



Perspectives on the mediation of the quest for healthy masculinity: the case of the website Art of Manliness

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Abstract:

Inspired by the phenomenological tradition of communication theory and research, this study applies frameworks relevant to the discourse on media, health, and society in a preliminary analysis of the Anglophone website Art of Manliness, which, without using the vocabulary of toxic or healthy masculinity, offers men actionable advice on personal development, in content that ranges from being generally about wellbeing to being almost medicalized. Toxic masculinity has been articulated, at the intersection of the social science and public health disciplines, as a gender issue and as a general social problem with implications on the health of communities. Movements for gender equality have inaugurated advocacies to curb this kind of masculinity, asserting that manhood can be expressed in healthier ways, especially in ways that honor women, but also in ways that respect the facticity of variety in how to live manhood. Missing from the literature is an examination of media cases exemplifying the search for healthy masculinity. I begin to close this gap by drawing from contemporary literature about toxic masculinity to enumerate a taxonomy of approaches to the problem. I also demonstrate the operationalizability of frameworks and concepts such as purity and danger, sociomaterialism, biovalue, and healthism in conjunction with textual analysis for future research about the mediation of healthy masculinity.

Keywords: Toxic masculinity, Healthy masculinity, Mediation, Men's health, Internet and health, Sociomaterialism, Biovalue, Healthism, Ritual

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Introduction

The media spectacle that was the controversial Gillette advertisement about what men can be, released to the world in 2019, may have exacerbated the debate surrounding the notion of “toxic masculinity” (Gillette, 2023). However, the video from the company that manufactures grooming products is hardly the first material that mediates the concept of toxic expressions of manhood. Conversely, it is not the first media product that hints at the idea of a healthy manhood within the Anglophone media ecology. There is, in fact, a wealth of material across media platforms that is explicitly

aimed at helping men become good men. There are — to mention a few of the extant media — websites that offer to teach proper manliness in general, movies that tackle the roots of the problems of the growing man in experiences of absent fatherhood, and news articles that sound the alarm over an allegedly diminishing ability among men to form and sustain homosocial friendships. The area of new media that deals with healthy masculinity in view of conversations around toxic masculinity is quite understudied.

Art of Manliness (artofmanliness.com), is one of the most prominent new media platforms that offer men paths to healthy masculinity. This is an English-language website

founded by Brett and Kate McKay, a married couple from the United States. With almost five million visitors every month (and nearly a million Facebook followers), the website has grown into the internet's biggest English-language men's magazine (Art of Manliness, 2023; Crunchbase, 2023; Similar Web, 2023).

In this paper, I argue that the discourse about toxic masculinity needs to be balanced by a discourse on healthy, embodied masculinity, the quest for which is aided by material in the media such as those found on the website *artofmanliness.com*. To develop my argument, I propound the question of how leading frameworks used in studies of media, health, and society — an emerging subfield of communication sciences — may be used to rigorously analyze and systematically undergird discourse on content similar to that of *Art of Manliness*. How may the use of these frameworks or concepts improve our understanding of the mediated search for healthy masculinity? To answer the question, I conduct preliminary analyses of portions of the website using these frameworks. They are Mary Douglas' ideas of purity and danger, Nikolas Rose and Carlos Novas' notion of biovalue, Deborah Lupton's framework of sociomaterialism, and Robert Crawford's idea of healthism. Through frameworks-supported initial analyses of the website, I demonstrate that content that indicates a turn toward the notion of healthy masculinity in new media is substantial enough to be studied with the objective of enriching the discussion on and conceiving practical steps to solve the malaise of toxic masculinity.

I situate this study within the phenomenological tradition and theory of communication research and thus present it as an exercise of dialogue, beginning to listen to an initiative to solve a problem (Craig, 1999).

I begin by reviewing the scholarship on the concept of toxic masculinity, subsequently introducing three paradigms used in approaching the problem. Next, I introduce the website *Art of Manliness* in the context of the wider new media movement in the 21st century to cater to an audience seeking content related to healthy masculinity. Afterward, I discuss toxic and healthy masculinity in relation to perspectives about male toxicity and the website using the aforesaid frameworks or concepts and the method of close reading. I address some opinions or objections that may be raised from a critical perspective of communication theory and research. Finally, I offer some concluding reflections.

