

# Womenomics Theories of Sexual Violence: Governing Toxic Men

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This article analyses how neoliberal “womenomics” theories problematize toxic masculinity as inhibiting women’s economic productivity. The article shows how problematizations of masculinity informed welfare policies in OECD states where men’s violence and an increase in single mother households were explained by “father hunger.” Similar theories were applied to poor communities in developing economies. The article shows how welfare and development literature constructs the figure of the violent, idle, toxically masculine man as responsible for feminized poverty and violence against women. Programmes tackling poverty and violence attempt to transform men to adopt a healthy masculinity so that they can contribute to heterosexual couple-based households. The article also analyses economic, business, and professional media commentary on the figure of the toxically masculine elite man, along with legal and human resources advice to employers on dealing with “#MeToo issues.” Womenomics theory shapes problematizations of elite men’s toxic masculinity as inhibiting women’s economic productivity and progress into senior leadership positions to the detriment of the global economy. I argue that the disparagement of toxic masculinity reflects a change in the conditions of patriarchy since economists no longer support a form of patriarchy where women should devote their productive energies to the domestic sphere.

**Keywords:** toxic masculinity, gender policy, sexual violence, womenomics, #MeToo

This article investigates new problematizations of masculinity and sexual violence that have emerged within the “womenomics” theory that economic growth can be achieved by drawing more women into income-generating activities. Womenomics has prompted critical discourse on men’s conduct insofar as it appears to inhibit women’s productivity. I ask about the sorts of masculine subjects such problematizations of masculinity produce and what this tells us about the current “conditions for the defence of patriarchy,” in Raewyn Connell’s (2005, 77)

terms. Men are no longer supposed to expect the patriarchal privilege of a woman devoted to being a fulltime wife and mother while senior managers are supposed to support women’s success in male-dominated workplaces. Japan’s economy is often used as the exemplar of the power of unleashing women’s productivity. However, womenomics theory has been applied to developing economies as well as wealthy economies.

My analysis depends on the concept of problematization as developed by Carol Bacchi (2012) and Nikolas Rose and Peter Miller (1992)

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using Foucauldian governmentality theory. Through this theoretical lens, policy problems, such as toxic or unhealthy masculinity, emerge from political rationalities and practices rather than existing outside of political discourse. The term “political rationality” refers to a way of reasoning about the proper government of people (e.g. maximizing freedom and productivity) and desirable governmental outcomes (e.g. economic growth, population growth) in terms of specific logics and vocabularies (Rose 1999). A political rationality, such as neoliberalism, involves “significant agreement on key political problems,” allowing for debate over “what should be done, by whom, and how” to proceed on common ground (Rose 1999, 28). This common ground can stigmatize political rationalities based on different values as “irrational.” Womenomics has emerged within a neoliberal rationality that agrees on prioritizing economic growth, free markets, and limited state spending.

Problematizations can be analysed by consideration of the sorts of solutions experts propose to address a problem (Bacchi 2012). This article analyses programmes, policies, and expert advice that targets men’s conduct with the aim of increasing women’s productivity. I show how womenomics discourse highlights gender-based violence and sexual harassment as problems of women’s economic productivity. This problematization produces racialized, masculine figures that vary according to their economic positioning. The first is the toxically masculine and sexually violent man from post-conflict zones, developing countries, and poor communities in rich countries. The second is the toxically masculine and sexually violent elite man in a powerful workplace position. The disparagement of toxic masculinity produces idealized healthy masculine subjects: the engaged father who

supports women in their economic aspirations and the enlightened boss who supports women in the workplace.

While these changes in the forms of masculinity that governmental authorities cultivate appear to support women’s interests, it is important to critically examine them. Feminists have critiqued womenomics as a manifestation of neoliberal governmental feminism (Eisenstein 2017; Prügl and True 2014). Scholars have also criticized the new forms of feminine subjectivity that neoliberal women’s empowerment politics seek to cultivate as making women individually responsible for overcoming patriarchal impediments to their well-being (Rottenberg 2014; Gill 2017). This article builds on these critiques by highlighting how neoliberal womenomics politics seek to foster new forms of masculine subjecthood through the disparagement of toxic masculinity.

