subject: Hillary Clinton

Title: The Cynic and the Lame Duck President  
Author: Charles Pierce  
Date: January 2015  
Subject: Barack Obama

Title: The Cynic and Senator Rubio  
Author: Charles Pierce  
Date: February 2016  
Subject: Marco Rubio

Title: The Last Optimist at the Apocalypse  
Author: Tom Junod  
Date: February 2016  
Subject: Hillary Clinton

Title: Donald Trump  
Author: Scott Raab  
Date: February 2016  
Subject: Donald Trump

Title: A Modest Proposal For Our Times  
Author: John H. Richardson  
Date: June 2016  
Subject: Donald Trump

## **Appendix B**

This coding manual served as a reference for the definitions of the hegemonic masculinity characteristics from the literature. The Potential Markers is a non-exhaustive list of ways the frames might present themselves in the articles.

### **Physical Force and Control**

Physical force and control is envisioned as an extension of the male body (Trujillo, 1991). “In this way, the male body comes to represent power, and power itself is masculinized as physical strength, force, speed, control, toughness, and domination” (Trujillo, 1991, p. 291).

Potential Markers:

- Descriptions of candidates’ body or physical appearance
- Sports or athletic activity
- Endurance/stamina on the campaign trail (or in the role of president)
- Physical pain or sacrifice
- War narratives
- Military service
- Anger or emotional outbursts that manifest in physical ways

### **Occupational Achievement**

Trujillo’s (1991) next distinguishing feature is “occupational achievement in an industrial capitalist society” (p.291). Carrigan et al. (1985) said hegemony is closely related to the types of work performed, with certain jobs deemed “men’s work” and others as “women’s work” and the general “definition of some kinds of work as more masculine than others” (p. 94).

Potential Markers:

- Business experience or leadership (CEO)
- Professional jobs (doctor/lawyer/accountant)
- Accumulated wealth (not aristocratic, but earned on own merits)
- Physical jobs that prioritize strength (blue collar/manual labor)
- Political leadership (Governor, member of Congress, cabinet member, vice-president, etc.)
- Military service in leadership position (officers)
- Professional athlete

### **Familial Patriarchy**

Trujillo (1991) defines patriarchy as “the manifestation and institutionalization of male dominance over women in society in general” (p.291). He goes on to specify that patriarchal representations of men include “breadwinner” labels, “family protectors,” and

“strong father figures” (Trujillo, 1991, p. 291). Women, on the other hand, are often represented as “housewives,” “sexual objects,” and “nurturing mothers” (Trujillo, 1991, p. 291).

Potential Markers:

- Husband narratives
- Father narratives
- Male as a head of household
- Female as domestic leader
- Wife narratives
- Mother narratives

### **Frontiersmanship**

Trujillo (1991) states that “masculinity is hegemonic as symbolized by the daring, romantic frontiersman of yesteryear and of the present-day outdoorsman” (p. 291). A form of this is the archetype of the cowboy, and historically is represented in the media as “white male with working-class values” (Trujillo, 1991, p. 292).

Potential Markers:

- “Cowboy” image (literal and figurative)
- Maverick persona
- “Go-it-alone” mindset
- Principled opposition to majority opinion; lone holdout narratives
- Rugged
- Adventurous
- Intuitive
- Stay up late/wake up early narratives
- Workaholic narratives

### **Heterosexuality**

Trujillo (1991) describes a “sex hierarchy” that elevates sex that is “heterosexual, marital, monogamous, reproductive, and non-commercial” (p. 292). This manifests itself as a form of hegemonic male sexuality which requires men not to be “effeminate (a “sissy”) in physical appearance or mannerisms, not having relationships with men that are sexual or overly intimate, and not failing in sexual relationships with women” (Trujillo, 1991, p. 292).

Potential Markers:

- Sexuality narratives
- Appeal to the opposite sex
- Ladies’ man persona
- Infidelity/Affairs narratives

- Long-lasting marriages

### **No Sissy Stuff: The Stigma Of Anything Vaguely Feminine**

David and Brannon (1976) state that parents want young boys to conform to the male sex role more than they care about whether young girls conform to the female sex role, and that fathers especially disapprove of boys displaying feminine characteristics. It's stated simply: "A 'real man' must never, never resemble women, or display strongly stereotyped feminine characteristics" (David & Brannon, 1976, p. 14). One particular example is the showing of emotionality, specifically emotions that show "vulnerability" or "extremely positive feeling such as love, tenderness, and trust" (David & Brannon, 1976, p. 16).

Potential Markers:

- Tough father figure narratives
- Don't show emotions/Stiff upper lip narratives
- Don't talk about your feelings
- No handout/ "Pull yourself up by your bootstrap" narratives

### **The Big Wheel: Success, Status, And The Need To Be Looked Up To**

David and Brannon (1976) sum this theme up simply: "One of the most basic routes to manhood in our society is to be a success: to command respect and be looked up to for what one can do or has achieved" (p.19). They define success as being defined in terms of "occupational prestige and achievement, wealth, fame, power, and visible positions of leadership (David & Brannon, 1976, p. 19). Of particular interest to this study, David and Brannon (1976) suggest that becoming President of the United States as a means for achieving those markers of success. The researchers note that symbols of success are an important part of this theme, as a means to demonstrate to those who may not know the man closely that he is, in fact, successful (David & Brannon, 1976).