Literature Review

Toxic Masculinity

The term “toxic masculinity” was precisely coined by its originator to foreground a set of attitudes among men as a condition that, while unequivocally unhealthy, has an antidote (Harrington, 2021, p. 347). According to some scholars, this illness has been understood as having a mental or psychological nature in men who have had emotionally distant relationships with their fathers, manifesting itself in such behaviors as “extreme competition and greed, insensitivity to or lack of consideration of the experiences and feelings of others, a strong need to dominate and control others, an incapacity to nurture, a dread of dependency, a readiness to resort to violence, and the stigmatization and subjugation of women, gays, and men who exhibit feminine characteristics” (Kupers, 2005, p.717; Harrington, 2021).

Salter (2019), however, argues that the causes of toxic masculinity are not necessarily universal, pointing out that in cases of determining the causes of incidents of violent behavior among men, alcohol has been found to be a factor, which is material rather than psychological.

Elliott (2018), meanwhile, locates the origins of toxic masculinity within a social context of pervasive oversimplifications in understanding “traditionally masculine characteristics such as violence, physical strength, suppression of emotion and devaluation of women” (p. 18) — themselves grounded on what Harrington calls “hegemonic masculinity”, the view that there is a single template for what makes a real man (Harrington, 2021).

From this snapshot of studies, it is apparent that the notion of toxic masculinity is approached by scholars from three schools, unanimous in concluding that there is a sort of masculinity that is toxic yet divergent in diagnosing the roots of and recommending remedies to the illness. What I call the absent father school attributes toxic masculinity to a man's poor or non-existent relationship with his father in his formative years and therefore implies that toxicity may be prevented by ensuring that a boy has strong emotional bonds with his father or with a father figure at least, if not addressed through psychotherapy. The materialist school acknowledges the tangible factors that predispose a man to toxic behavior and therefore implies that solving the problem may take a law-based approach, for instance through the regulation of alcohol trade and consumption.

The social school intimates that interventions in the socialization of boys in school may prevent toxic masculinity. These interventions include ensuring that in schools, boys are taught the achievements of women, the idea of complex (as opposed to hegemonic) masculinity, and awareness about sexist speech, behavior, and gender-based violence (Elliott, 2018, pp. 19-21).

While the scholars I have engaged regarding toxic masculinity have not erased the notion of its healthy counterpart, this has not been the focus of their studies. This is understandable given that there seems to be no urgent need to discuss the notion of healthy masculinity. I contend, however, that the quest for healthy masculinity must be problematized, too, not least because doing so helps complete conversations about the problem of toxic masculinity. If toxic masculinity is so complex a phenomenon as to be approachable from at least three vantage points, then what constitutes healthy masculinity cannot be taken for granted as the amorphous remains of masculinity once all its toxicity has been removed. Healthy masculinity must also be discussed, and in the following paragraphs, I discuss this notion using recent literature as well as established voices in discourses on health, having selected *artofmanliness.com* as an object in which the quest for healthy manhood is unfolding at the turn of the third millennium. In the succeeding sections, I introduce *Art of Manliness* and appraise its content through various perspectives and within the discussion of toxic and healthy masculinities.

Art of Manliness

The *Art of Manliness* website is a fit-for-purpose unit of analysis in discussing the mediated quest for healthy masculinity since it offers a wide range of material covering the interests of men and maybe juxtaposed with the problem of the illness that is toxic masculinity, be it approached from an absent-father, materialist, or social school. This adaptability sets the website apart from similar ones where the approach to dealing with toxic masculinity is either more subtle or more specialized. I do not speak of internet editions from legacy media organizations of men's lifestyle magazines such as *Men's Health*, *GQ*, or *Esquire*. Such websites generally intend to do no more than captivate an audience of men who will become their loyal readers on topics including health and fitness, sex, fashion, sports, and