Rather than address structural or institutional reasons for violence against women, anti-sexual violence policies and programmes inspired by womenomics theory individualize sexual violence and discrimination by blaming them on men’s psychological problems and adherence to outdated patriarchal traditions. In this view, the reasons for sexual violence are the same everywhere: whether in Ireland or Liberia, men’s violence is assumed to have similar psychological roots calling for similar solutions. Toxic masculinity discourse thus allows for a critical discussion of masculinity and gender that scapegoats toxically masculine men for the feminized poverty and violence against women that characterize free market economies. Indeed, according to womenomics theory, capitalist markets and heterosexual couple-based households are the solution to feminized poverty and sexual violence, not part of the problem. From this perspective, patriarchy and sexual violence distort rather than characterize properly functioning free

markets.

I begin the article with a critical account of theories of toxic masculinity and how they made their way into sexual violence policy discourse through womenomics theory. I then show how these theories have been incorporated into programmes aimed at men in developing economies and marginalized communities by analysing programmes and discourse in welfare and development literature concerned with reforming men. Following this, I discuss problematizations of toxic masculinity among elite men that blame gender inequality and economic crises on men with outdated attitudes toward women, based on an analysis of economic, business, and professional media commentary along with legal and human resources advice to employers on how to deal with “#MeToo” issues in the workplace.

## Problematizing masculinity as bad for men, women, and the planet

The discourse on toxic masculinity did not originate within feminist theory, as many assume, but in Western men’s movements and conservative social policy. The term was coined by Shepherd Bliss in the 1980s with his father’s militarized masculinity in mind (Harrington 2021, 347). Bliss blamed toxic masculinity for problems ranging from men’s poor health and violence against women to threats of nuclear annihilation and environmental catastrophe (Bliss 1995, 304). He theorised toxic masculinity as caused by modern social organization that required men as breadwinners to work long hours away from their children. Most boys thus grew up without forming the strong bond with a father figure which, Bliss argued, was necessary for their healthy emotional

development. According to Bliss, most men suffered from “father hunger” that manifested in addiction, violence, competitiveness, and misogyny (Bliss 1995, 297). Bliss led men’s groups that engaged in therapeutic retreats aimed at helping men to explore and reject harmful social pressures and to work through their feelings about their fathers (Tevlin 1989).

Thus, men’s self-help groups theorized that father hunger and traditional masculinity were harmful to men’s wellbeing. By the turn of the century their theories had travelled to mainstream psychology. The American Psychological Association (APA) began a project on the needs of boys and men in 2005, culminating in the 2018 release of guidelines that label traditional masculinity as “psychologically harmful” because it requires boys to suppress emotion (Pappas 2019). The 2018 guidelines define traditional masculinity as including “anti-femininity, achievement, eschewal of the appearance of weakness, and adventure, risk, and violence” (APA 2018, 3). They recommend that engaged fatherhood can provide men with “a time for growth by resolving wounds from a man’s own father and for reinventing fatherhood, or at least trying to become the father one always wanted” (APA 2018, 12). According to the APA, fatherhood can improve men’s psychological health, and children of engaged fathers do better emotionally and academically (APA 2018, 12). Such ideas had long been a staple of self-help culture and parenting advice. For example, Australian family therapist Steve Biddulph’s (1997) best-selling book, *Raising Boys*, insists that boys need a father figure for healthy psychological development. Family therapist and media commentator Frank Pittman (1993) warned that modern societies had normalized absent fathers resulting in widespread “problematic and disoriented masculinity.”

The APA drew a direct line between men's adherence to "sexist, patriarchal masculine norms" and their propensity to "endorse and commit higher levels of intimate partner and sexual violence toward women" (APA 2018, 10). This view informs social policy. For example, New Zealand's anti-sexual violence strategy includes promoting "healthy masculinities" (New Zealand Government 2021, 12). In the United States, the Centers for Disease Control fund high school programs that teach boys about gender equality, respectful relationships, and bystander intervention when their peers use violence or express misogyny (DeGue et al. 2012). Tackling harmful masculinities and promoting healthy ones forms the basis for men's anti-violence interventions in many other states as well as exemplified by the various national chapters of the global White Ribbon Campaign (White Ribbon Canada 2024; White Ribbon Australia 2024; White Ribbon UK 2024).