Potential Markers:

- Leadership positions
- Working up to a higher position from a low starting point narratives
- Status symbols/luxury items in clothing, accessories, material possessions
- A large fan base/celebrity status

### **The Sturdy Oak: A Manly Air On Toughness, Confidence, And Self-reliance**

The third theme from David and Brannon (1976) is somewhat ineffable, as it's not related to or dependent upon "success or traditional measures of social status" (p. 24). It manifests itself as a combination of "tough and self-possessed, which somehow emerges from the variable combination of quiet confidence, self-reliance, determination, indifference to opposition, courage, and seriousness" (David & Brannon, 1976, p. 24). Elaborating on self-reliance, David and Brannon (1976) summarize the concept as "the

idea that a man should always be ‘his own man,’ should think for himself” (p. 25). This theme is described as going “beyond the mere avoidance of ‘feminine’ emotionality; it’s the cultivation of a stoic, imperturbable persona, just this side of catatonia. A ‘real man’ never worries about death or loses his manly ‘cool’”(David & Brannon, 1976, p. 25).

Potential Markers:

- “Never let them see you sweat” narratives
- Calm under pressure
- Self-confidence
- Resilience/Never quit narratives
- “Poker face”/Inscrutableness
- Fearlessness
- Effortlessly talented/natural affinity narratives

### **Give ‘em Hell: The Aura Of Aggression, Violence, And Daring**

The final element of David and Brannon’s (1976) initial assessment of traditional masculinity ideology “smacks of strength and toughness but is not fundamentally wholesome, constructive, or benign” (p. 27). Specifically, they characterize it by “the need to hurt, to conquer, to embarrass, to humble, to outwit, to punish, to defeat, or... ‘to move against people’” (David and Brannon, 1976, p. 27). In contrast to The Sturdy Oak’s defensive posture, Give ‘Em Hell takes an offensive attack posture (David & Brannon, 1976).

Potential Markers:

- Ruthlessness narratives
- Coldness
- Decisiveness
- “Wild Man” narratives
- “Hell on Wheels” narratives
- “Controlled Recklessness” narratives
- Brutality
- War Narratives
- Military Service
- Hunting/Ability to Kill
- Domineering
- Anger Management/Hot Temper issues
- “Take no prisoners” narratives
- Inability to suffer defeat/Overwhelming desire to win

MRNI-R (Levant et al., 2007)

To describe the characteristics set out by the MRNI-R, each characteristic lists the corresponding questions from the actual surveys used in the research instruments.

### **Restricted emotionality**

- A man should not react when other people cry
- Being a little down in the dumps is not a good reason for a man to act depressed.
- A man should never admit when others hurt his feelings.
- Men should be detached in emotionally charged situations.
- I might find it a little silly or embarrassing if a male friend of mine cried over a sad love story.
- Fathers should teach their sons to mask fear.
- One should not be able to tell how a man is feeling by looking at his face.
- Men should not be too quick to tell others that they care about them.

### **Self-reliance through mechanical skills**

- A man should be able to perform his job even if he is physically ill or hurt.
- Men should not borrow money from friends or family members.
- Men should have home improvement skills
- Men should be able to fix most things around the house.
- A man must be able to make his own way in the world.
- A man should never count on someone else to get the job done
- A man should know how to repair his car if it should break down.

### **Negativity toward sexual minorities**

- Homosexuals should never marry.
- Men should not talk with a lisp because this is a sign of being gay.
- All homosexual bars should be closed down.
- Homosexuals should not be allowed to serve in the military.
- Men should never compliment or flirt with another male.
- Men should never hold hands or show affection toward another.
- Homosexuals should never kiss in public.
- A man should not continue a friendship with another man if he finds out that the other man is homosexual.
- Homosexuals should be barred from the teaching profession.
- It is disappointing to learn that a famous athlete is gay.

### **Avoidance of femininity**

- Men should not wear make-up, cover-up or bronzer.
- Men should watch football games instead of soap operas.
- Men should not be interested in talk shows such as Oprah.
- Boys should play with action figures not dolls.
- A man should prefer watching action movies to reading romantic novels.
- A man should avoid holding his wife's purse at all times.
- Boys should not throw baseballs like girls.
- Importance of sex

### **Toughness**

- Men should excel at contact sports.
- If another man flirts with the women accompanying a man, this is a serious provocation and the man should respond with aggression.
- Boys should be encouraged to find a means of demonstrating physical prowess
- Men should get up to investigate if there is a strange noise in the house at night
- It is important for a man to take risks, even if he might get hurt.
- When the going gets tough, men should get tough.
- I think a young man should try to be physically tough, even if he's not big.

### **Dominance**

- The President of the US should always be a man.
- Men should be the leader in any group.
- A man should always be the boss.
- A man should provide the discipline in the family.
- A man should always be the major provider in his family.
- In a group, it is up to the men to get things organized and moving ahead.
- Men should make the final decision involving money.