relationships. They neither implicitly nor explicitly assume a mission of systematically building a culture of healthy manhood. In contrast, *Art of Manliness* belongs to a different group of men's websites — independent of large legacy media institutions, native to the internet, and created in recognition of defects that plague cultures of living manhood everywhere. Similar websites include *Order of Man* (*orderofman.co*) that seeks to answer to “the need for learning how to be a better father... a need for strong and honorable men outside of the home” (Order of Man, 2023); *Fathering Together* (*fatheringtogether.org*) that has a mission “to turn dads into positive change agents” (Fathering Together, 2023), and *Wolf & Iron* (*wolfandiron.com*) that responds to men “lacking in examples of men living as they ought” (Wolf and Iron, 2023).

Like these websites, *Art of Manliness* does not explicitly use the phrase “toxic masculinity” but its aim of being a resource for men who are looking for media content to help them flourish as men at a time when masculinity is riddled with problems means that it is germane to the discussion of building healthy masculinity. The wealth of material on the website falls within the scope of the World Health Organization's (WHO) thick, heavily criticized definition of what it means to be healthy but also, in sections, is specific enough to complement narrower definitions of health, such as those operationalized in social health movements and by medical professionals.

In its “About” page, *Art of Manliness* is introduced as “a one-stop resource for actionable advice that covers every aspect of a man's life: character, career, relationships, fitness, style, skills, and much more” and identifies itself with its twin website, *The Strenuous Life* (*strenuouslife.co*), where the goal of the two websites is disclosed: to help men train “mind, body, and soul [and] leave the strata of mediocrity and attain to greater excellence and service in the world” (The Strenuous Life, 2023). In this sense, the objective of *Art of Manliness* may be situated within health as “a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity” (World Health Organization, 1948, 2023). The objective also demonstrates how easy it is to include the human concern for happiness, in this case, men's aspiration toward greater well-being, excellence, or service within “health” as an umbrella concept, as stated in a critique of healthism that I will revisit toward the end of this paper (Crawford, 1980, p. 387).

Healthy Masculinity, Purity, and Danger

In her meditations on the themes of dirt and pollution, the anthropologist Mary Douglas (2002) argues that the question of dirt is a question of order. “Dirt is essentially disorder”, she says, “eliminating it is not a negative movement, but a positive effort to organize the environment” (Douglas, 1966, p.2). Douglas’ treatise is a gateway to comparing the great religions, which she views as settings for the separation of clean from unclean in a ritual that in effect represents “reflection on the relation of order to disorder, being to non-being, form to formlessness, life to death” (Douglas, 1966, p.7). I argue that Douglas’ notions of purity and danger are not only applicable, as she says, to our conceptions of hygiene in non-religious contexts: they also apply to systems of thought about society, specifically in the conversation about masculinity. The toxic man is a danger to society and the healthy man is pure. *Art of Manliness* responds to the demands of scholars and gender advocates for the education of men into healthily masculine people, for the deterrence of their toxicity with, as stated in its About page, the help of a range of media content. This includes articles, books, and podcasts that cover

every aspect of a man’s life: character, career, relationships, fitness, style, skills, and much more... that facilitates a man’s growth in body, mind, and spirit... to help men grow up well, reach their potential, become better friends, mentors, husbands, fathers, and citizens, and live a life of eudaimonia — skill, flourishing, excellence, and virtue” (Art of Manliness, 2023).

By implication, for *Art of Manliness*, the dangerous, toxic man is of bad character, unsteady career, unstable relationships, and poor state of fitness, among other attributes, while the pure, healthy man may be described in an opposite manner.

While it may be argued that toxic masculinity is a tool of the patriarchal order, this patriarchy need not be of the same stock as Douglas’ notion of order that corresponds to purity. The patriarchal order propped up by hegemonic masculinity is from a broader application of the notions of purity and danger but one order within the greater social order that human beings do not merely perpetuate but strive to improve or purify over time. It is this effort at the improvement of the social order or purification that

occasions for human beings, men included, the space and time to classify aspects of masculinity, of patriarchy as disordered, dirty, and impure, justifying an alternative ordering of society. The patriarchal order that uses toxic masculinity is, to use Douglas’ expression, a matter out of place in a society undergoing a process of purification or ordering.