The World Bank (2019) has also adopted the view that the best anti-sexual violence initiatives "address underlying risk factors for violence, including social norms regarding gender roles and the acceptability of violence." Since early in the twenty-first century, the World Bank has identified sexual and gender-based violence as within its mandate because it creates "significant social and economic costs" amounting to as much as 3.7% of GDP" (World Bank 2019). The costs of sexual and gender-based violence, as calculated by economists, largely arise from its mental health impacts, which lead to "decreased productivity and lower human capital formation" among women (Global Gender-Based Violence Task Force 2017, 13).

Global anti-sexual violence policies have thus been driven by policy makers' interest in increasing women's contribution to economic growth. Japanese American economist Kathy Matsui

coined the term "womenomics" while working at Goldman Sachs in 1999 (Matsui, Suzuki, and Tatebe 2019). According to womenomics theory, increasing women's income-generating activities would increase a state's GDP. For example, a Goldman Sachs report argued that if Japanese women's paid working hours increased to the OECD average, Japan's GDP would increase by 15% (Matsui, Suzuki, and Tatebe 2019). Economists theorized that drawing women into paid work had further benefits of decreasing welfare costs and helping to support households in contexts of rapid economic change, widespread unemployment, and precarious work (Daly 2011). World Bank experts agree that women's income-generating activity boosts a state's economic productivity and has positive impacts on "children's human capital and well-being" (Buvinic and King 2007).

The World Bank has thus adopted the slogan of "gender equality as smart economics" (World Bank 2006). They argue that gender inequality and sexual violence imposes "costs on productivity, efficiency, and economic progress" (World Bank 2012, 10). From this perspective, out-dated social norms, laws, and institutions distort markets. Therefore, states, international organizations, and business leaders must introduce reforms to eliminate sexism in the interest of economic growth and productivity. Womenomics theory has driven policy interest in tackling gender-based violence based on research demonstrating that victims often suffer on-going mental health problems such as "depression, trauma, and substance abuse" that decrease women's productivity as well as the productive potential of their children and increase health and welfare costs (Global Gender-Based Violence Task Force 2017, 13).

While toxic masculinity theory and the associated concept of father hunger originated in therapeutic practices catering to mostly white

middle-class men, these concepts now inform governmental approaches to marginalized men in poor communities. The World Bank associates gender inequality with lower levels of economic development and economic growth with greater equality. Thus, the Bank characterizes communities and cultures in developing economies as more prone to sexual violence because of risk factors such as “male idleness” and social norms and institutions that emphasize women’s purity, normalize men’s violence, and stigmatize speaking about it (Global Gender-Based Violence Task Force 2017, 69).

### **Problematizations of marginalized men as toxically masculine: “Transforming men’talities” in poor communities**

Below, I analyse how neoliberal problematizations of masculinity that emerged in relation to womenomics discourse have delineated the figure of the toxically masculine man from post-conflict zones, developing countries, and poor communities as a new object for governmental intervention. These interventions seek to foster the economic potential of his counterpart, the sexually victimized women, by transforming men into engaged fathers and helpful husbands. From this perspective, marginalized men and men from more “traditional” cultures (often ethnic or racial minorities), migrants, or men from developing countries, bear responsibility for domestic violence, sexual violence, and feminized poverty.

In OECD states, theories of toxic masculinity and father hunger contribute to the stigmatization of single-mother households and of men from poor communities as violence-prone “deadbeat dads.” Neoliberal policy experts argue that

welfare support for single mothers in OECD states has fostered the development of a welfare-dependent underclass in which fatherless boys grow into unemployed, criminally violent men (Murray 1996). Badly fathered men, according to this theory, often neglect their own children emotionally and economically, living a life of crime and addiction disconnected from family life. During debates over US welfare reform legislation passed in 1996, legislators blamed absent fathers for condemning their children to poverty in single-mother households resulting in another generation of fatherless men prone to criminal violence (Haney and March 2003, 466). The US Centers for Disease Control (2021) identifies men who experienced poor father-child relationships and poverty as more likely to perpetrate sexual violence.

Thus, programmes aimed at men in poor communities aim to engage them as husbands and fathers and stabilize heterosexual dual-earner families. Feminist research has long identified heterosexual marriage as a patriarchal institution that provides a foundation for feminized poverty and violence against women. Nevertheless, policy experts seek to shore up heterosexual couple-based households as a solution to these problems. For example, early twenty-first century Irish policy experts recommend that social services should work with fathers in poor communities so that “their wildness is tamed to the extent that they can adjust to the discipline of domestic routines and remain with their children and partners and in their families (as opposed to prison, for instance)” (Ferguson and Hogan 2004, 8).

In the United States, since the 1996 “workfare” reforms, fathers have been targeted with fathering and relationships programmes that became eligible for federal funding through the new Temporary Assistance for Needy Families fund (Geva 2011).

In some cases, men with child-support debt can avoid prison time by attending classes on fatherhood. Journalist Hana Rosin (2010) observed one such class that appears to have been based on “father-hunger” theory since it was based on the workbook “Quenching the Father Thirst.” The lesson highlighted the significance of fathers for both sons’ and daughters’ well-being. While such programmes seek to ensure separated fathers pay their child support, one analysis of their content shows how they go further by cultivating a masculine sense of the self that is built around their unique contribution as fathers to their children’s development (Roy and Dyson 2010, 151). This emphasis on engaged fatherhood as a core masculine role “defeminizes” the nurturing aspects of childcare by representing nurturing fathers as expressing a socially desirable form of masculinity (Randles 2020). Federal funding also promotes heterosexual marriage for unemployed men based on the theory that a man who could sustain successful relationships with his wife and children will become less of a burden on the state in the long term (Randles 2013; Geva 2011).

Similar programmes have been directed at men in developing countries. Twenty-first century World Bank policy discourse on men in post-conflict contexts or developing economies represents them as potentially violent idlers who waste money on their addictions (Bedford 2009, 31). Policy makers have also supported efforts to transform men into supportive husbands and fathers to resolve the care gap left by drawing women in developing economies into paid work in an economic context of high male unemployment, a solution preferred by the World Bank over state funded community childcare (Bedford 2009, 100).

The UNESCO initiative “Transforming Men’talities” signals the extent to which contemporary global governmentalities include

a masculinity agenda. The Transforming Men’talities initiative exemplifies Foucault’s (1991) concept of governmentality. One nuance of the term “governmentality” is that it involves practical efforts to shape the governeds’ sense of selfhood, including internal-self-talk: to govern their mentalities. The project website states, “Despite great strides globally towards gender equality in recent decades, gender-based violence, discrimination, and inequalities remain a reality.” It attributes the persistence of gender-based violence and inequality to “patriarchal masculinities” that “play an important role in driving conflict and insecurity worldwide; marginalizing women, girls, and LGBTQIA+ individuals, hurting men and boys themselves and limiting the potential of societies” (UNESCO 2024). The initiative, as suggested by the name, “aims to change mindsets” because “men who adopt healthier and non-violent views of ‘what it means to be a man’ take better care of others and themselves, and improve their quality of life, well-being and relationships” (UNESCO 2024). The initiative aims to transform men’s mentalities and “pave the way to a more equal society, free of violence against girls and women” (UNESCO 2024). They do so by offering funding for research, workshops, and local NGO projects.

The International Rescue Committee’s (2013) workshop series “Engaging Men through Accountable Practice (EMAP) A transformative individual behavior change intervention for conflict-affected communities” provides a good example of a programme that seeks to transform men’s masculine sense of self to reduce violence against women. The programme involves a series of workshops for men and women that have been delivered in Bangladesh, DRC, Kenya, Lebanon, Liberia, Malawi, Mali, Nigeria, and Uganda (International Rescue Committee 2022). The eight women’s workshops are run first with the

purpose of gathering information and stories about the challenges faced by women in specific communities that can then be fed into the workshops for men. The sixteen men's workshops follow with interactive sessions where men engage in discussion, role-play, and games. Men already committed to non-violence are recruited to the programme (International Rescue Committee 2013, 28).

One of the EMAP workshops' main messages for men is that biological sex can be distinguished from social gender and that gender pressures on men can be harmful and cause violence against women and girls. One workshop activity uses the concepts of "the man box" and "the lady box," a discussion device that encourages men to identify both positive and harmful masculine norms and to reflect on the different expectations of men and women (International Rescue Committee 2014b, 178). Another workshop engages men with thinking about how power and status shape privileges, restrictions, and the exercise of human rights (International Rescue Committee 2014b, 212). A homework activity asks participants to role-play a conversation with their wives about how they might help more with domestic work before having that conversation in real life and reporting back to the group about it. They then make a "personal action plan" for how to change the gendered power relations in their own households (International Rescue Committee 2014a, 197). Thus, while the programme aims at ending violence against women, it also pursues the policy goal of increasing men's participation in household work.