Sociomaterialism and avoiding toxic masculinity

Sociomaterialism is an approach to digitized health education that focuses on the interaction between its assembled human and non-human components and on their ensuing, respective transformations over the course of their procession through space and time (Lupton, 2022, p. 517). The interaction between visitors and subscribers of *Art of Manliness* and the material available in it and in its twin website may be analyzed from a sociomaterialist lens. Not only does this lens apply to the people and technologies involved in this case, but this also brings into focus a way of responding to toxic masculinity and fostering healthy masculinity that differs from without opposing the absent father, materialist, and social school perspectives about the problem.

One of the educational articles posted and republished on the website is titled “Why every man should be strong”. From a sociomaterialist view, the social involved in this article are its writer and its readers: a writer that aims to justify physical strength training for men, and readers, presumably and primarily men, who are interested in material that argues for the reasonableness of physical strength training. The material involved includes the internet and the text of the article that is located in the digital sphere. In the interaction between author-content on one hand and reader on the other, the toxic behaviors of men based on their physical strength are not only unmentioned and therefore downplayed by erasure, strength-based healthy behaviors are also promoted. For instance, as the article states,

Building strength boosts your physical and mental health. Obesity kills. Exercising and raising your T[estosterone] (which lifting weights does) keeps your body healthy and combats depression. Need I say more? Physical strength is practical and prepares you for any exigency.

The author does not merely promote body-building among men, but more importantly, argues that the telos of men's strength training is their role as society's protectors. The text presents to the reader, instead of negative contexts of masculine strength such as bullying and the infliction of physical violence, attractive positive contexts such as the use of male strength for protecting and providing for people and for building infrastructure:

Strength is a defining attribute of masculinity. It's the literal power that has allowed generations of men to protect and provide for their families. It's the force that built our skyscrapers, roads, and bridges. While our current environment doesn't require us to be strong, developing our physical strength is still a worthwhile pursuit, for it lays a foundation for developing the Complete Man.

Seen from a sociomaterialist perspective, the author, as a teacher of healthy manhood using digital tools, as he admits, was inspired by pre-existing digital material about male strength training to produce a digitally published essay. The new material — a transformation written into the website — is one with which the author's audience interacts well, such that he found it necessary, as he indicates at the beginning of the article, to feature it again prominently on the website in the 2020s though it had been originally released in 2014. This is another transformation of the website following the assembly and intercourse of the social (author and audience) and the material (internet and text).

While one may sensibly opine that the duty to defend social groups and the self, foregrounded in the said essay, has been and could be used as pretext to excuse the toxic and hypermasculine tendency to be violent, to conclude that the writer has a vested interest of promoting toxic masculinity would be to risk subjecting the text to faulty eisegesis as it first underlines strength training as essential to men's personal health, for instance to avoid the harms of being overweight and mentally unstable, before proceeding to underline the social fruits of men's physical strength in the protection of peoples and construction of infrastructure. To deny the goodness of these fruits simply because men have misused their physical strength would be to summarily essentialize male physical strength as intrinsically toxic. On the contrary, however, physical strength by itself is not equivalent to violence. To quote from the text,

Even in our safe, suburban society, strength still comes in handy. I want to know that I'm strong enough to carry someone out of a burning home to safety (as well as being able to save my own life in an emergency); I want the strength to lift heavy bags of mulch when I'm working around my house; I want to be able to put a would-be attacker on the ground.