The EMAP workshops seek to change community gender norms by encouraging participants to share what they have learned with other men and boys. For example, one "homework" activity asks participants to have a conversation

with another man about the workshops and why they are committed to ending violence against women (International Rescue Committee 2014b, 200). In one workshop the men discuss how boys' games can normalize violence and aggression; the homework for the session asks participants to talk with their son or another young man about this issue and play a non-violent game with him (International Rescue Committee 2014b, 207). In the workshops, the participants reflect on their homework activities, and facilitators are advised to link their discussions with the concepts of "the man box" and "the lady box."

Thus, governmental interventions to reduce violence against women and increase gender equality target low-income men's gendered patterns of relating to other men and to women on an individual level. Feminist theories on violence against women clearly inform the "Engaging Men Through Accountable Practice" workshops, insofar as they treat gender as a socially constructed system of power relations that is historically and culturally variable. Nevertheless, projects to transform "men'talities" risk representing the problem of men's violence and gender inequality as one of marginalised men's psychology and sexist attitudes. This theory seems to absolve international and state institutions for gender-based violence and inequality by situating them as the solution to the problem and able to intervene for the better by transforming the outdated gender norms of low-income communities.

### **Elite men and toxic masculinity's threat to the economy**

Since the 2008 global financial crisis (GFC), toxic masculinity has also increasingly been used to criticize elite men for standing in the way of

women's progress into senior roles. The GFC prompted renewed attention to womenomics theory, driven by a loose coalition of corporations and international organizations, state agencies, and civil society organizations; key players in this coalition include the World Bank, the United Nations, the OECD, development agencies of the US and UK, financial firms such as Goldman Sachs, Deloitte, Ernst & Young and McKinsey & Company, and some civil society organisations such as Half the Sky and Catalyst (Roberts 2015, 110). This coalition drew on research by banks and investment and accounting firms such as Ernst & Young, Goldman Sachs, and Deloitte that offered empirical analyses suggesting that firms with more women in senior management were more profitable (Roberts 2015, 121).

Business media paid attention to such research, using it to support arguments that peculiarly male vices caused the GFC. A *Financial Times* article approvingly quotes former French finance minister and head of the International Monetary Fund as saying of the GFC, "If Lehman Brothers had been 'Lehman Sisters', today's economic crisis clearly would look quite different" (Agnew and Jenkins 2015). In a blog post headed "Why Men are to Blame for the Crunch," a BBC business editor blamed the GFC on "men behaving badly" and recommended that another crisis could be averted by the appointment of women to important financial roles such as chancellor of the exchequer and governor of the Bank of England (Peston 2009). He observed that "I know very few women who measure their success in life by the size of their respective bank balances, whereas I know an astonishing number of men for whom the only thing that matters is 'the score', as determined by the heft of their salaries, or bonuses or capital gain" (Peston 2009). He also claimed that "the kind of complex mathematical modelling

that underpinned so many of the toxic financial products—and of flawed systems for controlling risk — is also a peculiarly male practice" because it involves "little worlds detached from the real world" (Peston 2009).

According to this iteration of womenomics theory, if men's recklessness and detachment caused the GFC then women's more cautious nature could prevent future crises if they had leadership roles in key economic institutions. Authors of the 2009 book *Womenomics* reported in the *Washington Post* that "Economists at Davos this year speculated that the presence of more women on Wall Street might have averted the downturn" and that "Accounting giant Ernst & Young pulled out charts and graphs at a recent power lunch in Washington with female lawmakers to argue a provocative bottom line: Companies with more women in senior management roles make more money" (Kay and Shipman 2009). Thus, women were represented as economic saviours (Roberts 2015).

The theory that women's economic leadership could temper the excesses of men has influenced state policies. Governments in France, Belgium, the Netherlands, Germany, and Italy passed laws to ensure gender quotas for corporate boards (Comi et al. 2017). Then US President Obama appointed women to lead work on consumer finance regulation and head the Troubled Asset Relief Program and Securities and Exchange Commission (Prügl 2012, 26). In 2009, the UK Parliament's Treasury Select Committee developed a voluntary "Women in Finance Charter" that invited financial firms to commit to gender diversity in senior management (Treasury Committee 2018, 23). The Committee went on to release a 2018 report that cited the financial sector research that correlated more women in senior leadership with increased profitability (Treasury Committee 2018, 9). The



report argued that male dominance in finance had led to “group think” that had fuelled the GFC (Treasury Committee 2018, 8).