Masculinity and biovalue

The latent powers in human life itself have been changed into a source of value creation (Rose & Novas, 2005). In other words, human life may be considered a store of what is called biovalue. To the extent that the aspiration for healthy masculinity leads to assessed or increased economic, political, and other value in a man and in men, the concept of biovalue is useful in discussing healthy and toxic masculinity. In its promotion of healthy manhood, several articles and/or podcasts in *Art of Manliness* may be understood to clearly complement the idea of maintaining or increasing biovalue. "How to fall asleep in 2 minutes or less" provides men with guidelines for a technique of falling asleep fast, once used by naval aviators during World War II, thereby teaching them to manipulate their bodies' nervous systems in the name of productivity. "Podcast #862: Heal the body with extended fasting" gives a journalist who has authored a book about the wonders of fasting a platform to promote extended fasting by underlining the relationship between it and reversals in health conditions such as rheumatoid arthritis, diabetes, cancer, and mental health issues. In "The importance of having a physical identity", the authors of the website present in an article and a podcast the sports medicine doctor, sport psychologist, and orthopaedic surgeon, Dr. Daniel O'Neill, who encourages audiences to regain or establish their physical identity, their identity as beings who are embodied and should be moving, warning that the loss of this identity increases their risk of "all the physical and health issues a sedentary lifestyle creates: obesity, cardiovascular disease, muscle atrophy, insulin resistance, depression, and anxiety" and predisposes them to "missing out on many of the world's joys and pleasures" (Art of Manliness, 2023).

While viewing these articles through the prism of the concept that biovalue may initially seem contrived, this impression fades away when these articles and podcasts are contextualized within the objective of *Art of Manliness*. In

this objective, the flourishing of a man is constructed not only in terms of being free from and robust against mental and physical health issues but also in terms of being a means of enjoying fruitful careers and relationships, which are respectively central to the economic and political components of a man's biovalue. Moreover, while these *Art of Manliness* articles do not necessarily discuss biovalue as an outgrowth of interventions at the molecular level, they do spring from the roots of the notion of biovalue in the contemporary advances in biomedicine, including in the fields of genetics and the neurosciences. The articles do not explicitly commodify a man as an organism or as an assemblage of biological systems consisting of tissues, cells, and others, but their implication is unmistakable that the healthy, non-toxic man is someone (preferable) who acts in the politico-economic system. This man, healthy and non-toxic because he is in good condition as an organism and is harmless or beneficial to others, being of high biovalue, is capable of preventing the spread of toxic masculinity because he is able to model it to his sons and to other young men (addressing the absent father school), able to make healthy lifestyle choices (addressing the materialist school), and able to adjust well to society (addressing the social school).

From the perspective of promoting healthy masculinity, high-biovalue men would firstly benefit not those who stand to economically gain from them but the men and women in their immediate and wider social contexts. In addition, from this same perspective, biovalue is not a cold instrument to calculate the profitability of a man according to his health, so to speak, but a tool to sensitize men to be responsible to and to help those who have a claim to their assistance if they have higher biovalue and to enable those of low biovalue to stand for their lawful rights. This high-biovalue man need not be the hegemon megalomaniacally molding society according to his whims since in view of the objectives of *Art of Manliness* and similar websites, physical health alone is not complete health, and this dovetails with the idea of biovalue as pertaining not only to man as an organism but also to him as an economic or political actor. He has the sensitivity to collaborate with society and to place his biovalue at the service of combatting injustice and inequality, acting on *Art of Manliness* essays such as "How to fight entitlement and develop gratitude in your kids", "How a weekly marriage meeting can strengthen your relationship", or "How to deal with jerks, tyrants, bullies, and trolls".

Manliness and healthism

Crawford (1980) criticizes the movement, in society, of ever-increasing personal responsibility for health and the portrayal of everything in human existence within the vocabulary of health, which he calls "healthism". His bottom line is that while anything that can be good for an individual's health is not to be disavowed, shifting the blame for human health or sickness solely onto the individual comes at the cost of continuing or worsening inequalities in health among people at a societal level. This, he says, opens persons to inputs about human health from those who are not necessarily suitably educated to be health professionals but who can capitalize on counseling human beings (clients) under an expanded definition of health, for instance as alternative well-being gurus. Yet he also lambasts the idea that the usual medical experts and their future colleagues may become so powerful as to become the final arbiters of what constitutes a good human life simply because every aspect of it may be cast as a health issue. In other words, for Crawford, healthism is dangerous because it depoliticizes the quest for health by relegating it from a social objective to an individualistic, competitive, often middle-class pursuit, sacrificing the greater good that is achievable for human health through politics and governance. Yet he also counts among the perils of healthism the potential losses of human freedom in the voices of medical professionals writ ever larger and unchecked, leading to the medicalization of everyday life, as well as in the voices of those who claim to address health issues from vantage points outside the medical profession.

In the discussion of toxic and healthy masculinities, the risk of healthism, I argue, is not necessarily high. When men who have become toxic because of difficult experiences with their fathers find that they need medical intervention to sort themselves out, this could be a clear case of healthism, but when they go on a quest to reconcile with their fathers or make arrangements to live apart from them in order to avoid being part of a chain of toxicity, the development may be narrated as a move in favor of a healthier life. Yet there are other lenses apart from health through which a man may interpret his move, for instance, ideas such as family values, personal development, or relational maturity — categories that can hold their own without being chiefly appreciated in health mode. A materialist view of male toxicity, for instance tying it to alcohol can be grounded in discourses

about virtues such as prudence and moderation instead of about health. A social view of male toxicity clearly does not primarily lean on notions of health even though the term “toxic” draws from an empirical, medical glossary. In the social view, the proposed interventions to reverse toxicity are premised upon the power of a village, metaphorically speaking, to raise a man, not on the proposals of doctors, of allied professionals, or pretenders to medicine to solve the problem.

The sheer appending of “toxic” and “healthy” to “masculinity” seems to tip the quest for healthy masculinity toward healthism but the content in *Art of Manliness* is evidence that healthism is no foregone conclusion. In fact, the name of the website itself proposes that manliness is an artistic endeavor in an era when the medicine is ordinarily taken for granted as a science rather than an art (never mind the existence of colleges of medical arts), a field within the American academic silo term STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics). It is an effort to tackle health with what I hypothesize to be sufficient deterrents in place against healthism.

I must concede that in discussing *Art of Manliness* as an aid toward the achievement of healthy masculinity, it is possible to appraise the website as an artifact of healthism. Red flags related to the framework as Crawford elucidates it seems easy to enumerate. The site has a target audience of presumably individual men who may believe that becoming better as men is part of their quest for wellness amid the failure of the socio-political system to provide them with access to care for this aspect of their health. The site’s universal resource locator ends with “.com”, indicating that it is a commercial enterprise, its audience a potential market of the healthist whose money can be traded for content in aid of healthier masculinity. It sells merchandise and offers *The Strenuous Life*, its twin website as a paid subscription program in which men can join classes to train to become better men, thereby looking very much like a site tailored in the end to only those who can afford it, just like every product, service, or program that is accessible to the healthiest who is typically middle class.

In spite of all these, however, to conclude that *Art of Manliness* is a tool of healthism would be rather reductionist. While I argue that it is a mediated body of content in aid of achieving healthy masculinity, its own language does not privilege the vocabulary of health and sickness that is so prone to being hijacked by the healthist movements. The

website is divided into sections that suggest a sensitivity to the argument that not everything can be medicalized, or indeed, health-ized: “Get style” deals with self-presentation concerns. “Get strong” is the repository of content ranging from what is properly medical to the more broadly wellness-oriented. “Get social” delves into issues concerning men and relationality. “Get skilled” offers ways for men to improve their abilities or acquire new skills. “Get strong” is perhaps the section that is most vulnerable to becoming instrumentalized in healthism and questions of sociality, skill, and fashion may always be remixed as health matters but the philosophy behind *Art of Manliness* (and of *The Strenuous Life*) appears to be a healthy — pun intended — bulwark against healthism:

The Strenuous Life is a structured program designed to push individuals beyond their comfort zone and develop every aspect of who they are. Adherents are expected to train their bodies with vigorous exercise, train their minds and muscles by learning new skills, and train their souls by living a life of service-seeking virtue. In short, it’s a platform designed to facilitate skill acquisition and personal development. Think of it as a scouting program for grown men.