Policy and media reports on masculinity as a cause of the GFC portrayed aggressive, sexually predatory men as inhibiting women’s participation in financial management. The UK Treasury Committee labelled their inquiry “Sexism in the City,” publishing evidence that sexual harassment was commonplace in the financial sector (Treasury Committee 2024). The *Financial Times* also used the title “Sexism in the City” for an article that began with a story of a woman investment banker’s experience of being drugged and sexually assaulted after going for drinks with colleagues (Agnew and Jenkins 2015). Research on how the UK media covered the international banking sector from 2014 to 2016 found a shared metaframe that only exceptional women could succeed and become leaders because of toxic masculine culture that seemed unlikely to change (Sheerin and Garavan 2021).

The figure of the powerful sexually predatory man who stifled women’s professional progress to the detriment of the economy had thus enjoyed some currency even before #MeToo went viral in late 2017, accelerating efforts to deal with such problematic men through corporate employment policies and governmental interventions. #MeToo became a theme in business, managerial, professional, and trade publications with articles reflecting on how sexual violence and harassment negatively impacted productivity and progress in various fields (Harrington 2022). Following Foucauldian advice, I collected such “minor texts” on “#MeToo” issues penned by managerial experts, human resources advisers, administrators, policy makers, and participants in professional organizations. I assembled a dataset of eighty-six articles, blog entries, a working paper, and a

PowerPoint from searching google, google scholar, and an academic library data base, where experts opined on the implications of the “#MeToo era,” the “age of #MeToo,” “#MeToo issues,” and “#MeToo moments” for their profession, for business, for employers, for managers, corporations, investors, or an occupational field. These texts provide a window into managerial wisdom on how and why they should address sexual harassment.

Many #MeToo articles reiterated womenomics themes that businesses, professions, and trades would be enriched by women’s talents and productive potential but that sexual harassment and misogyny in the workplace often drove women out of, or prevented them entering, male-dominated fields. For example, the article “China’s Tech Giants Deal With #MeToo Issues” in *Barron’s*, a financial magazine, opined, “Companies that get sexual harassment right may be rewarded with a flood of new talent” (Mellow, 2021). *Finance Research Letters*, a bimonthly peer reviewed academic journal, published the article “#MeToo meets the mutual fund industry: productivity effects of sexual harassment” that suggested women’s productivity increased when companies introduced measures against sexual harassment. The article argued that sexual harassment “keeps female employees from optimally employing their human capital” (Cici et al. 2021).

A Canadian trades publication article, “Time’s up. #MeToo has come for the skilled trades,” represents sexual harassment of women in male-dominated trades as a question of national significance, reporting that Canada faces “a shortage of 1.4 million skilled workers within 15 years,” and that recruiting women could help (Alary 2018). The article begins with the story of a woman’s difficult search for work as a heavy equipment technician, saying that as the only woman working with twenty men, when she finally

landed a job, her “earliest moments in the trades proved life-changing” because she was “groped in full view of coworkers in an incident that was denied by her alleged attacker and later swept under the rug by her employer” (Alary 2018). However, such experiences were optimistically presented as “becoming a thing of the past” and “being dealt with when they’re brought to people’s attention” (Alary 2018).

Discussions of #MeToo and workplace issues frequently highlighted senior men’s inability to interact with women colleagues in a non-sexualized way as limiting women’s access to professional mentors and sponsors. A physician wrote in an influential medical journal that she had missed out on informal networking opportunities because she had learned to avoid socialising when travelling to professional meetings; the one time she had broken this rule she struggled to deflect the sexual advances of a man with “power, money, and influence” in her professional world (Peters 2018). In *Neurology Today* a prominent neuroscientist and transman, wrote “nearly every women trainee I meet tells me that they cannot go to a research conference...without being hit on (sometimes many times in one meeting) by senior males” (Shaw 2018). Thus, #MeToo discussions represented most senior men as harming their professions by failing to support women’s professional development.

The figure of the exceptional senior man who champions women’s progress emerged in managerial advice on #MeToo. A legal firm advised that “preventing sexual harassment involves much more from the top down. Prevention of sexual harassment starts with an attitude by top-level executives that they will not tolerate any form of harassment” (Hanley 2017). The previously mentioned Canadian article on women’s struggles to work in skilled trades declared that “more men are doing their part to change behaviour from

the inside” (Alary 2018). Likewise, a *Harvard Business Review* article claimed that #MeToo “is bringing out a community of men who are supportive of women” (Johnson et al., 2019). Professional publications advised senior leaders to “role model appropriate behaviour” (Wood and Brenton 2018). This figure of the good manager appears in discussions of #MeToo as able to realise women’s human capital potential by mentoring women, advocating for women, introducing anti-harassment training and policy, and role modelling appropriate behaviour while holding offenders to account.

Commentators urged men in senior positions to take personal responsibility for mentoring and sponsoring women’s professional advancement. An editorial in the *Journal of the American Medical Association* declared that: “Each of us has an individual responsibility: If a panel discussion, course faculty, hospital workgroup, search committee, or academic department is not representative, we need to ask why, and what we can do—as an individual on that team—to fix it” (Leopold 2019, 474). Similarly, in the leading journal *Annals of Surgery*, a “Surgical Perspectives” commentary titled “A Call to Action for Male Surgeons in the Wake of the #MeToo Movement: Mentor Female Surgeons” called on men to “unlearn the behaviors contributing to the ‘boy’s [sic] club’ within surgery, especially at senior leadership levels, as strong evidence suggests more diverse teams improve outcomes” (Daar et al. 2019). Thus, supporting women’s progress in male-dominated fields was represented as a professional responsibility for senior men.

Legal and human resources advisers counselled senior men on the importance of offering anti-harassment training that communicated clear anti-harassment policies. Such counsel assumed that senior men would

be managing other men who have no idea how to interact appropriately with women in the workplace. One legal journal stressed that such training should not aim to transform men's attitudes, but rather communicate workplace standards, instructing that "You will not after two hours of training convince someone that, 'What's wrong with me telling Susan she is sexy in that dress?'; No, go home and tell it to your wife, but when you walk into the doors of this workplace, that's not OK" (American Bar Association 2019). Another article suggested anti-harassment training should provide detailed advice through consideration of different scenarios such as travelling with colleagues, going out for dinner after work, going out for drinks, or having a closed-door meeting. In each scenario, the article stressed women should be treated the same as men; so, if the men were going to a bar, the women should be invited as well (Segal 2019). Such training materials assume that men may react to anti-harassment policies by avoiding female colleagues altogether and that they need fine-grained advice on how to behave around women in a professional context.

Professional, trade, business, and managerial publications thus problematize senior men who are complacent and fail to provide leadership against sexual harassment in their organizations. From this perspective, senior men who allow sexual harassment harm not only individual female employees but also their organizations' productivity and their professional fields' development. While sexual harassment can be perpetrated at all levels in an organization, the literature insists that responsibility for prevention lies at the top.

Managerial discourse thus offers senior men a new ideal of masculine leadership that signals a change in the conditions for the defence of patriarchy. Within this discourse, performing

well at work requires men to actively oppose sexual harassment, be a role-model to other men, and support women to achieve their productive potential. This image of professional competence and leadership has emerged in opposition to the figure of the predatory man who leads a masculinized workplace culture that excludes women. Such discourse rests firmly upon a binary gender model that values women because they, supposedly, bring unique qualities to the workplace.

## Conclusion

Womenomics theory problematizes sexual violence as preventing women from developing their full productive potential to the detriment of national economies and professional fields. The problematization of both marginalized and elite toxically masculine men emerged within this broader problematization of sexual violence. Welfare and development discourse represents men in impoverished communities as perpetuating inter-generational poverty through their violence toward women and neglect of their children. Policy makers seek to transform these men into non-violent supportive husbands and attentive fathers by engaging them in self-reflection on how masculine social norms may encourage violence and gender inequality. Thus, heterosexual marriage is treated as a solution to, rather than a cause of, violence against women and feminized poverty. According to toxic masculinity theory, boys who grow up with a strong father-son bond are much less likely to become violent, criminal, unemployed adult men. Furthermore, according to the World Bank, if men do their share of childcare and domestic work, then their wives will have more time to engage in income-generating activities,

helping lift their households out of poverty and contributing to economic growth (Bedford 2009, 100).