The goal of “living a life of service-seeking virtue” does not look like privatizing and individualizing healthcare as a reactionary response to the failure of a society or polity to equitably provide sustainable, efficient, and effective healthcare to its members and constituents. It is rather an assertion that it is good for men to improve themselves in every aspect, health included, because these are not ends in themselves but are means toward the lofty end that is a life of service. That this service is not enunciated with a political party brand does not necessarily mean that members of *Art of Manliness* or *The Strenuous Life* have opted out of political activism to give all a better life or indeed to improve medical and healthcare systems around the world. Perhaps, it simply means that the website has successfully divested itself of any indicator of political leaning, such that it draws men regardless of their political affiliation into a personal development project that potentially redounds to the welfare of systems, healthcare, political, and others, through their improved capacity to alleviate the woes that besiege such systems. This last point could well be an argument against Crawford’s apparent assumption that the

individual pursuit of and greater personal responsibility for health and wellness is automatically equivalent to going apolitical and terminating advocacy and activism for better medical and healthcare for all.

Conclusion

I have argued in this paper that the discussion of the problem of toxic masculinity needs to be balanced by discourse about what constitutes healthy masculinity and that material is available, in this case in the website *Art of Manliness*, which may be used as aids by men, at least in the Anglophone world, who wish to tread the path of healthy masculinity or move away from toxicity as a man. Listening with positive regard rather than with criticality especially during preliminary analyses, being inspired by the phenomenological tradition of communication theory and research, I began by exploring the literature on toxic masculinity, which yielded three problem-based approaches to the phenomenon: the approaches from the absent father, the materialist, and social schools — all necessary approaches but that are limited insofar as they are not solutions-focused in the way I have sought to be in this paper, introducing the website *Art of Manliness* as a media aid in solving the problem and subjecting it to a preliminary analysis.

In a nonsectarian, nonreligious context as in the question of social behavior, the notions of purity and danger as enunciated by Douglas remain applicable: social relationship is not a religion but it is governed by ritual in which toxic behaviors in men are considered out of place, implying that there are healthy manly behaviors that are ritually acceptable and encouraged. These may be found discussed and promoted in *Art of Manliness*, a medium in which writer(s), audience, and texts interact, evincing sociomaterialism and effecting change both in human beings and in material, as seen in the development and rehashing of the website content, from which may be deduced sufficient feedback from the audience to justify content development and reuse. Biovalue is a useful concept with which to reflect on healthy masculinity to the extent that improvements in man's intelligence and skills, as advocated for by the website, have implications on his value as a socio-political and economic participant in the various spheres of life. Healthism is a possible threat to the quest for healthy masculinity as laid out in *Art of Manliness* yet it has

philosophical underpinnings in categories like service and virtue, which are motives for resisting the healthism that is symptomatic of failed medical and healthcare regimes in capitalist economies.

The frameworks that I have employed along with the method of close reading in examining the question of healthy masculinity and the website *Art of Manliness* are operationalizable in questions for future research in media, health, and society, such as: (1) What social marketing processes have contributed to the sustainability of *Art of Manliness*? (2) How do visitors and subscribers of *Art of Manliness* and *The Strenuous Life* use the content of the websites to implement developments in their lives? (3) How applicable are dangerous-toxic and pure-healthy manly behaviors as categories of social critique in Anglophone cultures where English is not the first language? (4) What are the politico-economic advocacies (and their health implications) of visitors and subscribers of *Art of Manliness*? The contents of the website are of course not the only corpora that may be analyzed in relation to the research problem, so the frameworks may also be used in looking closely at other media products, representations, and audiences dealing with it, and in conjunction with methods such as qualitative content and critical discourse analyses.

In relation to the quest for a solution to the problem of toxic masculinity, this study indicates that the internet is an important resource. *Art of Manliness*, as I earlier asserted, is not the only men's website that, quite apart from other men's lifestyle websites faces the question of healthy masculinity head-on. The website and others are solid starting points for public discussions about how to ensure that boys and young men develop into healthy adults who do not harm but benefit the people who are entrusted to them. The existence of these websites also signals an inflection point in public use of the internet, from which issues such as fatherhood, manhood, the socialization of boys, and related ones that used to be restricted to domestic and private spheres are now rarefied for discussion and action in the public sphere. The emergence of new media as an important factor in the development and health of man finally signals the need for the formation of content producers for greater competence in communicating the topic of finding and walking paths toward healthy manhood.

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