The discourse on the toxic masculinity of elite men has much in common with that on marginalized men and is similarly driven by womenomics theory. Since elite men are not subject to welfare or development regimes, problematizations of their masculinity have occurred mainly in business, economic, and professional media and human resources and legal advice to employers. The discourse on elite men and toxic masculinity represents them as preventing women from reaching their full productive potential by exhibiting sexually aggressive conduct in the workplace and leading masculinized work cultures to the exclusion of women. According to this discourse, such conduct harms not only individual women but also the global economy and can even be blamed for the 2008 GFC.

Problematizations of toxic masculinity establish an alternative form of socially honoured masculinity, producing the figure of the man with healthy masculinity who eschews violence and supports women. While the welfare and development literature targets men's conduct in their domestic lives in the interest of maximizing the productivity of their wives and daughters, the business and managerial literature targets men's conduct at work in the interest of maximizing women's productivity in general. In both cases, men are offered an image of themselves as a role model for other men and as acting in the best interest of their households or professional fields.

The significance of healthy masculinity for the global economy in the discourse on toxic masculinity show that the "conditions for the defence of patriarchy," in Connell's (2005, 77) terms, have changed. Leading economic

theorists insist that boosting women's income-generating activity and drawing women into senior management positions will lead to economic growth and stability. Thus, forms of patriarchy based upon the subordination of women in households and workplaces are represented as not serving the global economy well. Men who cling to the old patriarchal order are disparaged and contrasted to a new form of idealized masculinity that offers men a positive image of themselves.

Toxic masculinity theory has some appeal for feminist theorists, who certainly favour men committing to non-violence, engaging more with childcare, doing more domestic work, and fighting sexism in the workplace. However, we should recognise that toxic masculinity discourse depends on a binary conception of gender that elevates an idealized hegemonic masculinity over other forms of masculinity and in opposition to femininity. In the face of feminist and queer critiques of the gender binary and normative heterosexuality, problematizations of toxic masculinity allow for a critical discussion of masculinity and gender while offering an idealized healthy masculinity as a solution. The figure of the toxically masculine man whether rich or poor, provides a scapegoat for problems of violence against women and feminized poverty that represents capitalist markets as a place where women can realize their potential unfettered by toxic men. In this discourse patriarchy and sexism are relegated to the past as old-fashioned cultural norms and traditions.

Furthermore, a theory of toxic masculinity as the cause of sexual violence blames men's individual psychological problems for the issue and decontextualizes it from social structures and institutions. The theory treats men's violence in very different contexts as sharing similar roots in "father hunger" and patriarchal social norms. Social norms undoubtedly play a part in men's

violence against women. However, income and property inequality, militarism, and access to social services, among other things, are equally important. The reasons for sexual violence should not be reduced to men's psychological struggles or patriarchal beliefs nor to the same causes in every context.

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要旨

## 性暴力のウィメノミクス理論 —— 有害な男性の統治

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本稿は、新自由主義的「ウィメノミクス」理論が有害な男性性を、女性の経済的生産性を妨げるものとしていかに問題化しているか分析する。そして、男性性の問題化がいかに OECD 諸国における福祉政策に影響をあたえており、男性の暴力およびシングルマザー世帯の増加が「父親の飢餓」として説明されてきたかを示す。同様の理論は発展途上経済における貧困コミュニティにも適用されてきた。本稿はさらに、福祉と開発に関する文献が、女性化された貧困と女性に対する暴力を引き起こすものとして、暴力的で怠惰で有害に男性的であるような男性像をいかに構築しているかを示す。貧困と暴力対策プログラムは、健康的な男性性を身につけることによって異性愛カップル単位世帯に貢献するよう、男性たちの変容を促している。本稿はまた、経済・ビジネス・専門職メディアにおける有害に男性的なエリート男性の像に関するコメントリー、および「#MeToo問題」に対応するための法的・人的資源に関する雇用者向けアドバイスについても分析を行う。ウィメノミクス理論は、エリート男性の有害な男性性を、女性の経済的生産性と上級リーダーシップ地位への昇進を妨げ、グローバル経済に損失をもたらすものとして問題化する見方を形成している。こうした有害な男性性に対する非難は、女性がもてる生産的エネルギーを家内領域にのみ振りむけるような種類の家父長制をもはやエコノミストたちが支持しなくなっているなかで、家父長制の条件における変化を反映しているのである。

キーワード：有害な男性性、ジェンダー政策、性暴力、ウィメノミクス、#MeToo

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